



Speech By
Janelle Poole

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

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CRIME AND CORRUPTION (RESTORING REPORTING POWERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs POOLE** (Mundingburra—LNP) (8.02 pm): I rise to contribute on behalf of the Mundingburra electorate on the Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill. The Crisafulli government, through this bill, is taking important steps to restore the openness, transparency and accountability that Queenslanders expect and deserve from their government—transparency and accountability that was trashed by the former Labor government. This bill delivers a key election commitment of the Crisafulli government to strengthen the reporting powers of the Crime and Corruption Commission, the CCC. This bill provides an explicit power for the CCC to report at any time about corruption matters. The bill also provides an explicit power for the CCC to make a statement to the public about a corruption matter in the way the CCC considers appropriate.

The Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill 2025 is consistent with the LNP's Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill that was introduced into this very House in 2023. The LNP's bill was then ignored by the former Labor government and they continued to ignore Queenslanders' calls for accountability until the dying days of the Miles government, when they introduced their own bill which lapsed just a few weeks later when parliament was dissolved.

This bill's reporting and public statement powers are subject to a new safeguard in the form of a set of criteria which the CCC must consider before releasing information in either a report or a public statement. The new criteria are designed to operate alongside and give substance to the existing obligations of the CCC to: act at all times independently, impartially and fairly, having regard to the purposes of the CC Act and the importance of protecting the public interest; perform its corruption functions while applying the public interest principle; and make decisions that are compatible with human rights under the Human Rights Act 2019. Importantly, the safeguards provide the CCC with the flexibility to independently determine when and how releasing information will be in the public interest. The criteria are also not exhaustive, and the CCC may have regard to any relevant factor in making its decision about whether to report or make a public statement.

It is important to note that a further clarification provision has been included in the bill to make it clear that the CCC does not have the power to make findings on corrupt conduct. This has always been the case; nothing in this bill changes the position under the current act. The CCC's role is to conduct investigations and hand over any relevant material it has uncovered to the decision-making authority which is responsible for determining whether further action is warranted. An express provision is included in the bill limiting the CCC's ability to make findings or recommendations relating to a person engaging in corrupt conduct, whether a person should be prosecuted for a criminal offence or disciplinary action or whether there is evidence or insufficient evidence to support the start of such proceedings.

In cases where the CCC finds it reasonable and appropriate to name the subject of an investigation and make adverse comment about them, the CCC is bound by the requirements of the current act to give that person procedural fairness. This bill expands those procedural fairness requirements, and the Crisafulli government has worked with the CCC on ways to do this.

This bill revises the approach under the current Crime and Corruption Act for the tabling of CCC reports to ensure that the decision to table reports rests solely with the CCC. Unlike Labor, the Crisafulli government will respect the independence of the CCC and protect their discretion to table reports in parliament. Under the bill, a signed commission report must be given to the chairperson of the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee, the Attorney-General as the minister responsible for the Crime and Corruption Act and the Speaker. The Speaker is required to table the report in the Legislative Assembly on the next sitting day after the Speaker receives the report. Where the Legislative Assembly is not sitting, the Speaker must deliver the report to the Clerk of the Parliament who must authorise its publication.

Unlike the approach taken by Labor in their lapsed bill, this bill makes it clear that all past reports and public statements of the CCC are valid. This will allow the CCC to restore past reports and statements to its website and provide legal certainty to the CCC and its officers in respect of these reports and statements.

I would like to thank the Attorney-General, the Minister for Integrity and the Minister for Justice for the hard work that she has put into this bill to present it before parliament. I would like to thank the chair and the members of the Justice, Integrity and Community Safety Committee for their hard work on this bill as well.

It is important, as we move forward, to remember it is our duty to continue to uphold and act with integrity at all times and not just when it suits. This bill brings to a close a dark chapter of Queensland's history—the Palaszczuk-Miles government legacy of secrecy, cover-ups and integrity when it suits. I commend this bill to the House.