



Speech by

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**STATE DEVELOPMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr CUMMINS** (Kawana—ALP) (12.51 p.m.): I rise to support the State Development and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2001. As has been announced by prior speakers, a lot of what is before us is a process to make simpler and more efficient the good governance of this state. I take this opportunity to mention a response to a question that is quite often asked: what is the Department of State Development and what does it do?

Much of the big picture from this department has been very positive throughout the state of Queensland. I would mention some of the successful issues that have been supported by the department, specifically on the Sunshine Coast. The Department of State Development has assisted Australian Provincial Newspapers to establish a shared services centre in Maroochydore. Australian Provincial Newspapers produces the leading local paper, the *Sunshine Coast Daily*, which obviously has a wide circulation right across the Sunshine Coast. It also produces the *Sunshine Coast Weekly* and other free community newspapers that are not as full of daily news but are more community oriented and are delivered to the vast majority of residents, whether they be in Noosa with the *Noosa News* or in Caloundra with the weekly. Those community newspapers are well received and pick up a lot of the big issues that affect people.

Australian Provincial Newspapers has established a services centre on the Sunshine Coast in preference to other areas in Australia due to the assistance provided through the Department of State Development. The Queensland Industry Centre Scheme focused on staff training and payroll incentives. The centre has made an important contribution to employment growth in the region by generating over 45 jobs on the Sunshine Coast since 1999, with further increases of a similar scale expected over coming years.

As one enters the Sunshine Coast from the south—as you would be aware, Madam Deputy Speaker—there is the most beautiful region of the Glasshouse Mountains. At the base of one of the Glasshouse Mountains is an establishment known as Moby Vic's. Moby Vic has been a service station on the way to the Sunshine Coast for as long as I can remember—

**Mr Reeves:** For years.

**Mr CUMMINS:** That is right; for years. It was situated on the old Bruce Highway, just before the Mooloolah turn-off. When the new highway was built a decade or so ago, it moved further south to the Glasshouse area.

The late Vic Walker was the originator of the company and that is why it is referred to as Moby Vic. Vic Walker was very well respected in the area. Nowadays, Moby Vic runs tours onto one of the Glasshouse Mountains, Wild Horse Mountain, which has an extremely good lookout. I believe that that is the only Glasshouse Mountain that does not have an Aboriginal name. In 1999-2000, the Department of State Development provided a regional business development scheme grant to the Walker family who proposed a theme park adjoining one of their sites on the Bruce Highway. This grant assisted Moby Vic Pty Ltd to undertake a feasibility study into the commercial viability of a major tourist

attraction theme park on the land adjacent to the service operations of the northbound Mobil Service Station.

As a former board member of Tourism Sunshine Coast, the Sunshine Coast's regional tourism authority, I realise that it is well documented that leading tourist destinations nowadays need more than sun and surf. They need places where people can venture for one or more days, such as theme parks. The Sunshine Coast, with its natural beauty, may not have or need theme parks similar in style to Dreamworld or Sea World on the Gold Coast, which are well patronised and well loved by the people of and visitors to the area. However, the Sunshine Coast needs more of a natural type of theme park and I believe that Moby Vic is trying to target this with an Australiana theme. The project is currently undergoing public consultation. While I was part of the Caloundra City Council, I realised that they were working in cooperation with the Environmental Protection Agency, the local community and other state government bodies. Obviously, the new state member would also be heavily involved. The project of Moby Vic, if or when it does go ahead, has the potential to create close to 300 new, full-time jobs in the region and private sector investment could top \$30 million.

Another project on the Sunshine Coast that was assisted by the Department of State Development was the study into the development of a commercial fishing facility providing facilities for processing, storage and sale of seafood, known as the Mooloolah River Fisheries Pty Ltd. The study identified opportunities for increased trade through an easy-access boat harbour on the Sunshine Coast, one of south-east Queensland's largest commercial fishing industries. If implemented, the project is expected to generate in trade close to \$5 million for the region and up to 50 new local job opportunities. Of course, the Mooloolah Harbour is one of the safest harbours on the eastern seaboard, obviously due to its north facing beach.

