



Speech by  
**Hon. Jeff Seene**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

Hansard Thursday, 1 November 2012

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BILL**

**Message from Governor**

**Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (11.43 am): I present a message from Her Excellency the Governor.

The Deputy Speaker read the following message—

MESSAGE

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BILL 2012

*Constitution of Queensland 2001, section 68*

I, PENELOPE ANNE WENSLEY AC, Governor, recommend to the Legislative Assembly a Bill intituled—

A Bill for an Act about economic development and development for community purposes, to repeal the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007, to make consequential amendments to this Act and the Acts mentioned in schedule 1, and to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011, the South Bank Corporation Act 1989, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971, the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and the Acts mentioned in schedule 2 for particular purposes.

(Sgd)

GOVERNOR

Date: 30 OCT 2012

Tabled paper: Message, dated 30 October 2012, from Her Excellency the Governor, recommending the Economic Development Bill 2012 [[1486](#)].

**Introduction**

**Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (11.44 am): I present a bill for an act about economic development and development for community purposes, to repeal the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007, to make consequential amendments to this act and the acts mentioned in schedule 1, and to amend the Disaster Management Act 2003, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Environmental Protection (Greentape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2012, the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011, the South Bank Corporation Act 1989, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971, the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 and the acts mentioned in schedule 2 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Economic Development Bill 2012 [[1487](#)].

Tabled paper: Economic Development Bill 2012, explanatory notes [[1488](#)].

The bill I present today is primarily a process bill. It is a bill for an act to facilitate economic development and development for community purposes in Queensland. The bill repeals the Industrial Development Act 1963 and the Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007, and integrates the powers and functions of the existing Minister for Industrial Development Queensland and the Urban Land Development Authority into one single act. The bill establishes the Minister for Economic Development Queensland, MEDQ, a corporation sole, to replace the Minister for Industrial Development Queensland, a corporation sole which has existed since 1963. It provides the MEDQ with the ability to deal commercially in land, property and infrastructure to encourage economic development and development for community purposes. This reform recognises the synergies between the two entities that existed under the former model and will allow for improved operational efficiencies.

Operationally, the new entity—Economic Development Queensland, EDQ—will assume responsibility for bringing developments to market under the guidance and direction of a board and the MEDQ. The EDQ, a commercialised business unit of the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning, will exercise functions of the MEDQ by delegation. Economic Development Queensland will continue the same commercial arrangements and operation as the existing Property Services Group in the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. It will continue the same activities currently undertaken by the Urban Land Development Authority. Transitioning the planning and development powers and activities of the Urban Land Development Authority to the MEDQ will help deliver on the government's policy of winding back the current operations of the authority.

The bill provides for the declaration of development areas for the purpose of planning and development in discrete sites—just as the former ULDA legislation did. The MEDQ will have the ability to establish local representative committees on a case-by-case basis, providing a mechanism for local government engagement in planning and development assessment activities of the MEDQ in a way that the former government never did with the former ULDA.

The governance arrangements established in the bill incorporate a board of up to six members called the Economic Development Board. It also establishes the Commonwealth Games Infrastructure Authority, a board that will work with the MEDQ through the Economic Development Board. Through the governance arrangements in the bill, the powers and functions of the MEDQ will be utilised for the planning and development of the 2018 Commonwealth Games Village and other venues so that our state may meet its obligations in regard to the Commonwealth Games.


The bill amends the South Bank Corporation Act 1989 to transition the statutory planning powers of the South Bank Corporation to the Brisbane City Council in accordance with the government's election commitment. The bill also amends the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971 to clarify and streamline the powers of the Coordinator-General. Important amendments will deliver more robust criteria for deciding which projects should be Coordinator-General projects and streamline environmental impact statement processes, to name just two examples. The bill will also make changes to the titles of such things as 'projects of state significance' and 'infrastructure facilities of significance' to prevent proponents from using these declarations to wrongly indicate that they have some level of state support when those declarations do not afford that state support.

The bill recognises that the work of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority in rebuilding vital community infrastructure needs to continue. The bill will ensure that the tenure of the authority is extended by extending the expiry date of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011 to 30 June 2014. The authority will then cease, in line with the government's previous commitment.

The bill also amends the Environmental Protection Act 1994 and the Disaster Management Act 2003 to implement specific recommendations from the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry report. These amendments provide for the issue of temporary emissions licences to allow for temporary discharges as part of the response to an emergency event, including after an emergency has ended. These amendments will also define the term 'emergency' and permit an emergency direction to be given orally to address other recommendations of the report. Furthermore, the amendments will enable the chief executive of the department of community safety to appoint an officer of Emergency Management Queensland to direct State Emergency Service operations in extraordinary circumstances.

The essential reforms to existing planning and development legislation contained in this bill will put the government in a position to facilitate economic development and development for community purposes and to deliver our election commitments, particularly where there are identified and persistent market gaps. Our government has committed to building a four-pillar economy for Queensland. Enacting the Economic Development Bill will equip us with the legislative tools necessary to identify and drive development projects that contribute to a strong and sustainable state economy by combining the powers of the former ULDA and the former Minister for Industrial Development. I commend the bill to the House.

## First Reading

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (11.52 am): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

## Referral to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee.

## Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (11.52 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 136 the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee report to the House on the Economic Development Bill by 22 November 2012.

