

The Hon. Jeremy Buckingham, MLC
Member of the Legalise Cannabis Party
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

8 October 2025

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Citizens Right of Reply

Dear Mr Buckingham,

I write to you in your capacity as Chair of Parliamentary Committee No. 1 conducting the Budget Estimates hearing into Aboriginal Affairs and Treaty, Gaming and Racing, Veterans, Medical Research, the Central Coast on 26 August 2025.

At the Budget Estimates hearing, the Hon. Emma Hurst MLC took the opportunity to raise baseless allegations in relation to myself under privilege.

Specifically, Ms Hurst alleged that I had sexually harassed a female employee at a work-related function in 2020. Ms Hurst also alleged that I was referred to by staff as 'handsy'. She later went on to alleged that there were 'several' sexual harassment complaints made against me.

In making those allegations without me being present to defend myself, Ms Hurst was able to publish unfair and unjust imputations detrimental to my character and reputation under the protection of privilege.

Additionally, as a result of the use of privilege, on 27 August 2025, the Sydney Morning Herald published an article, nationally syndicated, based upon Ms Hurst's allegations that further publicly impugned my character and reputation.

As a result of Ms Hurst's unfair and unjust use of privilege, I have had to resign my position as a Board Director of a group of early childhood and learning centres. I may never be able to gain another Board role again in the future.

Now to the true facts.

The work-related function in 2020 to which Ms Hurst referred, did not involve any incident of sexual harassment, nor could anything I did be construed as sexual harassment. I simply placed my hand on the shoulders of two staff members when saying goodnight and leaving the function, one of whom happened to be a female staff member.

The female staff member subsequently raised with me that my touching her on the shoulder made her feel uncomfortable. The female staff member did not suggest that the touching was sexually suggestive, nor would any reasonable person form this view.

The name 'Handsy' was not a nickname used by staff at the Greyhound Welfare & Integrity Commission (GWIC) where I was formerly Chief Executive Officer.

This term was used by a male Steward at the Select Committee Inquiry into GWIC in 2021. The Steward concerned held an antipathy towards GWIC and had sought to use the work-related incident in 2020 as a means to discredit GWIC. The Steward in question was not present at the work-related function.

There are no complaints relating to sexual or other harassment against me at GWIC, nor have I ever had such a complaint in my 40 years of working in Government. I am concerned this allegation was published by Ms Hurst to intentionally impugn my character and reputation.

I did note that during the hearing you cautioned others against the unfair use of privilege to make statements against third parties not present at the hearing and not able to defend themselves. I believe that same courtesy should have been extended to me. It would be appropriate for some level of due diligence and inquiry to be undertaken with Ms Hurst prior to her being permitted to use privilege to make the allegations she made.

I noted that during debate in the Legislative Council on 10 September 2025, Ms Hurst took her allegations to another level indicating that there had been 'sexual assault' allegations made about me (16.06). This is yet another outrageous and more egregious use of Parliamentary privilege. I am writing separately to the President of the Legislative Council in relation to this matter.

As you would be acutely aware, Ms Hurst's agenda is to ban greyhound racing. It would appear that, as part of her agenda, she wishes to discredit me in my role as CEO of Greyhound Racing NSW by unjustly using Parliamentary privilege to defame and impugn my character.

It is also apparent that Ms Hurst has no compunction in continuing this abuse of Parliamentary privilege in an attempt to further destroy my personal and professional reputation. It is completely inappropriate that a member of Parliament be allowed to do so unchecked.

Given the egregious nature of Ms Hurst's attack on me and the impact on my character and future career prospects due to Ms Hurst's use of Parliamentary privilege, I request that you give consideration to my request that the Committee publish my correspondence responding to the adverse comment with a footnote to the relevant part of the transcript.

Should you accede to my request, I ask that you use the contents of Annexure A (enclosed) for the footnote.

I look forward to receiving a favourable reply.

Yours sincerely,

Steve Griffin
Chief Executive Officer

Annexure A

RESPONSES TO CLAIMS MADE UNDER PRIVILEGE BY EMMA HURST, MLC AT BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING ON 26 AUGUST 2025

Page 9

Ms Hurst: "Minister, when did you first become aware of sexual harassment allegations against Steve Griffin, the former CEO of GWIC and the current CEO of Greyhound Racing NSW?"

Response: There was never a sexual harassment complaint lodged against me. The incidental touching of the female staff member on the shoulder when saying farewell was not and could not be construed as sexual harassment. The female staff member did not suggest that this was the case at the time.

Page 10

Ms Hurst: *"it's well known that staff referred to Mr Griffin as 'Handsy', a nickname that was given to him because of his behaviour while he was the CEO of GWIC."*

Response: This is untrue. I was not known or referred to as 'Handsy' by GWIC staff. This term was used by male Steward during the course of a Select Committee Inquiry into GWIC in 2021 to attempt to discredit me and the organisation.

Page 22

Ms Hurst: *"My understanding is that there's more than one case. I assume you're aware of that, that there are multiple women that have made allegations."*

Response: This claim is rejected. There are no complaints relating to sexual or other harassment against me at GWIC, nor have I ever had such a complaint in my 40 years of working in Government. This allegation is without foundation and was published by Ms Hurst in order to impugn my character and reputation.