Even small amounts of funding that the Department of State Development provides can have a huge impact and positive influence on the community, and I would mention the Maleny Scarecrow Festival. The Department of State Development granted an amount to support the development of a business plan and assisted with the creation of the festival. This grant enabled the first festival to proceed, and I believe that was in about 1998. The event has grown over the years and has well in excess of 200 entries annually and attracts an extra 5,000 visitors to our region. That is a major boost to the local economy that, over the years, has been decimated by the deregulation of the milk industry and similar downturns in rural industries.

Another project that the Department of State Development assisted with was providing a regional business development scheme to Wood Fisheries Pty Ltd at Mooloolaba to undertake a feasibility study into the commercial viability of an Asian Interpretive Centre. The grant funding also assisted the proponent in the production of an investment brief for the project that targeted investment for up to \$10 million. The long-term project has the potential for significant economic benefit within the region and the development of over 150 new tourism and service industry job opportunities.

As I have mentioned numerous times in the past, I was a board member of Tourism Sunshine Coast, the regional tourist authority. The Department of State Development provided funds for a regional business development scheme to Tourism Sunshine Coast as part of the funding of the regional tourism strategy. The strategy confirmed that the value of the tourism industry to the region's economy was significant, with visitor expenditure across the region estimated to be in excess of \$1.4 billion annually. The strategy, which is now being implemented by Tourism Sunshine Coast, focused on strengthening peak body and industry leadership, generating adequate funding for regional marketing, establishing a united approach, improving communications and production coordination across the region, capitalising on the full range of the region's assets.

Before lunch I was talking about the strategy that has been partly funded by the Department of State Development via the Regional Business Development Scheme to Tourism Sunshine Coast to fund a regional tourism strategy. This strategy has been widely received across the tourism industry. The three councils involved recently invited the member for Noosa, the member for Nicklin, the member for Maroochydore and me—although the member for Maroochydore actually put in an apology on the day—to the Councils in Cooperation meeting. Those councils wish to work together to oversee the new direction that Tourism Sunshine Coast and other regional bodies will take for the future that may come under the Councils in Cooperation banner. All levels of government hopefully will agree to pull together and work in a regional sense for a better outcome. The three councils involved are the Noosa Shire Council, the Maroochy Shire Council and the Caloundra City Council. Their representatives include the various mayors, deputy mayors and chief executive officers.

Yet another positive project that was supported by the Department of State Development was a grant for a pre-feasibility study into the establishment of a high technology film industry for the Sunshine Coast region. The study has been completed with the result that further discussions between stakeholders will take place to progress the findings of the report, which indicates that the establishment

of the industry could be achieved on the Sunshine Coast as a viable regional location. Several interested parties are now seeking involvement in the project, which has the potential to provide significant skilled employment in the region. An estimated investment of \$30 million to \$50 million will be required to see this proceed.

I think all members of this House would realise that Australian film-making as an industry has a future. Not only are our actors proving their success, but many films that are made in Australia are blitzing those made elsewhere at the box office. Hopefully many parts of Australia, especially those in Queensland, can utilise the potential of our work force, the beauty of our landscapes and the various changes that can be provided within such a close area.

I wish to speak about something which has come to the Sunshine Coast and which has given many residents a great amount of hope and pride, that is, the Innovation Centre of the Sunshine Coast. It is one of the major coups to the Sunshine Coast. In August 2000, the former Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development approved a contribution of half a million dollars on behalf of the Beattie Queensland government towards the operational costs of a new technology incubator for the Sunshine Coast region, located on the campus of the University of the Sunshine Coast at Sippy Downs. This incubator has been branded the Innovation Centre Sunshine Coast.

This innovation centre will be part of a network of properly managed business incubators currently being developed across Queensland. It will be the key resource in the region for the new development of largely high technology businesses and will act as the catalyst for a technology park proposed in the newly planned Sippy Downs township. The business incubator will initially offer some 600 square metres of flexible office space, with stage 1 capable of supporting up to 19 businesses and stage 2 expected to house 40 tenants with some three staff each.

