




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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

 **Mr J KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (8.10 pm): I well remember my first vote; I am sure many of us do. I missed out on the 1987 election. I followed it closely. I wished I had a chance to vote in that federal election. I just narrowly missed out on the Brisbane City Council 1988 election. I followed that one carefully. That one did not go so well for Labor, but I tell you what, that 1989 election was a special one! That was a good one to have your first vote in, and that was my first vote. I have to say I even had to spoil a relationship over that one, unfortunately. Someone did not want to go out with me anymore because I was voting the wrong way, but as far as I was concerned, I was voting the right way and I have been doing it ever since.

You can imagine, coming of political consciousness and awareness in that era, I had a deep understanding and a deep experience of the Queensland of that era. I have been a great supporter personally of all of the various reforms that have been put in place to try to improve accountability and to stamp out any form of corruption or misconduct in our society. That is what I have done. I have been a good supporter of that.

That was further reinforced for me by a fair bit of travel, in particular in Latin America, where I managed to get to quite a number of different countries which were all at different stages of development. Some of them were under authoritarian dictatorships. When you go to a country like that, you see corruption flourishing and you see what that means for average, working people, and I can tell you it does not mean very good things for them. That again reinforced my views that having systems in place that stamp out corruption and ensure the highest standards of our leadership and our political systems is something that we should all be striving towards.

Little did I think in those days that I would ever be elected to be a member of parliament. It was not something that I aspired to or understood that you could actually do. However, I did get there and I found myself on the PCCC as the deputy chair. That further built my understanding around the importance of this institution. I do want to acknowledge the chair, Lawrence Springborg, at that time. We worked together very closely. Can I say it was an absolute pleasure to work with Lawrence. He always looked to the good of community, the good of the institution, the good of parliament and tried to engage in the highest possible personal behaviour, even if sometimes that meant copping a loss for his side or forgoing a win for his side. He always sought to get the best possible outcomes.

I certainly associate myself with the remarks from the member for Gaven in relation to the Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill.

Going back to the 1980s, that was the time I started work. My second job, not my first job, was at the Royal Brisbane Hospital as a nurse. It was a highly hierarchal institution, a very controlled institution, with very large numbers of very young women and a lot of very powerful men in that institution. You can imagine that there were a lot of not-so-great things happening during that time. I did see, unfortunately, a lot of colleagues who perhaps were not able to handle that on top of all of the other

things that we had to deal with as nurses. Some fine nurses, unfortunately, would have left the profession due to those things. I saw that myself and at times experienced it myself, because if you were a male nurse in the 1980s, you were automatically labelled as being gay by many people and that automatically attracted some negativity in relation to yourself. The reality is that was nothing compared to what the women in that institution at that time had to endure. Unfortunately, I have seen that continue in a range of ways. It has improved; it has moderated over time. It is very far from perfect, and I can tell you from 10 years' experience as a union official, I certainly saw my fair share of workers who were being sexually harassed and intimidated in the workplace.

I think the parts of this bill which are delaying the respect at work act changes are reprehensible and disgraceful, and continue this behaviour of the LNP of talking down workers and of stomping on workers' rights. The Deputy Premier likes to come in here and try to cosplay as a working-class hero. If he actually understood our movement, he would know that people do not go around wearing that as a badge of honour. What we want is all people to be equal and all people to be treated well, and that is exactly what was supposed to be happening at the core of these bills. They have been consulted up to the wazoo. The unions are happy with it. Employers are happy with it. We should just get on and do this. Unfortunately, yet again, we have seen another example of the LNP saying one thing and then walking away. 'Oh, we are going to be the workers' best friend,' but then when they are given the opportunity to do that, just as we heard last night from Stacey Schinnerl, the secretary to the AWU, we have put in place laws that would have given greater protection to workers from dust diseases, protections that would save lives, they are scrapped by this government. It should not surprise any of us that these are being scrapped.

I make the final appeal that we do not scrap these laws; that we go forward with them and we do not delay. There is no need to delay. Some of the things I saw in the 1980s continue to happen to this day. The potential is there. We can avoid that. We could have better workplaces. We could have more productive workplaces. Any time we damage anyone in a workplace, we damage productivity. That is terrible for society, but it is absolutely dreadful and heartbreaking for that individual. With those few words, I support the bill, but I wish the bill was doing a lot more than it currently is.