



Speech By  
**Wendy Bourne**

**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Education, Arts and Communities Committee**

 **Ms BOURNE** (Ipswich West—ALP) (4.14 pm): I rise to speak on my first estimates as a new member in this chamber. I want to begin this speech with a single word—disrespect. Disrespect stands for more than just poor manners. In this chamber it means deliberately ignoring stakeholders, refusing engagement, silencing people and evading critical transparency. It reveals a pattern of dodging accountability. From a government that promised transparency and accountability, coming up to almost a year in office, what we see is not respect for Queenslanders but an endless string of broken promises and deliberate avoidance. What we see is disrespect. Let me give a few clear examples.

In terms of education, I stand firmly with our hardworking teachers and school staff—the men and women who shape the future of our children each and every day. Education is not just another portfolio; it is the backbone of opportunity for families. It should be a government's highest priority and yet this government has shown those very people nothing but disrespect.

After months of failed negotiations and two rejected enterprise bargaining offers, more than 50,000 Queensland teachers were forced to take strike action—the first in over 16 years. This was not because they wanted to, but because they had no choice. If you cannot respect the people on the front line of education, how can you possibly claim to respect the future of Queensland?

The arts sector thrives on independence, integrity and respect for creative voices, but what we saw this year was unprecedented interference. A minister of this government personally directed the Library Board to rescind a fellowship—a fellowship awarded after an independent, transparent process, judged by respected experts. That disrespect for the decision of the judges triggered the resignation of 12 Queensland literary award judges. Let me be very clear: when government ministers interfere in independent art decisions they do not just disrespect judges; they disrespect writers, artists and the principle of cultural freedom itself.

The same pattern of disregard extends into our communities. The Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships failed to meet collectively with the Queensland Coalition of Peaks—one of the most important representative bodies in this state. This is blatant disrespect for First Nation voices and for genuine stakeholder engagement. On top of that, when we examined the Closing the Gap Priorities Fund we discovered that \$37 million out of \$108 million has already been spent without any formal guidelines or criteria. That is not accountable. That is not respect. That is reckless.

When I entered this parliament, I did so as the 100th woman elected in Queensland. I take enormous pride in that. I see it as a responsibility to carry forward the work of those women who came

before me, who fought to create space for women in leadership, in public life and in decision-making, and yet what we have seen from the government is a total disrespect for Queensland women.

This government remembered to rebrand what was once the Women's Budget Statement into the LNP's own colours, but somehow forgot to include the words 'gender equality'. Was that a mistake or was it deliberate? Either way, it shows just how out of touch this government is with women and girls across our state.

Promises have not been honoured. Publicly funded IVF for women with complex medical conditions was due to start on 1 July—backed by \$42 million in investment from the previous government. It has not commenced and it is unclear what advocacy was undertaken by the Minister for Women. The Respect at Work laws, designed to keep women and girls safe from harassment in the workplace, have been indefinitely paused. Again, it is unclear what the Minister for Women advocated for. This is not what respect looks like. This is negligent. This is avoidance. This is disrespect on full display.

In closing, when I say this government is showing disrespect I do not mean it lightly. It is not one moment or one oversight; it is a pattern—disrespect to teachers, disrespect to judges and the arts, disrespect to First Nations communities and disrespect to women. The people of Queensland—

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms BOURNE:** I am not taking those interjections. The people of Queensland deserve better. They deserve respect—real respect—grounded in listening, in accountability and in action. Until this government recognises that, Queenslanders will continue to see them for what they are: a government that promised transparency but delivers only disrespect.