

~~Fourthly, the disclosure elements are critical. The banning of donations from developers is vitally important. It is here that we see the greatest difference between the LNP and Labor. The LNP will never be rigorous in enforcing this kind of transparency. It does not want people to know the true identity of its donors. Look at its track record today and this week. It has tried to hide the identity of people who gave it about \$3 million. It has had to return \$300,000 or \$500,000 in donations from developers and the like. Even after all this time, it keeps taking their money. It keeps taking money for state and council candidates and keeps forgetting to disclose it.~~

~~I looked at some of the exhibits tendered during the Belcarra hearings. I see on exhibits 13 and 14 that an LNP aligned candidate on the Gold Coast, Ms Boulton, received \$1,500 from the member for Southport. I do not know if our colleague revealed this in the register of interests. I table exhibits 13 and 14 from the Belcarra hearings along with an extract from the *Twenty-ninth report on the register of members' interests*, where the candidate lists the donations from the member, and the place in the register where it should be recorded.~~

~~Tabled paper: Document, undated, titled 'CCG Exhibit'.~~


~~Tabled paper: Extract from the *Twenty-Ninth Report on the Register of Members' Interests* relating to the member for Southport, Mr Rob Molhoek MP.~~

~~I note in these exhibits that there is \$15,000 from Stuart Robert and the Fadden Forum to this candidate. I could have run two local government election campaigns in my area with that kind of money. Ms Boulton got \$30,000 in total, I believe, from Stuart Robert and the Fadden Forum. I believe that another candidate got \$30,000 as well from Stuart Robert. That is \$60,000 from one LNP fundraising vehicle going to just two council candidates. This same fund received \$100,000 from a Gold Coast lobbyist who worked for developers and resource companies. We see that the LNP has a stream of donations going to local LNP candidates. It comes from—we do not exactly know where. The LNP does not think it is a priority for people to know where this money comes from. We do.~~

~~Debate, on motion of Mr Whiting, adjourned.~~

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (DISABILITY PARKING PERMIT SCHEME) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (12.29 pm): I present a bill for an act to amend the Traffic Regulation 1962 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Transport and Public Works Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Transport Legislation (Disability Parking Permit Scheme) Amendment Bill 2019.

Tabled paper: Transport Legislation (Disability Parking Permit Scheme) Amendment Bill 2019, explanatory notes.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge those who deserve credit for this bill. The primary credit should go to those vision-impaired individuals and their families who have been screaming out for changes to the parking permit scheme for a long time. Their lives will be made a little bit easier and safer through these changes that I am putting forward in this bill. I also thank Justin Hugget for connecting me with the Brown family in Townsville and Hailey and Chayd, who are the proud parents of Aryliah and Mackenzie who were born with albinism, rendering them legally blind from birth. Credit should also be given to the organisations that advocate on behalf of the vision-impaired in Queensland. I also want to acknowledge the hard work of my KAP colleague Shane Knuth for the work he has done. He started this fight long ago and this bill reflects on the work that he has put in.

Mr Katter: Hear, hear!

Mr DAMETTO: Hear, hear! This bill sets out to expand on the current Queensland disability parking scheme criteria to include those persons with vision impairment. These amendments will make sure the scheme is fairer and more inclusive by enabling persons with specific types of sensory impairments access to disability parking zones. Under the current scheme in Queensland, if a person is vision-impaired or legally blind they do not qualify for a disability parking permit.

In 2010 a national review was conducted of disability parking schemes across all states and territories. This review resulted in the introduction of a nationally recognised disability parking permit and minimum standards for disability parking concessions. National eligibility criteria for permits were also created, known as the Australian Disability Parking Scheme. This is a scheme around mobility and assessment for this permit is focused on an applicant's functional ability to walk and excludes sensory

impairments. Eligibility in Queensland remains exclusively focused on the applicant's ability to walk which I strongly believe discriminates against those with visual impairment or those who are travelling with someone with a vision impairment in a vehicle.

The safest place for a person to park with someone who is visually-impaired in the vehicle is as close to the front door of the building as possible in a disability parking space. Currently, vision-impaired persons living in New South Wales, Tasmania, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory are able to apply for a disability parking permit under those state and territory schemes. This bill amends the Traffic Regulation 1962 and the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995. These amendments are necessary to achieve the Katter's Australian Party policy objective by expanding the criteria for those eligible to apply for a disability parking permit to those persons with a total loss of vision, permanent severe visual impairment or a temporary severe visual impairment that will last more than six months. This criteria would be assessed by a doctor. The bill also amends the Traffic Regulation 1962 by expanding the eligibility criteria for a disability parking permit to individuals who have either had a total loss of vision or impairment.

