




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Ryan**

**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2024

**CRIMINAL CODE (DECRIMINALISING SEX WORK) AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (3.35 pm): I rise to make a short contribution in support of the Criminal Code (Decriminalising Sex Work) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024. The passage of this bill will be an historic moment for Queensland and for this parliament. Almost 35 years after the Fitzgerald inquiry exposed systemic corruption in relation to sex work, when brothel owners routinely paid for protection from criminal liability, this parliament has an opportunity to finish the work of Fitzgerald by putting in place laws that are effective and promote the equal protection of all participants in the sex work industry. The reality is that the current regulatory framework that is in place in Queensland excludes the majority of participants in the sex work industry. The evidence is clear that decriminalisation is the best model of sex work industry regulation. No Queenslanders should have to make the difficult choice between working safely or legally. This bill treats sex work as work. It enables sex workers to report criminal behaviour to police without fear of criminal prosecution. It enhances public health and safety.

I want to acknowledge, in particular, the work and dedicated advocacy of Janelle Fawkes on this important reform. Since I became the Minister for Police, Janelle has been a consistent advocate for the decriminalisation of sex work in Queensland to myself and my office. I also want to acknowledge the advocacy over many years of Respect Inc, DecrimQld and Scarlet Alliance in support of these important reforms. I acknowledge the work of the dedicated public servants in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Queensland Police Service and the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel for their work on the bill and for the amendments that this House passed last year to remove sex work specific police powers from the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act.

This is an historic moment for Queensland and the parliament. I commend the bill to the House. I encourage all members to support it.