



Speech by

Ian Rickuss

MEMBER FOR LOCKYER

Hansard Thursday, 15 November 2012

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LAND HOLDING BILL: MOTION

Mr RICKUSS (Lockyer—LNP) (4.48 pm): I rise to briefly outline why this motion cannot be supported. It is just outrageous. This opposition should be called the PPP opposition—not 'public-private partnership' but 'politicians professionally procrastinating', because they perpetually procrastinate on issues. They had 20 years to try to tidy up this issue.

Mrs Miller: It was your bill in 1985.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba.

Mr RICKUSS: Could you please give me some protection, Madam Deputy Speaker?

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Lockyer has the call.

Mr RICKUSS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I am glad of your protection. As the minister has just said, this bill will give Indigenous communities freehold title. The transcripts of the meetings of both of the committees the member referred to show that they all want freehold title. The only way they can get it is for this bill to progress. We on this side of the House will organise the surveying of these communities so that this issue can be progressed. We cannot progress without this legislation. I refer to the discussion paper *Providing freehold title in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities*, released by the minister today. This is the first step in moving this whole process forward. This government wants to make continual advancements for Aboriginal communities. Unfortunately, the opposition has held them back for 20 years. It made no effort to assist them. It is an absolute disgrace.

Those opposite talked about community consultation. The committee sent out 1,600 letters—to all of the Torres Strait Islander residents on the electoral roll. We consulted with everyone in the Torres Strait. We wrote to everyone on the electoral roll, simply because some of the councils were not being overly helpful in terms of some of the issues up there. The community at large wants to get on board with this.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Mr RICKUSS: I know that the member for Bundamba gets on so well with her local council and finds that it is very efficient. There will always be issues of representation.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, I have asked you to allow members to make their contributions. They are not taking your interjections. Please follow my direction. The member for Lockyer has the call.

Mr RICKUSS: Thank you for your protection again, Madam Deputy Speaker. The whole process is almost inane. Why would you try to move this back and delay the process—a process that will move Indigenous communities forward? I fully support this bill and I fully support the minister's recommendations.