The cost of the innovation centre, funded by the University of the Sunshine Coast, is close to \$5 million. Other partners in the project include the Commonwealth government, the University of the Sunshine Coast and the local council, the Maroochy Shire Council. The innovation centre complex includes some 2,500 square metres of function space. The Honourable Premier Beattie opened the complex on 1 June. Prior to the official opening, many of us were lucky enough to attend the Sunshine Coast University graduation ceremony, where the guest of honour was Jose Ramos-Horta, a well recognised dignitary from East Timor. He spoke in a very moving way and all the attendees were very proud to listen to this brilliant but humble man.

The Department of State Development is also assisting local government authorities of Caloundra city, Noosa shire and Maroochy shire within the Sunshine Coast to identify future industrial land requirements and availability. Specific industrial land planning projects have included planning for the Caloundra Regional Business Park, including the Department of State Development land near Corbould Park and the potential future industrial estates at Sippy Creek in the development strategy.

Another project that the Department of State Development has assisted with was the Regional Business Development Scheme. Over \$150,000 was provided by the department to the Maroochy Shire Council for the development of a feasibility study into the commercial viability of a proposed arts convention centre for the Sunshine Coast. The study indicated that the performing arts and exhibition centre could be viable, and the construction would cost close to \$50 million. Such a facility would provide a focus for local and regional arts, and the cultural development would assist with the diversification of the regional economy. The Maroochy Shire Council is currently following up on the recommendations of the study, and the Department of State Development officers are working with the council to progress options for the development of the centre in due course.

I personally feel that one of the proposed sites—that being the one in central Maroochy—would probably not be best but, rather, that a site located at or near the Sunshine Coast University should be favoured. I say that because the Sunshine Coast University is in close proximity to both the Bruce Highway and other leading connecting roads such as the motorway to Kawana and south to Caloundra and the Sunshine Motorway to Mooloolaba and north to Noosa. The Maroochy area has also been earmarked as a key regional centre and has numerous issues with local land-holders, who have held a gun to the head of the council and other governments' heads for far too long. I believe that it is time to get on with a more viable alternative. In my opinion, the Sunshine Coast performing arts and exhibition centre would be best located at or near the Sunshine Coast University, making this the smart precinct for the Sunshine Coast, a region within the Smart State of Queensland.

Another project for the Sunshine Coast that I will mention involves the Regional Business Development Scheme, which granted close to \$20,000 to the Maroochy Shire Council to assist with planning for the development of industrial land at the Sunshine Coast Airport north of Maroochy. The work is part of the department's strategic approach to land use planning for the development of

future business and industry opportunity in the region, specifically in this case, those associated with the aviation industry—an issue that the Beattie Labor government will continue to pursue. As was mentioned in yesterday's budget, the aviation industry is part of our smart technology future. The Caloundra aerodrome is also a very vital part of the local community and, indeed, the Sunshine Coast, which employs many people within the aviation industry. These industries are a vital part of the community and a vital part of our future economy.

We have heard the debate in relation to Lang Park for quite a while. I fully support a new world-class facility, an arena that Queenslanders truly deserve. People from Gladstone, Rockhampton and further north, from Toowoomba and everywhere across this great state come to Brisbane for sporting events. This redevelopment was overwhelmingly supported across the state at the last election, and that is easy to judge according to the swing to this side of the House. I hope that one day those who continue to bleat about this redevelopment swallow their pride and say they were wrong, wrong, wrong, because when this redevelopment is complete it will be one of the best recognised sporting facilities not only in this state and this country but also the world. I have been lucky enough to watch Rugby League and Rugby Union in various parts of the world. Lang Park has always been the home of Rugby League for Queensland.

As a junior footballer growing up in Ipswich I remember catching the old red rattler, as we used to call it, to Milton and walking to Lang Park to watch the local match of the day. A person who is nostalgic and who has fond memories is not living in the past, but I hope one day to bring my son, Daniel, who is only two and a bit years old, to one of the leading stadiums of the world, one that every Queenslanders should be proud of. I wish those on the other side of the House would swallow their pride and get on with it.

I commend this bill to the House in the hope that all members support future employment prospects. Yes, we realise that Queensland needs jobs, jobs, jobs. These jobs will be provided by the Innovation Department and the Department of State Development as they work in close cooperation with businesses right across Queensland.

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