




Speech by

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REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—LNP) (3.58 pm): I rise to speak to the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which seeks to lay the legislative groundwork for the limitation of the revenue management system, or RMS, that is being developed by the Office of State Revenue. In the minister's second reading speech the honourable Treasurer said that this legislation would make the administration of Queensland revenue laws as simple and as efficient as possible. One thing that Queensland is learning is that when this government does anything, it is never simple and it is hardly efficient.

We have seen how well this government implements systems that are supposed to streamline and integrate the layers upon layers of bureaucracy that are crippling our Public Service. This government has spent millions and millions of taxpayers' dollars streamlining the Queensland Health payroll system and is now spending hundreds of millions of dollars more trying to fix this monumental failure. This government has spent millions of dollars streamlining the weapons licensing system and will now have to spend more fixing it while the delays of licence approvals threaten the livelihood of businesses.

We have seen failure after failure with this government's attempts to streamline the tidal wave of bureaucracy threatening to choke the economy of the state only to create further chaos. The old, tired methods of applying bureaucratic solutions to real world problems are wearing this state into the ground and are trying the patience of Queenslanders, who are sick of watching the cost of living rise due to this government's stuff-ups.

This legislation amends the Aboriginal Land Act 1991. The amendments to the Aboriginal Land Act include five Cape York national parks as transferable Aboriginal land, allowing joint state and Aboriginal management of the parks. The insertion of section 83LA into the act will mean that five additional national parks on Cape York Peninsula—Mungkan Kandju, Lakefield, Iron Range, Cape Melville and Flinders Group—and defined areas near those parks will be made transferable. The amendments will also assist in increasing the areas of Iron Range and Lakefield national parks. Lakefield National Park is a major tourist destination. This legislation seeks to place this and other national parks under joint Aboriginal and state management and to increase the size of Lakefield and Iron Range national parks.

Why is this government pushing on with its agenda of locking up more of Queensland when it is unable and unwilling to implement management strategies for existing national parks? I have also been contacted by constituents and visitors to my electorate who are angry that they can no longer book camp sites at Lakefield in advance. This reflects the mismanagement that is occurring in national parks across the state. These national parks are supposed to be a drawcard for tourism—both interstate tourists and locals. This is one of the many issues arising from the mismanagement of national parks, and it must be addressed rather than lumped onto Aboriginal groups who enter into a shared management arrangement.

The state government is now spending up to \$58 million purchasing more national parks, yet at the same time it does not have management plans for the majority of Queensland's national parks. We are talking about handing over land to the Aboriginals. These are wide, big, open spaces. They are massive areas. These national parks are full of noxious weeds, feral animals, rubber vine and lantana. There is no

management control of pigs, yet one boar can spread weeds from one end of the park to the other, and overnight one boar can tear up up to a quarter of an acre like a rotary hoe. These issues are not being addressed. While the government talks about extending more national parks, horse riders are being kicked out of state forests. It is very hypocritical when we have a management problem, we have a noxious weed problem and we have a feral animal problem.

The Auditor-General stated that only 98 of the 576 national parks have a management plan.

Dr Douglas: Seventeen per cent.

Mr KNUTH: That is only 17 per cent. So why are we purchasing more national parks? I think this needs to be debated, because it is serious issue, especially when the government is creating more national parks but is kicking park users out of these areas and when the issues of feral animals and noxious weeds are not being addressed. It is not benefiting anybody.

This bill also facilitates changes to Seqwater. It facilitates the proposed merger of WaterSecure and Seqwater. Back in 1989 or 1990, the then government recognised that South-East Queensland did not have enough water to last us for another 20 years, so Wolffdene Dam was proposed. Then Wayne Goss came along and opposed Wolffdene Dam, as did Peter Beattie. That has brought us to the point we are at now and that is why we have the changes proposed in this bill. South-East Queensland almost ran out of water so Peter Beattie flew over Traveston Crossing, put his hand on his heart and said, 'I will build my dam there.' It had nothing to do with water security; it was all about saving his political hide at the 2006 election. Then we had the water crisis and the energy crisis and the health crisis. This is why we have the \$85 billion debt. It has nothing to do with the global financial crisis.

This legislation also provides the Local Government Change Commission with greater discretion to call for submissions and to conduct hearings about boundary changes. This is intended to be used for minor, non-controversial changes. When former Premier Peter Beattie handed down the proposal for forced council amalgamations we did not hear a pin drop in this House because we could not believe it. The backbenchers could not believe it because they were not told about it. It was probably one of the greatest attacks in our history not only on rural and regional Queensland but on the whole of Queensland, because local councils were the engines that drove the communities. They were locals. They were part of the community. They worked with the community and participated in the community. But we are now seeing councils covering 60,000 square kilometres. We knew that there would be chaos and that it would be a catastrophe. We knew that. We tried to tell the government, but now it has failed legislation that we are trying to amend. It was a bad decision in the first place.