I want to make a few comments about the motion that I have moved, which will ensure this bill is reported upon by the committee and is available for this House to consider before Christmas. It is important that this bill be considered before Christmas. I want to make some broader comments about the committee structure and some of the nonsense commentary that I have heard in this chamber in the last six or seven months since the government changed.

I was part of a committee that put in place the committee structure that we currently have in the parliament. For the benefit of the members who were not here during previous parliaments, I say that the committee structure we have now is a very new concept. The previous committees never considered legislation. They never considered legislation at all. They never had a chance to consider legislation and, therefore, were seen by many long-serving members in this House as having very little real role in the parliamentary process.

A bipartisan committee made up of eight senior members of this House put together a new committee structure that was completely different from the old one and enabled committees to consider legislation and, more than that, enabled interest groups and the general public to have input into that legislation. The committee consisted of long-serving members of the opposition—people such as Mike Horan, the former member for Toowoomba South; my colleague Lawrence Springborg; and me. It also consisted of long-serving members of the then Labor government—people such as the former member for Rockhampton, Robert Schwarten, and the former leader of the House, Judy Spence. These were people who understood the parliamentary process and had a lot of respect for this parliament. We designed a committee system that allowed for considerable input from members, stakeholders and general members of the community into the legislative process.

However, it was never intended that every piece of legislation would go through the same process before the committee. It was always recognised that that committee process had more relevance to some particular pieces of legislation than others. It was always recognised that there would be urgent legislation that would not go to the committees at all, that would go the same way as legislation in this House has gone for the last 20, 30, 40, 50 years in that it is introduced and then it is debated. There is that classification of legislation which is part of the government's agenda which is considered urgent enough to be debated in the House. It was also always recognised that there was another layer of legislation that would go to the committee for a relatively short period to undergo the types of checks that the former subordinate legislation committee used to do—to run those sorts of checks over the legislation. In this motion that I am moving I am suggesting that this bill falls into that category.

The committee structure was really set up for the next layer of consideration of, if you like, the sort of legislation that had a broad public interest. We wanted to provide an opportunity for the public generally and interest groups in particular to have an input into that type of legislation. That is the sort of legislation that it was always envisaged would spend a considerable amount of time with the committee. The committee could then, at its own discretion, create an opportunity for submissions from the public; create an opportunity for public hearings if they felt they were necessary; and go through the processes that I

know committees are undertaking at the moment in particular instances in which they are travelling widely across the state and examining issues that are part of the legislation.

The bill before the House that I have introduced is not one of those; it is a process bill. It is not introducing new concepts or new powers; it is combining two pieces of pre-existing legislation. It is also introducing things that are urgent—things like our ability to deal with our commitments to the Commonwealth Games, our ability to respond to the flood inquiry and our need to extend the term of the Reconstruction Authority. It is very appropriate that this bill not spend a long time before the committee. It is not a bill that requires those types of examinations. It is not a bill that requires the detailed public submissions and detailed opportunities for public input that some of the other bills that are currently before the House do.

I am certain that we will see the same nonsense comment from the opposition and from some members of the media who do not understand the committee system that the bipartisan committee made up of senior members of this parliament put in place. As I move this motion today I want to ensure that this bill does proceed through this House before Christmas in order to meet those responsibilities that the government has. I want to make the point that that is the way the system was designed to work.

If members of the opposition in this place today had the same political maturity as the members from both sides of the House who designed this committee system, they would understand and support the motion that I have moved and they would understand and support the concept of bills requiring different levels of scrutiny by the committee depending on their urgency, depending on the degree of new concepts that are introduced in those bills and depending on the opportunity that should exist for public input. I know that hoping for that political maturity from the opposition members who sit in here at the moment may well be a hope in vain, but I refer them to some of the comments that were made by their political colleagues who were on the committee that reviewed the committee system during the term of the last parliament. I would refer them to some of the contributions that were made in this House when we passed the legislation to set up this committee structure.

It was never designed for oppositions to play politics with. It was a bipartisan attempt to ensure that this chamber produced better legislation and that the people of Queensland had an opportunity to have input into that legislation when it was legislation that it was appropriate to consult widely upon. There are a number of pieces of legislation before this House at the moment where it is appropriate to consult widely. It is appropriate, as my colleague the member for Mirani is doing in one particular instance, to travel widely across the state talking to people about the issues that a bill encompasses. I will be introducing legislation into this House in the very near future that sets up the GasFields Commission. That is a bill which specifically requires a lot of public consultation. In contrast to what I am doing today, in that instance I will be suggesting to the committee that it takes a long time to consult, that it takes a long time to give everybody an opportunity to have input, that it seeks submissions and that it talks to all stakeholders, because that is what the committee system was designed to do.

But the committee system was never designed to curtail the government's agenda, to prevent the government from meeting its obligations with regard to urgent issues or from meeting its obligations with regard to particular responsibilities such as the Commonwealth Games, such as the flood inquiry and such as the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. So I have moved the motion to ensure the committee reports to this House by 22 November 2012 to ensure this bill does pass through the House before the end of the parliamentary year so that the government does meet its commitments with regard to each of those things. I say to the opposition that it should try to attain the levels of political maturity that were demonstrated in the committee that designed this committee structure and understand that the proper processes of this House will be fulfilled by the motion that I have moved today.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.