




Speech by

Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Hansard Wednesday, 22 August 2012

MINES LEGISLATION (STREAMLINING) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.08 pm): I rise to support the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Bill 2012 which aims to provide legislative changes necessary to clarify the legislative framework relating to compulsory acquisition of land as it relates to resource interests; confirm and clarify current jurisdictional arrangements for the regulation of hazardous chemicals, major hazard facilities and operating plants; and provide increased regulatory certainty for Queensland's emerging CSG-LNG industries.

I will be brief as I wish to talk in particular in relation to the Streamlining Approvals Project section of the bill. As this bill will amend some 17 pieces of legislation, in my role as Assistant Minister for Regulatory Reform, I believe this bill goes a long way to help address the current high level of red tape and regulatory overburden within the mining industry and will allow us as a state to develop and deliver a more modern and efficient regulatory framework that will encourage these organisations to grow within our state.

The mining industry is one of the four pillars identified by our LNP Newman led government to drive economic growth and prosperity in our state. Therefore, it is vitally important that this legislation reflects this agenda and assists rather than hinders the resources sector. This bill will enable the state's paper based tenure administration system to be modernised to an online environment. It is pleasing to see that one of these initiatives is the establishment of MyMinesOnline, a web based system that will do away with the cumbersome paper based systems that were restricting the flow of information to stakeholders. While this system will reduce regulation and red tape, I would like to emphasise that it will not reduce the rigorous assessment system that is necessary for sustainable and appropriate resource management. This brings us in line with other Australian states, such as Western Australia and New South Wales, which are also moving towards online systems. It is about time that a Queensland government did something to encourage resource companies to invest in this state. By retaining and improving the investment attractiveness of our great state, the Queensland community can take full advantage and reap the economic benefits that flow from the current resources demand.

This bill will allow for a four- to six-week saving by transferring the power to grant mining leases from the Governor in Council to the minister. This is a process change that will save time in getting projects started. It will also save months over the Christmas-New Year period when the Executive Council does not meet. This power will provide many benefits to both industry and government as it will allow for faster and more predictable time frames along with a consistent legislative approach for all tenure approvals, both in Queensland and Australia. It also allows for the situation where an applicant is unreasonably delaying the assessment process which can often deter investment from other bona fide parties. It is a good move forward.

The dealing provisions will reduce the assessment burden on transactions that have little or no risk to the state. We can also process transactions for all tenure types, not just for coal or petroleum. The state can also focus its effort on the assessment of high-value projects by reducing the assessment time frames and allowing companies that wish to invest in our state greater certainty and transparency. This bill also reduces the assessment times for mining claims and leases and the burden on the court system will therefore be reduced.

Amendments clarify that an application may be remitted back to a mining registrar if all objections to the application have been withdrawn prior to a Land Court hearing starting. This obviously not only saves time and money for both industry, government and the employees involved but also will allow projects to start sooner if granted.

As I have already mentioned, I believe this bill goes a long way to reducing red tape for our vital investors into this state. It will also increase security for landholders and the industry as a whole. It will encourage more timely decision making by government and provide more certainty. It will allow Queensland to become open for business and drive the vital economic growth that is much needed. I congratulate the minister for his hard work in bringing this bill to the House in this vital time. It is with that I commend the bill to the House.