

Prime Minister

Senator McGRATH (Queensland) (13:50): I want to tell a story about a bloke who's a blatant and unapologetic—I can't say the word, but it rhymes with 'fire' and begins with the letter 'l'. This someone is a purveyor of untruths.

The ACTING DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Senator Grogan): Senator McGrath, I'll just caution you as well.

Senator McGRATH: He's a purveyor of untruths, a fibber, a fabulist, a fabricator, a deceiver, a maligner, a befuddler, a hoodwinker, a hornswoogler, an equivocator, a prevaricator, a falsifier, a fabricator of falsehoods or, as the Italians would say, un bugiardo. Of course, these are words that all apply to Prime Minister Anthony Norman Albanese.

The ACTING DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Senator McGrath, I will just caution you about impugning another member.

Senator McGRATH: As Leader of the Labor Party, he campaigned religiously on bringing back truth, trust and transparency to government—three words beginning with the letter 't' that should never be seen in the same sentence or the same room with Labor and Prime Minister Albanese. We have a Prime Minister who, on the issue of tax, looked down the camera—as I am doing now—and said to the Australian people: 'Trust me. My word is my bond.' But guess what? He was holding his fingers like this, wasn't he, fellow senators? The Prime Minister, this purveyor of untruths, misled the Australian people at the last election and has misled the Australian people since the last election about the issue of taxes.

If he misled you back in 2022, this Prime Minister and this Labor Party will mislead you when it comes to changes to negative gearing and capital gains tax on the family home. Labor keep saying they have no plans. Guess what? They said they had no plans to change the tax rates. Guess what? They've done that. Once a purveyor of untruths, always a purveyor of untruths.

Fibromyalgia

Senator TYRRELL (Tasmania—Jacqui Lambie Network Whip) (13:52): Almost one million Australians, including many people close to me, are affected by fibromyalgia, and yet it's still a misunderstood condition. It affects people of all ages—mostly women but also men—and they have to deal with debilitating symptoms including pain, fatigue, brain fog and many other symptoms.

For too long, calls from people with fibromyalgia have been ignored, with many being stigmatised because of their condition. Those unable to work because of their condition face the impossible task of navigating the welfare system and the NDIS to get the support they need. There needs to be more support, training and compassion. In my employment services days, I saw that backing those who need it can lift people up.

Just recently I met with Arthritis Australia—with Jane from Tassie, who lives with fibromyalgia and has worked with Arthritis & Osteoporosis Tasmania to help Tasmanians living with the condition. I also met with Dr Sam Whittle, the vice president of the Australian Rheumatology Association, who is a leading expert on fibromyalgia. They told me that the cost-of-living crisis and the rheumatology workforce shortage are pushing people to breaking point. Arthritis Australia recently surveyed people with fibromyalgia, and here's what they found: 65 per cent of people had to cut back on fibromyalgia treatments to pay for basic living expenses and 50 per cent had to cut back on other living expenses to afford the health care they need for their fibromyalgia. People who have this disease are forced to decide between food and treatment, which is only making it more difficult to live with fibromyalgia.

Through medication, exercise and physiotherapy, fibromyalgia can be treated and managed. Seeking treatment is costly, but boosting the number of allied health appointments through the chronic disease management plans would make an immediate difference to out-of-pocket costs. People like Jane and so many other Australians are counting on fibromyalgia being taken seriously.

Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide

Senator THORPE (Victoria) (13:54): This country signed on to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 1948, in the aftermath of the Holocaust. According to the convention, we have the duty to do everything in our power to prevent and punish genocide. But this country has a long history of failing to address genocide, and intentionally so.

Australia did not enshrine the convention in domestic law until 2002, when it criminalised genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes—the very worst of humanity. The government at the time ensured that no such crimes before 2002 can be prosecuted here, a convenient way of washing its hands of historic acts of genocide. They also gave powers to the Attorney-General to approve or reject the prosecution of any genocide case here. This is known as the AG's fiat. This veto power undermines the very intent of the convention, where we all have a duty to prevent and punish the crime of genocide. There is not even a right to appeal the AG's decisions.

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