




Speech By
Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

Record of Proceedings, 29 April 2025

**CRIME AND CORRUPTION (RESTORING REPORTING POWERS) AMENDMENT
BILL**

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (7.30 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill. I wish to echo the words of the shadow attorney-general, who confirmed that the Labor opposition supports a strong and an independent Crime and Corruption Commission that is empowered to do its job on behalf of Queenslanders. I had the privilege in my first term in parliament to be the deputy chair of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee and I saw firsthand the invaluable work that the commission undertakes.

I was 15 when Wayne Goss led Labor to power, and six years later I had the privilege of working for the Goss government. What I know, and what has been recognised, is this quote from Glyn Davis, who wrote—

A single animating value drove Goss as premier: The need for integrity in government. This required new anti-corruption institutions, an overhaul of electoral laws to entrench “one vote one value”, freedom of information, administrative law reform and major structural changes to the public sector.

We, the Labor Party, led integrity in this state after more than 30 years of corruption, cover-ups and gerrymanders. Frankly, we will not be lectured to by those opposite when it comes to our support of the Crime and Corruption Commission. Those opposite are clearly taking our state back to the bad old days with their political interference of electoral boundaries.

Tonight, I want to specifically focus my contribution on the disgraceful changes to the Anti-Discrimination Act and the respect at work act introduced by the Attorney-General that are indefinitely delaying protections for women at work—domestic violence victims and people who are experiencing homelessness. This is an absolute disgrace. These laws would have placed a positive duty on Queensland employers to require them to take all reasonable steps to prevent sex-based harassment and discrimination. Sexual harassment remains prevalent, with one in three workers experiencing it in their workplace in the past five years. The reforms would prevent discrimination based on a person being homeless, a person being a victim of family or domestic violence or a person’s physical appearance or due to irrelevant components of a criminal record, such as withdrawn charges.

The Attorney-General said she told everyone in a ministerial statement that she was going to move these amendments. At the time of her statement, she failed to inform the Queensland Human Rights Commission—the statutory body that led the 3½-year consultation process. Queensland Human Rights Commissioner Scott McDougall quite rightly said that the lack of consultation with QHRC—

... was in stark contrast to Mr Crisafulli’s promise to uphold the Westminster system of government.

He also said—

It’s concerning that the level of respect that our Westminster system the government relies upon to ensure we don’t descend into chaos has not been evidenced ...

The Attorney-General did not even have the decency to raise her government's concerns with him. Aside from the review by the commission, the laws have been backed by inquiries from the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council and two prior inquiries by the former parliamentary Legal Affairs and Safety Committee. The Human Rights Commissioner said—

To pause the implementation of all these changes due to a concern about one aspect of the reforms, with no notice and no concerns previously having been raised with us, is a disproportionate response.

To claim the reforms were rushed and not consultative enough is additionally misleading.

Pressing pause on these protections without any clear justification is a shameful political act. To say that further consultation is required is just ridiculous, given there has already been 3½ years of consultation. It was a wideranging consultation with a clear finding that better protections were needed.

While the government dithers, there are working women and survivors of family and domestic violence who are not adequately protected from sexual harassment and discrimination. The General Secretary of the Queensland Council of Unions, Jacqueline King, said the decision was 'an outrageous betrayal of Queensland workers'. She said—

We don't need any more consultation. We have been consulted to death over important reforms in this space on sexual harassment. We just need to get on and act the legislation and do it.

I have two daughters and, as a mother, I want to ensure they are not only free from discrimination because they are women but also safe from sexual harassment when they enter a workplace. I know what it is like to be sexually harassed as a young woman starting out in the workforce. I worked in male-dominated industries where women were treated poorly and we did not have the confidence or agency to speak up for fear of losing our jobs. The lewd jokes, the touches here and there and the disgusting misogyny—I am one of many women in this state who faced this. Any woman who has experienced this disgusting sexual harassment should know that this LNP government will not protect them from this behaviour because they do not care.