



Launch of UQ Pro Bono Centre
Banco Court
Thursday, 26 February 2009, 6pm

The Hon Paul de Jersey AC
Chief Justice of Queensland

I am very pleased to support this initiative of the TC Beirne School of Law.

A commitment to pro bono work is now a well-established feature of the legal profession in Queensland, indeed of the legal profession nationally. The firms and individual practitioners who participate in this work in this State deserve substantial commendation. So doesQPILCH, which coordinates much of the work with great efficiency and dedication, not to overlook the professional associations as well. I am privileged to be patron of QPILCH, which is affording great assistance to the courts through its assisting unrepresented litigants and potential litigants, through the citizens' advice bureau component of the accessCourts initiative.

QPILCH is grateful for the willing involvement of law students as well as established practitioners. I have met and spoken with some of those students, and they display great enthusiasm for the work, enjoying the chance to accomplish real work with actual clients. Rather similarly, I know that novice practitioners relish the prospect of involvement in this sort of work, especially where the alternative is, say, six months behind closed doors condemned to the disclosure of documents.

I applaud the Law School for now giving form and profile to its commitment in this area. By formally and publicly acknowledging this commitment, the Law School recognizes the real public importance of the pro bono phenomenon in legal practice; by endorsement of it, the School will foster a commitment in the students, which one hopes will be abiding, continuing into subsequent years of actual practice; and by its efforts, it will enhance efficiency in delivery.



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I congratulate the Law School. I thank again the firms and practitioners who are engaged in this work in Queensland. I commendQPILCH for its ongoing commitment and efforts. And importantly this evening, I thank the students who have been, and will be, involved in this publicly important endeavour.