




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 10 June 2025

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Crisafulli LNP Government, Integrity

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (2.30 pm): The Premier says his government is all about integrity, but Queenslanders are fast learning that that is just another slick slogan from a government that does not seem to understand the meaning of accountability and transparency, let alone integrity. From day one, the Crisafulli LNP government has operated not in the interests of Queenslanders but in the interests of LNP donors, former MPs and political insiders. We have seen the rise in a jobs-for-mates culture that would make even the former Morrison government blush.

Let's start with Mr Julian Simmonds—a former LNP MP, a campaign director for a right-wing lobby group and the architect of a coal funded ad blitz that attacked the former Labor government. What is he doing now? He has been hand-picked as the acting CEO of Economic Development Queensland, which is a body that is meant to lead our state's housing strategy—a role, according to a report in the *Australian* last month, that was never advertised. This is the same Julian Simmonds who ran a \$500,000-plus campaign funded by fossil fuel interests attacking the former Labor government. Now he is running EDQ. That is not integrity; that is a reward—a political dividend for services rendered.

Then there is Mr John Sosso—who, I am advised, is a known LNP insider—who has been appointed to the Queensland Redistribution Commission, the very body responsible for drawing our electoral boundaries. That appointment triggered national headlines and warnings. When debating electoral reforms many years ago, Santo Santoro stated in this chamber—

A lack of support of the commissioners by any party would lead to a public perception that the Government of the day had rigged the system. This must be avoided and the way to avoid it is to enshrine in the legislation the requirement that all appointees must have the support of all party leaders. It is vital that our electoral system be held in high regard by members of the voting public.

I never thought I would be here saying I endorse the comments of Mr Santo Santoro! It is even worse. As reported in the *Courier-Mail*, Mr John Sosso may have been invalidly appointed due to the failure of the Attorney-General to properly consult. The Attorney-General should have known that, under the Electoral Act, she is required to consult with political parties, and her failure to do so appropriately has now put at risk the validity of any decisions made by the commission.

It does not stop there. We have seen: Andrew Cripps, a former LNP MP, parachuted in as the State Recovery Coordinator; and Jeff Seeney, the architect of the last era of LNP cronyism, appointed to the board of CS Energy. Quite honestly, the list of LNP aligned board appointments reads like a who's who of an LNP state conference.

While they are handing jobs to mates, they are sacking public servants with decades of experience. Ten directors-general were dumped in the government's first month in office, despite the Premier's repeated claims that no-one would be sacked. We have heard that they have been showing the door to the next level down—the DDGs—if they do not like them either. Even worse, they are gutting

independent boards. At Manufacturing Skills Queensland, they kicked out union and worker reps—the very people who know the industry best—only to stack it with LNP-friendly appointees without any transparent process.

Let's not forget that last year the then LNP leader of the opposition refused to back retrospective lobbying rules to force disclosure of meetings between lobbyists and shadow ministers. Why? It would have revealed just how much access their lobbyist mates had while they were still in opposition.

This is not a government that values integrity; this is a government that values control. It is becoming very clear that the Crisafulli LNP government does indeed have a plan. It is not for Queenslanders, though; it is for their backers, their donors and their political allies. This is not 'let the sun shine in', let me tell you that much. This is 'draw the curtains and lock the door and only let those in who are aligned to their values or who have money'.

The Coaldrake review warned of this exact culture creeping in to our public institution. It warned us about the politicisation of the public sector, the undermining of integrity agencies and the use of appointments to control outcomes rather than deliver results. Premier Crisafulli promised a new era in Queensland politics—a fresh start, he keeps saying. What Queenslanders have now is the same old backroom deals, developer mates and donor-driven politics that they have seen from the LNP time and again. This side of the House will not stay silent. We will keep calling it out because without integrity there can be no trust. Queenslanders deserve a government that governs for them and not just for their LNP mates and their donors.