

Queensland Parliament Hansard Green

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SUBJECT: Respect in Parliament

MEMBER: Ms BOLTON

Respect in Parliament



Ms BOLTON (Noosa—Ind) (9.30 pm): After the last parliament, and given what has occurred in our own country and globally since then, I appeal again to both sides of this chamber, as I did when I made my maiden speech in 2018, that—

It is time to set a better example to our communities, especially to our youngest Australians, that bullying and aggression are not tools of negotiation.

Please, just stop and think. How can we expect our children and grandchildren and everyday Queenslanders to respect each other and their views when our own behaviour falls far short of community expectation? How can we inspire our communities to negotiate and resolve issues and lead by example without hatred and promoting divisiveness when we cannot manage to do that in this chamber?

It was a real eye-opener to visit the Commonwealth parliament in Canberra recently. The debate was relevant, with not a slogan to be heard. The members were considerate of the Speaker's rulings and, dare I say it, professional. The ball was played, not the man or woman. Question time was civil—no emotive falsities, no misinformation, no endless calls to order from the Speaker or constant interjections on relevance. It renewed my faith in what is possible.

Whether a large business, a not-for-profit or, indeed, a parliament, culture drives performance. Every MP in this House is aware that the culture of our chamber has become unproductive and toxic, with the repetitive attacks across the chamber a form of bullying. So much time is lost in efforts to drag the other side down versus transparency, credibility, accountability and deliverability, which would not be tolerated in an ASX200 company. Peter Drucker, a management consultant and author, said 'culture eats strategy for breakfast'. This is fundamental to having our governance and systems working effectively for the people of Queensland.

I respectfully ask that both sides work together to build a culture in this chamber and parliament that Queenslanders can be proud of—where we are not embarrassed to have students in the gallery and where procedures and standing orders, even though I may disagree with some, are adhered to out of respect for the Speaker, the people we represent and each other. I ask that we focus on what we are paid to do: work hard on the challenges impacting our communities and state together, not waste time on the politicking and the tit-for-tat, and we should do this without furthering the disrespect being experienced in many realms of our communities, including by our police and teachers. Instead of looking for media grabs that incite outrage and anger, which does nothing for Queenslanders except promote discontent, disengagement and despair, we should lead by example to inspire better behaviours. That will be a win for all and our future.