This bill is a practical way to expand the eligibility criteria and it is not anticipated that this bill will draw on any additional funds from the government's consolidated revenue. However, I do note that there may be some additional costs to departments due to processing applications. This bill is consistent with the fundamental legislative principles as defined in section 4 of the Legislative Standards Act 1992.

One of the key elements of those principles is a requirement that legislation must have sufficient regard to the rights and liberties of individuals. The provisions in this bill give additional rights to those persons with a visual impairment by enabling them to apply for a disability parking permit, removing the previous restriction which only recognises an individual's ability to walk. The amendments do not restrict or compromise any existing rights for individuals who are currently eligible to access the scheme.

During the drafting of this bill we have engaged in a consultation process with all stakeholders around the fundamental principles contained in this bill. We have worked with families of persons as well as persons who are visually-impaired and Guide Dogs Queensland, an organisation that provides vital support to help people who are blind or have low vision to experience the freedoms and independence they deserve. Guide Dogs Queensland provides personalised training and support programs to help Queenslanders who are blind and vision-impaired and is supportive of the provisions outlined in this bill.

It is Guide Dogs Queensland's position that the application of the Australian Disability Parking Scheme in Queensland to only the minimum standards does not meet the community's needs or expectations and nor does it provide a broad enough scope of inclusion with the notable exclusion of people in the community who are living with blindness or who are vision-impaired, even though they experience widely recognised mobility impairments due to their lack of vision. New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Tasmania already recognise the impact of blindness and vision impairment and how that affects mobility and recognise the rights of vision-impaired people to access a disability parking permit. This allowance builds confidence and independence for these constituents, providing them with a much safer ability for them to be able to access shops, shopping centres and navigation points at locations near those shopping centres and community facilities, greatly reducing the risk of injury.

The more inclusive scope of the Australian Disability Parking Scheme eligibility in these jurisdictions highlights a serious inequity for blind and vision-impaired Queenslanders as well as anyone who moves to Queensland because they cannot access the same support in the parking scheme offered in the locations they have moved from. This also works against the intentions of the Australian Disability Parking Scheme, which was designed to simplify and standardise access to permit holders moving between states.

In a recent Guide Dogs Queensland survey of the blind and vision-impaired clients in February 2019, 93 per cent of respondents believed their mobility and the ability to walk are impaired by their blindness and low vision. This sentiment is largely shared within the community, with over 2,300 Queensland residents signing an e-petition before the Queensland parliament which was tabled by David Batt MP on 12 February 2019. On a Facebook survey conducted by Guide Dogs Queensland, the main comments received during the time that post was up was a disbelief that blind and vision-impaired people in Queensland did not already have access to disability parking in Queensland.

Mr Knuth: Shame!

Mr DAMETTO: I take that interjection from the member for Hill. The reason for inclusion is simply that the state's definition of 'ability to walk' is too narrow and excludes a class of people who meet the criteria and intent of the scheme for those who live with blindness. This should improve their ability to be mobile within the community. A person's ability to walk and their functionality are determined by their ability to see and move freely. For a person to 'move freely', they must be able to walk in a way that is free from harm and obstruction. Sight is absolutely critical to the mobility of a person if they are to navigate their journey in a safe way. When a person loses sight, their ability to judge and evaluate risk within an environment is largely removed, impairing their ability to move freely and vastly increasing the likelihood of harm.

Guide Dogs Queensland has also said that it is essential for people who are blind or vision impaired to use mobility devices. In this case, that may mean a walking stick. It also could be a human guide or a guide dog. While negotiating a car park, when people have been given the opportunity to learn different ways to negotiate things, they use their hearing. When you are in a car park there are multiple noises, including noises from stationary or moving vehicles, bicycles and other people. It becomes very daunting for anybody who is trying to negotiate that car park.

The impact of this environment on the confidence of blind and vision impaired persons is profound. A survey done by Guide Dogs Queensland in February 2019 showed that 92 per cent of respondents reported that they do not feel safe in carparks, with 58.5 per cent responding that they do not feel safe at all and either avoid carparks altogether or will not move through carparks unassisted. Seventy-two per cent of respondents said that they required a sighted guide, which would be a guide dog or a person, to feel safe enough to move through a carpark.

