




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

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DEFAMATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL


Second Reading

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (12.57 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Defamation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025—a bill that delivers stronger, clearer and more contemporary defamation laws. These reforms are needed across Queensland, but they are particularly important for communities like ours in Redlands. Redlands is a community built on strong connections. We look out for one another. We stay engaged online and we care about what happens in our streets, our schools and our neighbourhoods. That same sense of connection can also leave people feeling vulnerable. Families, small businesses, volunteers and community groups in Redlands have all felt the impact of the darker side of the digital world—rumours presented as facts, anonymous attacks and online pile-ons that spread quickly. The harm they cause is real.

That is why this bill matters. It gives everyday Queenslanders, including Redlanders, the protections they deserve and updates our law to match the way people communicate today. For too long our defamation laws have struggled to keep pace with online behaviour. This bill delivers nationally agreed reforms endorsed by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General, ensuring Queenslanders have the same protections as people in every other state.

The bill makes several key changes. First, it clarifies that digital intermediaries like Telstra, Dropbox and search engines should not be held responsible for defamatory material when they have had no active role in publishing it. They are the infrastructure, not the publishers. This commonsense approach protects the digital services we rely on.

Second, the bill introduces a fair and workable defence for social media platforms and page hosts, including the suburb and community pages Redlanders use every single day. If they have a clear complaints process and remove harmful content within seven days, they can rely on that defence. This is especially important for volunteer administrators—people running community pages out of goodwill—not there to moderate legal disputes. This bill gives them clarity whilst still protecting individuals from harm.

 **Mrs YOUNG** (Redlands—LNP) (4.01 pm), continuing: Second, the bill introduces a fair and workable defence for social media platforms and page hosts, including the suburb and community pages Redlanders use every day. If they have a clear complaints process and remove harmful comments within seven days, they can rely on that defence. This is especially important for volunteer administrators—people running community pages out of goodwill—who are not there to moderate legal disputes. This bill gives them clarity while still protecting individuals from harm. Importantly, it also creates new avenues for accountability for Redlanders who have been targeted by anonymous accounts or faceless posters.

The bill enables courts to identify anonymous users; allows courts to require digital intermediaries such as Facebook to remove defamatory content, even if they are not a party to proceedings; permits

offers to make amends to include removing or blocking defamatory material; and modernises communication processes so notices can be given reliably by email or direct message. These reforms cut delays, reduce barriers and allow victims to resolve matters far more quickly.

The bill also extends absolute privilege to publications made by police acting in their official capacity. Our local police do an exceptional job. They must be able to report facts and warnings without fear of defamation claims simply for doing their duty. This reform supports them and strengthens public safety.

Why does all of this matter for Redlands? Small businesses rely heavily on their reputation. One false review or malicious post can undermine livelihoods overnight. Parents, teachers, volunteers and young people are increasingly exposed to online bullying and defamation, and community groups—many run entirely on goodwill—have long told me they feel exposed when moderating their pages.

This bill brings clarity and fairness. It ensures: Redland families are better protected; Redland businesses are shielded from malicious online attacks; Redland police can do their job with confidence; and Redland community pages have a clear, workable framework to manage complaints. It achieves this while maintaining national consistency and supporting the uniform defamation model across Australia. This bill modernises our laws, strengthens our protections for Queenslanders and provides certainty for everyone who uses or manages digital platforms. For the Redlands, these reforms are essential. They mean safer online spaces, stronger protection of reputations and clearer rules for all.