



Speech by

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NATIONAL TRUST OF QUEENSLAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LEE (Indooroopilly—ALP) (11.57 a.m.): It is a great pleasure to rise in support of the National Trust of Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2001. The National Trust of Queensland was a vital driving force in the long battle to establish a legislative basis for the identification and protection of places of cultural heritage significance to Queensland. While some may have considered that the introduction of the Heritage Buildings Protection Act of 1990 and the subsequent Queensland Heritage Act of 1992 would have resulted in the trust's role becoming less relevant, this was not the case.

While legislation is a useful tool in encouraging the conservation of Queensland's unique cultural heritage places, the National Trust realised that it was vital to win the hearts and minds of both individual owners of places and the broader community as to the importance of safeguarding and passing on cultural heritage places to future generations. I am particularly lucky in my electorate of Indooroopilly. I have numerous places of cultural significance. I have innumerable Queenslander houses throughout my electorate, but I would like to speak not of the well kept and well maintained buildings. I would like to speak briefly about the disgrace that is one of these houses commonly known as Irony.

It is a house to be found on a block on the corner of Clarence and Lambert Roads in the suburb of Indooroopilly. It is a very old building and I understand one which cannot be removed from the present site. However, the owner of the building seems content to let the building go to rack and ruin and so find himself in the position in which it becomes a safety risk to the rest of the community.

I think that it is absolutely disgraceful that someone who is in possession of such a beautiful and culturally significant building as this would not maintain it in the appropriate manner. I would also like to speak briefly in a more positive tone about a part of my electorate that I believe is worth mentioning. Last Monday night I attended the graduation ceremony for the year 7s at Sherwood State School, which is one of the oldest state schools in Queensland. I was joined by my parliamentary colleague the member for Mount Ommaney on that night.

Mrs Attwood: It was a good night.

Mr LEE: I take that interjection from the member for Mount Ommaney. It was a really wonderful night. Sherwood State School always puts on a good show, particularly for graduations. The principal, Mr Nelson, and his deputy, Mrs Thiris, always run a very tight ship. I was also very impressed by the way in which the school has developed, nestled as it is among some of Queensland's oldest leopard trees, which I think in themselves are of historical worth. Over the years, as the school has grown it has maintained its older buildings and its leopard trees and gum trees. The school is very proud of its old trees. The school acknowledges that, as the trees have grown so, too, has Sherwood State School.

Mrs Attwood interjected.

Mr LEE: I was actually going to speak of that. Every year Sherwood State School holds its major fundraising event known as Opera Under the Gums. The school has some very decent opera singers and parents, friends and members of the wider community come along and enjoy a couple of bottles of wine and a delightful evening of opera knowing that they are supporting the school.

This year's event was very interesting in that it took place on 10 November, which was the date of the federal election. But also on that day a significant amount of rain fell in Brisbane. The organisers

of the event were very sensible and swapped Opera Under the Gums for opera near the gums in the school hall at very short notice. It was a wonderful night. The hall was decorated in a marvellous way. The P&C and the organising team did a great job.

I return to the substance of the bill. The National Trust plays an important role, as a non-government body, in advocating good heritage conservation policy and practice to individuals, local communities, local government and state government. Through the 1990s, it has commented on many controversial heritage conservation matters. With 11,000 members, it is an important voice on these issues. It has focused in particular on providing practical advice to the owners of the unique timber and tin houses of Queensland. I am very grateful for the assistance that the National Trust has provided to my constituents, particularly those living in the suburbs of Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood, which have large numbers of timber and tin houses. The assistance of the National Trust has been no less great in Fig Tree Pocket, Indooroopilly, Taringa, St Lucia and the western portion of Toowong.

The National Trust has developed a series of technical information leaflets ranging from how to restump a house to the care and conservation of a garden setting. One of the things that makes Queensland's unique style of housing so wonderful is the way in which we can offset our beautiful timber and tin Queensland homes with a wonderful garden. The National Trust also demonstrates sound conservation practices in the repair and maintenance of its own buildings, which are open to the public. It also awards and celebrates good heritage conservation practice in Queensland through its prestigious John Herbert Awards. I think that is a very significant point to note—that the National Trust lives by the mantra that it would expect the rest of us to live by. It maintains its own buildings in a marvellous way. Over the years, I have had the pleasure of visiting a number of these buildings and I have always been impressed by how well they are maintained and how much love and care goes into their maintenance.

Accordingly, I would like to say that the proposed amendments to the National Trust of Queensland Act 1963 are important in ensuring that the problems faced by the National Trust are resolved so that this important non-government body can continue to play a vital role in the conservation of Queensland's cultural heritage. It is always wonderful when a government acknowledges that there are non-government bodies that play significant roles in our community. This is one of those bodies. It is very important for governments of whatever persuasion to acknowledge that large numbers of people in the community work in very large non-government bodies and that these bodies play a very significant role in working for the betterment of our society.

It is also particularly important that this amendment bill addresses a number of basic administrative matters for the governance of the National Trust. It will update the provisions for the establishment of the National Trust as a statutory body and articulate clearly its powers. It will also remove outdated and redundant provisions in the National Trust of Queensland Act 1963 on a range of financial and budgetary matters which are covered in the Financial Administration and Audit Act 1997, the Statutory Bodies Financial Arrangements Act 1982 and the Financial Management Standard 1997. These amendments will update and improve the governance regime of the National Trust and also assist its administration.

As a member of this fine government, I am pleased to be able to support a bill of this nature. I commend the minister for the work that has gone into the bill. I would also like to commend the department for it. In closing, I think that it is appropriate, having mentioned the Sherwood State School, that I pass on my best wishes not just to the year 7s from Sherwood State School but also the year 7s from the other schools in Queensland as they graduate tomorrow. I am pleased to support the bill.