



Inaugural Walk for Justice Monday, 19 May 2008, 7:00 am

**The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice of Queensland**

I welcome all to this inaugural 'Walk for Justice'. Congratulations on having to this point survived.

We are, today, part of a national and indeed international movement. The public interest law clearing houses in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, and South Australia, are all hosting walks today. The United Kingdom is the source of the concept. In about 19 hours, the London Legal Support Trust's 4th London Legal Sponsored Walk will be held at 5.30pm London time. That walk, around London's legal landmarks from the Royal Courts of Justice, is led by Lord Chief Justice Phillips and Sir Anthony Clarke, Master of the Rolls, familiar to many of you from QPILCH's Public Interest Address in 2005.

We are raising money for QPILCH, established by our profession to coordinate pro bono legal services and fill gaps in civil law services. QPILCH refers public interest matters to law firms and counsel. It also provides direct services to the homeless, refugees, people in debt, disadvantaged groups and self-represented litigants.

Many of you are members of QPILCH or employed by firms which are members of QPILCH. Your contribution makes a real difference to people otherwise bereft of necessary legal guidance.



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As QPILCH patron, I am gratified and encouraged, especially by the many young faces I see here today. Our profession displays a real altruistic commitment. I also see older faces, my contemporaries, fellow judges and magistrates, parliamentarians and councillors, senior partners of firms and senior barristers. I am glad to see we all made it!

It is important to acknowledge limitations on access to civil justice, which remains, on the civil side, the albatross of our system. We must continually strive to enhance it. Today's initiative will directly support disadvantaged people to access legal services through QPILCH's innovative programs.

We work in daily environments far removed from the immediacy of the disadvantaged. Opportunities to demonstrate a dedication to justice, however great or small the gesture, always exist. Walking here today is one such gesture. I respectfully commend each and every one of you.

We all extend greetings from Brisbane to our fellow walkers in London, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.

Thank you for joining us today. Enjoy your breakfast, you've earned it, and see you next year.