




Speech By
Kerri-Anne Dooley

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 29 April 2025

CRIME AND CORRUPTION (RESTORING REPORTING POWERS) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms DOOLEY** (Redcliffe—LNP) (7.36 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill 2025. Restoring integrity, transparency and accountability to the public sector is a core focus of the LNP Crisafulli government. This bill seeks to create more transparent reporting powers and integrity in government. Queenslanders demand and deserve accountability of their elected representatives. This bill responds to the public demand for trust in our institutions.

The Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill 2025 is consistent with the LNP's Crime and Corruption Amendment Bill, which was introduced into this House in 2023. This was the LNP's first attempt to restore the CCC's reporting powers after the deficiencies in the act were identified by the High Court. The LNP's bill was blatantly disregarded by the former Labor government and they continued to ignore Queenslanders' calls for accountability, even in the dying days of the former Palaszczuk-Miles government.

The CCC has been unable to publicly report on corruption matters since a High Court decision in September 2023, with Labor failing to promptly act to amend legislation to allow for public reporting. It is the Crisafulli LNP government that is acting to restore the CCC's powers and ability to release critical integrity reports. These landmark laws will end Labor's political protection racket that kept Queenslanders in the dark about the Trad and Carne reports.

The bill retrospectively validates the preparation and publication of all past reports and public statements made by the CCC. The CCC previously reported on, and made public statements about, its corruption investigations; however, this bill provides an implicit power for the CCC to report at any time about corruption matters. This will provide the CCC with the power found to be lacking by the High Court to make a statement to the public about a corruption matter in the way the CCC considers appropriate. Why is this important? We saw a disgraceful abuse of power under the former Labor government when then deputy premier Jackie Trad, who was referred to the CCC over an inappropriate public appointment on her watch, took legal action against the corruption watchdog to stop the release of the report into her behaviour and inappropriate appointment.

To add insult to injury, this was all at a cost to Queensland taxpayers. The Jackie Trad court saga cost Queensland taxpayers around \$400,000 in legal fees. That is disgraceful. I thank our Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Deb Frecklington, for her work and advocacy to see more transparency brought back to the CCC. Thanks to the introduction of this bill, and ensuing motion, the reports that the Labor Party worked so desperately hard to hide were released to the public on 19 February this year.

The Crisafulli LNP government has delivered on a key election promise to see the release of the CCC reports into Jackie Trad and Peter Carne. We said we would deliver it, and that is exactly what we have done. After years of secrecy, Queenslanders deserve to know what these reports contain. What

did those reports reveal? The former deputy premier Jackie Trad's 'aggressive advocacy' saw the appointment of a top bureaucrat, her first pick, who was actually deemed not appointable by an independent panel.

In 2020, the CCC revealed a complaint that Ms Trad had 'interfered' to ensure the appointment, her choice, of one candidate 'with whom she had a longstanding professional relationship'. In the ensuing 2021 report, the CCC chairperson Mr Bruce Barbour wrote that the 'forcefully expressed personal preference' of Ms Trad had influenced Mr Stewart. He wrote—

In the final analysis, it was not merit that carried the day, but aggressive advocacy by the Senior Minister and a Director-General acceding to that advocacy.

Meanwhile, the report about Mr Carne detailed allegations about his poor conduct while serving as the Public Trustee, of his inappropriate behaviour, his alcohol use and his misuse of the public credit card. These reports the Labor Party wanted hidden from the public. We say no more. We say no more to cover-ups—no more to gagging the CCC.

The Crisafulli LNP government is delivering on our promise to bolster the powers of the Crime and Corruption Commission and restore its ability to release critical integrity reports through this bill. The Crime and Corruption (Restoring Reporting Powers) Amendment Bill 2025 provides clear powers for the CCC to issue public reports and make public statements at any time about corruption complaints or investigations. This includes 32 investigation reports and 256 media releases that had to be removed under Labor.

This bill's reporting and public statement powers are subject to a new safeguard in the form of a set of criteria. I welcome the new criteria which are designed to operate alongside and give substance to the existing obligations on the CCC. These include: act at all times independently, impartially and fairly; 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.

These criteria are not exhaustive and the CCC may have regard to any relevant factor in making its decisions about whether to report or to make a statement. However, these safeguards provide the CCC with flexibility to independently determine when and how releasing information will be in the best public interest. This will allow the CCC to have regard to the prevailing state of affairs and any need to accommodate unique or exceptional circumstances.

As the member for Redcliffe, the people of my electorate expect and demand of me to act with integrity at all times—to be accountable, to take ownership and to be responsible for my behaviour. That is expected and demanded of every single member here in this chamber.

In closing, thank you again to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, the member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington, for introducing this bill to the House and for her leadership to drive this reform. Thank you to the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Committee for their work, to those who made submissions and to the secretariat for their work in collating the report. The report made just one recommendation—that the bill be passed. I commend the bill and these amendments to the House to help restore accountability and transparency and to restore confidence and trust for all Queenslanders.