




Speech by

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MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Hansard Wednesday, 22 August 2012

MINES LEGISLATION (STREAMLINING) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (4.59 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Mines Legislation (Streamlining) Amendment Bill 2012. This bill will bring about much needed change in Queensland's approach to regulation, compulsory acquisition, implementation of the streamlining project, clarifying jurisdictional arrangements in relation to hazardous chemicals and operating facilities and providing regulatory certainty for all parties involved in the emerging coal seam gas to liquefied natural gas industry. The resources industry is a significant employer of Queenslanders. Countless residents of my electorate of Logan are reliant on the growth of this sector. This amendment bill ensures that the continued growth of the mining and resources industry gets the strongest possible legislative support that it deserves.

The need to streamline the resources industry in Queensland can bring about the next evolution in a key economic sector within our state. The need to have an effective, seamless and proactive industry can come about only with the most practical and supportive legislation. After three independent reports on the resources industry's need to improve efficiency and the regulatory framework for the sector, this amendment bill will see that those targets highlighted in the report are met, which will help to continue the growth of this vital industry.

All industries in today's dynamic and robust resources market need to be readily accessible for their local, regional and global partners. A key recommendation of the streaming approvals project is the establishment of online delivery platforms. Through stringent security checks and balances, this interactive and responsive ability for the sector to engage with consumers, providers and government entities puts the resources sector at the forefront of the global market. Through the modernisation of online services, as I have previously mentioned, we will see Australia, and in particular those elements of the resources industry that call Queensland home, lead this sector for decades to come. This modernisation brings about a more efficient operating procedure, such as designating powers that will allow the department and its respective chief executive to take appropriate steps without the referral of the mining registrar.

This amendment bill will also see the streamlining process improved through the reduction of the initial term of a mining claim from 10 years down to five years in an effort to support small scale mining, improve resource stewardship, consolidate administrative processes and requirements in relation to mineral and coal exploration, clarify access arrangements for exploration, ensure that all applications comply with legislative requirements and reduce the assessment times by streamlining the process of the Land Court referrals. These measures are on track with our government's commitment to reducing red tape, creating smaller government and thus restoring government accountability.

These initiatives, which are key to the streamlining process, will see greater flexibility when dealing with departments and, ultimately, will pave the way for a stronger market and better growth within Queensland, all of which would not be achievable if it were not for the legislative reforms that we speak to today. Queensland can be a vibrant, bustling state for years to come. Our potential to expand our natural resource market is limitless. Over the past several years the growth in the mining industry not only in Queensland but across the country has seen an unprecedented boom since the pioneering years of our nation's birth. With this growth we have seen more jobs and more infrastructure for our citizens. Our ability

to be a strong factor in the international market in the natural resources industry has been proven time and time again.

But as the market expands, as the need for our resources expand, both domestically and abroad, we must allow that very industry to expand with it. In allowing this industry to expand, we must facilitate that need by providing support both in the form of legislation and on-the-ground action. For an industry to expand, especially one like the mining industry, we need to construct the very provisions that allow this industry to be a globally connected enterprise. This is not limited to the establishment of a strong transportation network linking Queensland's mining regions to our international ports. In order to accommodate this rapid expansion, we need to provide the right legislation to enable both enterprise and governments to work in conjunction with the community to secure the economic development of our state. To achieve this, we need a responsive and understanding approach to compulsory acquisition. Currently, compulsory acquisition in Queensland lacks the clarity that is required to keep track of the progressive rate at which our state and the mining industry evolves. This bill will see that the laws currently in place that govern resumptions and acquisitions of land and resources align with government policy.

Another key area that this bill seeks to rectify is the approach to regulating the coal seam gas to liquefied natural gas industry. This industry is an emerging sector that has a strong future as part of the economic future of our state and our nation as a whole. The legislation that exists currently was developed in order to facilitate the production and exploration of petroleum. As CSG continues to evolve as an emerging resource, the need to refine the current legislation in order to facilitate that growth should be a priority in supporting the natural resource sector in Queensland. The existing legislation lacks the necessary flexibility to allow the unexpected production of this product. In an industry that is reliant on its very ability to meet deadlines and production levels, this lack in capability must be corrected. The inability to adjust production commencement dates hampers our ability to be a leading state in the production and shipment of the product to markets around the world. This legislative handicap must be rectified and this amendment bill does just that.

A shortcoming with the current legislation is its failure to support the efficient transportation and treatment of CSG water and brine between regions, which leads to the development of common-use water treatment and brine facilities in permitted areas. To address this failure, the amendment bill will generate greater adaption in this sector, which will see the shipment and processing of the CSG water and brine. Furthermore, this amendment will allow for more innovative solutions to be generated when addressing the shortcomings that pertain to the transportation and treatment of CSG water and brine. This solution will bring about the ability for the industry to more easily comply with government policy towards CSG water management.

Proponents of CSG are seeking a way to negate the current easement issues with landowners that are affected by the presence of pipeline routes. It is essential that, with the expansion of the CSG network, an amicable agreement is reached between landowners and proponents of the industry. It is also essential that security for the pipeline infrastructure is ensured and that there is longevity of the presence of the pipeline when land titles change hands, integrity of the land register and, most importantly, a strong safety record protecting the community, landowners and the future of the CSG sector.

In all industries, the implementation of stringent occupational health and safety guidelines is a must when it comes to protecting the boots on the ground. To quote an occupational health and safety tag of the Royal Australian Air Force, 'We do dangerous things safely.' This quote could be more appropriately styled to the resources industry. Across-the-board, Australia has a proud record in implementing workplace safety. A tribute to that record is the provision in this bill to continue to support the existing regulation following the enactment of the national work safety law. This bill also clarifies the application of workplace chemicals and operating facilities. With this all-round precaution, yet practical approach to workplace safety, the protection of everyday Australian workers and the members of the public surrounding the resources industry will have the best possible legislation behind it.

This amendment bill is quintessential to our state's growth, both domestically and internationally. If our state wishes to continue to be an active party in the global resources market, we need to support that very industry with the right legislation and will not let the countless thousands of Queenslanders who are employed by the resources sector slip behind the eight ball. The benefits that will come from this amendment will have untold value in the future. With jobs and economic growth so strong in the resources sector and the need to build our economy, a strong industry means a strong economy, which means a stronger Queensland for tomorrow. The ripple effect that this amendment bill will have across-the-board will bring about a more robust, skilled and prosperous Queensland, with constituents such as those within my electorate of Logan, who are active partners in our resources industry, to gain the most out of this sector and a strengthening of our local and state economies. It gives me great pleasure to commend this bill to the House.