Some of the problems they faced were travelling two abreast. As members would understand, if a person has a guide or a guide dog, they need to travel two abreast. It is very hard for a person who is blind or visually impaired to walk in single file. If the sighted guide is distracted at any time, that can become a huge hazard. It has resulted in blind or vision impaired being led into obstacles or even oncoming traffic because of the confusion of the guide. Travelling with children can also be very unpredictable and add stress to the parents who are trying to work in that situation. That stress is amplified by having to care for children as well as work as a guide for the person who is blind or visually impaired.

Travelling with groceries can be very difficult as well for a person who is operating as a guide for a blind or visually impaired person. Usually, people will drop off their blind or visually impaired passenger at the front door of a building, or a shopping centre, and then go to find a park. That leaves the blind or visually impaired person standing there waiting for some time, which makes them very vulnerable to being exposed to people who may rob them or have an accident while their guide is not there, which is quite humiliating. That has been reported by some people who have been put in that situation.

Other hazards that have arisen in consultation has been the width of regular car park spaces, making it near impossible to close doors or open doors wide enough to get a guide dog in or out. Narrow car parks, when a blind or visually impaired person is trying to travel two abreast with their guide, could result in mobility devices scratching or denting other cars, which can also be quite humiliating to the blind or visually impaired person who is doing the damage. As well, blind or vision impaired people could be injured by car mirrors as they try to pass through car parks. The final point that was noted in the consultation was the burning of guide dogs' feet as they had to travel long distances through hot car parks during the summer months. Including a person who is blind or visually impaired in the state's definition as a person whose ability to walk is impaired or a person with a disability as outlined in Chapter 5, titled 'Road use', section 111 of the Transport Operations (Road Use Management) Act 1995 would greatly assist blind or vision impaired people who want to access the Australian Disability Parking Scheme in Queensland.

The view of Guide Dogs Queensland is that providing access to disability parking for the blind or vision impaired members of our community would go a long way towards achieving the Queensland government's policy objective of its All Abilities Queensland: Opportunities for All program. It would also help people who live with this disability if they undertake interstate travel or wish to travel or engage in recreational sports throughout the state.

This is a non-contentious bill. It has been put forward with one simple objective in mind: to give blind or vision impaired people the right to park in a disabled parking space. Being closer to the entrance of a shopping centre or the entrance of a building makes the daily journey for people who are blind or

vision impaired safer and more dignified. Every day these people have to deal with their impairment. We in this House have the opportunity to enact this bill to make their lives a little easier.

Mr Knuth: Hear, hear!

Mr DAMETTO: I take that interjection. I thank the member. As legislators, every now and then we get to do something great. We also get to do things that I consider to be a little bit of soul food. This bill has the ability to change people's lives for the better.

First Reading

Mr DAMETTO (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (12.45 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to Transport and Public Works Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Transport and Public Works Committee.

~~LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL (IMPLEMENTING STAGE 2 OF BELCARRA) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~ELECTORAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

~~Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 2 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from p. 3234, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, and Electoral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from p. 3234, on motion of Mrs D'Ath~~

~~That the bills be now read a second time.~~

~~**Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (12.45 pm), continuing: I want to emphasise again that Queenslanders want to know about the money that is flowing to their candidates in local government elections. This bill ends the lack of transparency that exists currently and allows that information to be available for people who want to know about the candidates and where their money is coming from. This lack of transparency is what the LNP has wanted to preserve. Without real time disclosure, without all the changes that we are bringing in, we will never know about these donations in a timely fashion, or perhaps never truly know where they come from.~~

~~Local government elections are around the corner. I know that in my area—the Moreton Bay area—some people are cynical. In talking to people, some of them assume the worst in a council's motivations and perhaps in the candidate seeking election. As someone who served for many years in that council area, I hope that cynicism and that assumption of the worst can be reversed in the years to come to.~~

~~I know that many fine people, whether they are employees, or councillors, love being in local government and truly want to be part of building a better community. They want to see that rebuilding of confidence as well. The employees of councils want to create confidence in their councils and end the cynicism. If we do not bring in these Belcarra reforms, the current attitude will get worse. Cynicism will rule the roost. I already see some potential candidates in the Moreton Bay council area who want to mine that seam of cynicism and who are appealing to that cynicism in their election platform. They are only making the situation worse.~~

~~I loved my time in local government and I truly loved being able to change my community for the better. I do not want to see my local government constantly overshadowed by distrust and cynicism, by a debilitating lack of faith in its motives. These bills must be passed to rebuild confidence in our town halls and city halls. I commend these bills to the House.~~