




Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**

**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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## **INTEGRITY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (4.15 pm): I rise to speak to the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I have just familiarised myself with some of the amendments that have arisen today. It has ruined a little piece of my speech, but I will press on.

Given its genesis, we could change the name of the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill to the 'lack of integrity bill'. I say that because there were several bad examples from the government and they were the genesis of the Coaldrake report—and I understand we will address 11 out of 14 of the Coaldrake recommendations through this particular bill—and were the cause of much negative media about the integrity of the government during the last year or so. Obviously, Mr Coaldrake wanted to shine a light on these issues, so his report is very relevant. We are pleased we are in the position today to support some recommendations. Anything is better than nothing when it comes to improving the integrity of government delivery.

As honourable members will recall, it started with the State Archivist having his reports doctored. When he became a whistleblower on the matter, there were serious ramifications for the State Archivist. That was step one in arriving at where we are today with this bill. Then we had the issue, as the shadow integrity minister pointed out, with the former integrity commissioner and her issues with the Public Service Commissioner and other matters that were a blight on the so-called integrity and independence of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner. That ended very badly. Mr Coaldrake talked to the previous integrity commissioner in his investigations and in finalising his report. When we received his report we saw he was quite critical of the intimidation in the Public Service. It is just totally unacceptable for any government to have a Public Service that is fearful of its independence and fearful of giving independent and transparent advice. It is up to governments to interpret and make their decisions on that basis. That is why we have this integrity bill before us today.

We can keep going in terms of integrity issues for the government. There was the director-general, the former member for Woodridge, the former director of the Labor Party and the former NBN head appointed by the Rudd or Gillard Labor government and other similar issues that cast doubt and do not pass the pub test in the minds of the public that this is a completely independent Public Service.

Unfortunately, just in recent times—this is why we need this integrity bill—the director-general appointed the former premier's chief of staff to a Public Service role and had the temerity to say that there was nobody in the Public Service who had the capacity to serve that role. That is a totally embarrassing political statement from a guy who cut his teeth in pure Labor politics. To say that this integrity bill is going to fix every issue that we still have today is far from the truth. Rather, it will at least go some way, but we still have a long way to go in terms of integrity issues with this government and in this state.

I am not going to debate the issue of the CCC reports because it is before the House and I understand that, but the LNP has called for a bill for the CCC to release those reports. We now unfortunately have to wait until the review comes out before we can get those two important reports released to the public. The CCC chairman himself has said that it is necessary for those reports to be released to the public and yet we are going to have to wait three months, according to this morning's announcement of the review. That in itself will delay—and the time for that review may be extended which may further delay—important information that goes to the very heart of the integrity of the government and the people who are involved in those areas that were reported on by the CCC.

One area that I am pleased with—I have just had a quick read and I think it addresses a lot of my concerns—is in relation to lobbyists. That was one of the issues that we had in our statement of reservation with regard to lobbyists, and I will give an example. The Evan Moorhead example springs to mind because I think that might have been the catalyst, if you like, for a rethink on the amendments coming before the House today to address a missing point that I was going to harp on about in terms of the bill before the House. Evan Moorhead has a firm called Anacta. I wonder why he called it 'Anacta'. To be honest, I have always thought, 'If Evan does it, Anna'll act on it.' I will be interested to see if it ever gets called 'Miles-acta', so we will see how that goes for Evan Moorhead.

The amendment being moved today would prevent Evan Moorhead, as has happened previously, from operating as a registered lobbyist and then taking a little time off—it was six weeks, but I am told that the amendment addresses that—to do his time in getting the government re-elected with his partner—I forget his name—and then going back in and doing some marvellous lobbying work. As I recall, there was a dump that had been rejected on many occasions out near Ipswich somewhere. There was an approval through Anacta as lobbyists, which was a big surprise to everyone, and then Anacta made a very sizeable—multiple thousands of dollars—donation to the Labor Party. The only thing smellier than that dump would be the smelly deal. This amendment—I am taken to believe, but I am not across the legalities of it—will address the matter of a lobbyist firm such as the one I have mentioned having access to close government contacts and getting results that probably are seen through the public eye as not being of the highest quality in terms of integrity.

We hope that the amendments as well as the bill itself in terms of a step forward in integrity start to lift this government's integrity credentials out of the gutter, where they have been for the past couple of years. From my point of view, hopefully our future government—hopefully that will be the LNP Crisafulli government because we are going to show Labor the door in '24—will be happy to abide by the integrity issues put in place, and I am sure we will. This bill will provide a great platform for a new government in 2024 to make decisions with the highest quality of integrity available to Queenslanders to ensure that those sorts of smelly deals and smelly jobs for the boys, which are quite evident through some public servant appointments, will be a thing of the past.

I will certainly be supporting the bill's passage through this House. I look forward to a fuller explanation on the amendments in terms of those matters that need to be addressed through those amendments, but I do believe that we have taken a good step forward. The reason we are here today is because of the media and the LNP highlighting the lack of integrity that brought about the Integrity and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.