




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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**QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

Second Reading

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.17 pm): In rising to address this bill, I want to touch on the issue—I think it is clause 26—of dual reporting. I do so by acknowledging the presence in the gallery of Michael Garrels, who has done so much over the years to make sure the memory of his son Jason has been preserved and that what happened to him cannot happen to anyone else. The central underpinning principle that I am addressing today is making sure this does not happen again.

I want to commend the member for Springwood on his speech. I changed substantially what I was going to say after listening to him. I think he made a very measured, passionate but also very informative speech. I want to reiterate, as he did, that this particular clause is not just about paperwork. What this deals with can be about life and death. Dual reporting is designed to save lives in Queensland. It is an administrative requirement to make sure the building regulator and the safety regulator are informed immediately about an incident.

We have heard LNP members talking about some measures in this bill, and they may have been talking about dual reporting. They may call dual reporting red tape or they may call it duplication; I call it protection and I call it looking after Queensland workers. It is a reform, as we have heard, that many people have fought long and hard to bring in and I strongly believe it is something that cannot just be given up or surrendered. The failure of liaison between agencies has been one of the lessons that we learnt from Jason's death and we have already heard that dual reporting is one of those initiatives which has seen over 900 incidents reported over the last five years and five licences cancelled. These reporting requirements, including dual reporting, are the guardrails that Queensland has to ensure that construction workers come home every night.

I have talked a lot about construction workers in this place over the last 10 years and one of the reasons is the number of construction workers who live in my electorate. There are more steel fixers in Deception Bay than anywhere else in Queensland. I know these men and women. I hear their stories of what they are exposed to on sites, I have heard about their injuries and I have heard about their fights to ensure that they are on safe worksites. Therefore, I appeal to everyone here: let us keep this protection of dual reporting.

The LNP, as the member for Springwood has said, has offered no evidence, no modelling and no case to get rid of dual reporting. The learned member for Burleigh said that paperwork robs time. What I say is that inadequate protection robs lives. I want us to honour Jason's memory, I want us to honour Michael's work and I would like us to keep this protection.

One thing that we have heard from LNP members is that with this bill we can rely on automation for reporting to be done and if not there are big penalties—80 to 100 penalty units—but tell me if that will prevent another death like Jason's and tell me if that will prevent another rogue operator from doing

the wrong thing. There are many fine things in this bill but, like many members on this side, it more than irks me—it concerns me greatly—to see a protection like dual reporting taken away when we know that by keeping it in the legislative toolbox it can help prevent another death in Queensland.