



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 November 2019

**MOTOR ACCIDENT INSURANCE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT  
BILL**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (12.17 pm): I rise to make a very short contribution to the debate of the Motor Accident Insurance and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. At the outset and as per my entry on the Register of Members' Interests, I declare that I was recently involved in settling a CTP claim to do with a motor vehicle accident that occurred whilst I have been in this job—indeed in April 2018. I want to make that clear to the House and in the ongoing debate.

I want to address a number of the matters that members on this side of the House have raised with regard to this bill. Most Queenslanders would be relatively relaxed about legislation pertaining to motor accidents and the insurance thereof, but, as the LNP deputy chair of the Economics and Governance Committee, the member for Mermaid Beach, pointed out, there are a number of significant concerns with this bill. The largest of those pertains to new sections 74 and 75, at clause 15, and what they do to consolidate the business of motor accident insurance into businesses that have clear links to industrial organisations—another term for unions. A number of colleagues, and indeed the report itself, reference a comment made by Mr Tom O'Donnell, Principal of O'Donnell Legal, in his evidence given on 22 July this year. He said—

... it seems to me that if referral arrangements are impacted then inevitably it will push consumers to those firms that either have links with industrial organisations and/or advertise a great deal or possibly those who have good links with community associations.

...

The reality is that small firms cannot afford those types of relationships. As such, if referral arrangements were squeezed out, in my view it would squeeze small firms out of the market.

That basically means that, unless there is a connection with a union, the opportunity to participate in this kind of work will not exist. This is yet another example of when a union or unions make donations to the Labor Party—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Stevens): Member for Logan, the member is not taking your interjections. Cease, please.

**Mr POWELL:** When a union or unions make a donation to the Labor Party, it is not long before we see legislation in this chamber making a change to benefit the unions. It beggars belief that we have had statements made by very significant bodies around this state and elsewhere that there seem to be very visible links, so let us name it, between so-called property developers and state members of parliament. We all know that, yes, there is clear linkage between property developers and local government employees, but to link them with the state government when the same comments have not been made—indeed, the opposite comments have been made—about union influence particularly on Labor governments beggars belief. Here we have yet another example where finances have been provided to the Labor Party only for us to be debating, soon after, legislation that clearly favours said unions.

It is of real concern. We have just debated a motion. We have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. We have an infrastructure shortfall because of woeful indecision and an inability to invest in infrastructure—indeed, to pull funds from infrastructure over several years now under this Palaszczuk Labor government. Yet what are we in here debating? We are debating ways that unions, not Queenslanders more broadly, can benefit more. We are debating ways that unions can benefit.

That raises a significant concern for us in the LNP, as indeed it would for people more broadly. We believe that people should be able to access a broad market of firms that can participate in this kind of field. Yet what we are seeing is action being taken to potentially limit that to union dominated businesses and links. On that basis, I understand that the LNP will be opposing these particular clauses.

In conclusion, most Queenslanders welcome a level of interest, a level of legislative modernisation, around motor accident insurance. Much of what is in this bill is supported by the LNP. We cannot, however, support any increase in the power of the unions in this state.

*(Time expired)*