



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

Hansard Wednesday, 19 April 2006

MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (3.34 pm): I rise to comment on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill. The bill seeks to enable the use of major sports facilities for a special event and to allow a concert to be held at Suncorp Stadium. This bill is required as the development approval for Suncorp does not provide for the use of the facility for concerts. In fact, there is a specific condition in the development approval which precludes the use of the facility for major concerts, cultural or religious events.

The explanatory notes recognise that obtaining the required approval for the use of Suncorp Stadium for a concert and amending the conditions of the development approval could take several months. We need to understand why the government put in place what they are now wanting to change. In the lead-up to the 2001 election when Labor was under pressure in the seat of Mount Coot-tha it said, in order to appease the local residents and grab some last minute votes, that it would implement a strict set of criteria and also limit the number of times that the stadium would be used and events that it would be used for.

A restriction on concerts and other events was a resulting condition for development approval. The Premier claimed after the election that he then had a mandate to build the stadium—notwithstanding that that single issue candidate campaigning against the stadium got a sizeable vote—because his candidate, the Australian Labor Party's Wendy Edmond, won the seat. Here is what Premier Beattie said in *Hansard* on 20 June 2001—

The reality is that prior to the last election there was considerable and substantive debate about the redevelopment of Suncorp Metway Stadium. There was considerable debate on the ABC about it and in the papers. In that election campaign we received a mandate to redevelop this site.

Can I say to the Premier that he did gain the approval from the electorate to redevelop the site but that redevelopment was only accepted because it was subject to conditions. The Premier went on to say—

My wife and I lived near this site for around 17 years. I am in a better position than anyone in this House to make a judgement about Suncorp Metway Stadium. I lived near it. I know exactly what it means for the lives of the people locally. I know exactly what the issues here are. I know that a properly managed and properly organised Suncorp Metway Stadium is compatible with the local community.

This properly managed and properly organised stadium was to be achieved through conditions placed on its use, the conditions which this bill aims to erode. This Labor government is now being dishonest and sly and I hope that the Liberal candidate, James Mackay, lets everyone know about its duplicity and change of heart. The lesson to be learnt here the hard way by the people in Mount Coot-tha and indeed Queensland is that this government has no problem with making promises in the lead-up to an election and then going back on these promises.

If the government wants to run a cyclone benefit concert an admirable event it should do it at ANZ Stadium, a venue that has been accepted as appropriate for concerts. The government should not cloak itself in the sense that it is doing the honourable thing for Cyclone Larry victims when it is being duplicitous.

The bill will amend the act by providing for the use of a major sports facility for one or more concerts, public assemblies or religious events—note that: one or more. This bill does not limit the number of these significant events to one or two or even three. This bill will allow this government—which will probably get excited by the amount of money the Major Sports Facilities Authority can make—to hold as many of these concerts, public assemblies and religious events as it wants despite making promises to the electorate of Mount Coot-tha that it would protect their enjoyment of land from such events through imposing conditions on its use. The government is once again disregarding its promises at appreciable cost to the people of Paddington, Toowong, Milton, Bardon, Auchenflower, Petrie Terrace and Red Hill.

One concert could become 10 and eventually it will be open slather. I am aware that I am drawing a lot of attention to the fact that clause 7 seeks to redefine special events as one or more concerts, public assemblies or religious events but this clause is much broader than the Premier suggested it was. Let us recall what the Premier said in his second reading speech—

The proposal to hold a ...

I say again, 'a'—

... major concert featuring Australian and international performers at Suncorp Stadium to raise relief funds to help the community of north Queensland.

This bill goes much further than this in providing the ability for one or more like events. This is something we should have expected. The current member for Mount Coot-tha indicated as much in this House on 30 March. The member recognised that at the time of redevelopment the former minister for sport and the former Lord Mayor both opposed concerts and cultural and religious events being held in the stadium. The member for Mount Coot-tha went on to question why the stadium should be restricted to football fans only and he confirmed that again today. Maybe the member should ask his electorate why they did not want concerts then and why they still do not want them now. It is very possible that the holding of such events will impact adversely upon neighbouring residents and businesses. Let us also recognise that the redevelopment of Lang Park was accepted by the electorate after the conditions excluding concerts and like events were put in place. Now we have an amendment given to us today to allow sound checks and rehearsals and their attendant noise. The Beattie government should respect the promises it made to the people of Mount Coot-tha and hold worthy special events in the venues that have been designated for them. Suncorp Stadium has not been designated for them.

Finally, I want to refer to the *Courier-Mail* and what it said just after the 2001 election for which the redevelopment of Lang Park was an issue. It states—

Although 'mandate' already has been used in the media, I hope the Government does not assume that its ... victory in the state election gives it a mandate to pass any legislation and do anything it likes, regardless of the consequences. I hope that the result will allow the Government to get on with the job in a sensible and co-ordinated way, remembering that people want their Government to look after them rather than walk over them. What will happen with Suncorp Stadium will truly be a test of their sincerity.

How true this statement from a *Courier-Mail* journalist remains.