



Speech by


**Michael Pucci**

**MEMBER FOR LOGAN**

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## **ANIMAL CARE AND PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (7.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Animal Care and Protection and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. This bill will seek to bring a balance to animal protection on Indigenous land that is practised by the broader community whilst at the same time preserve the sacred traditions observed by the traditional owners of this fair land. Our government, in response to concerns from across our community in regard to cruelty by rogue hunters towards animals on native land, seeks to introduce legislation that not only allows traditional owners to reserve this part of their heritage but also bring about security and protection of the animals and marine life that also inhabit this great land of ours. This legislation will also see Queensland come into line with similar legislation endorsed and successfully implemented in our sister states.

For too long this state has lagged behind other governments throughout our country. For years the community lobbied the former government to bring about necessary amendments, yet time and time again it refused. Once again within the first six months of the LNP government we are making good on our election promise to address the pressing needs facing animal protection in this state. This bill does not seek to impede by any means the traditional ways practised by the original owners of this land. It seeks to provide the much-needed balance between preserving their stoic traditional hunting methods and current legislation that is in place across the nation that regulates the humane methods when hunting on our shores.

In society today many of our cultural values, traditions and observances are being put aside as we steam headfirst into a technological age of innovation and efficiency. In that forward push we run the risk of losing elements of our heritage that define who we are and that have shaped us as a people. We must endeavour to hold onto those very practices and, at the same time, well knowing that as a society our attitudes towards what once was common practice do change. It is our responsibility to pass on those traditions and the skills that come with them to our younger generations who are set to follow us in the very footsteps that we forge. We must commit ourselves to ensuring that those traditions we pass on are in keeping with how society as a whole undergoes an attitudinal change towards what was once accepted methods of hunting. If we lose hold of these traditions we lose part of our very own identity. Saying this, we must also act accordingly within contemporary times and continue to grow as a society that recognises a need for a progressive approach towards hunting in the modern era. We must approach all aspects of hunting with a reasonable and balanced attitude that accommodates the need to preserve traditions at the same time ensuring that endangered creatures like sea turtles and dugong are protected under appropriate legislation.

This bill does not seek to remove the rights of traditional hunters. It does not seek to prohibit, obstruct or limit the right to practise their methods, what this bill does provide is the assurance that cruel and unnecessary methods of hunting are stamped out. It also seeks to ensure that only appropriate levels of native life are hunted and that the survival of these endangered species is assured. We must endeavour to continue our commitment towards protecting the national wildlife of our great country. We must ensure

that these creatures will be living off our land and in our oceans for generations to come so that all Australians can appreciate their existence.

With this bill a reasonable balance will be struck, allowing the regulated practice of hunting by our Indigenous population. With the implementation of this amendment a change in culture will occur. For those found to be entrenched in using practices that would now be considered illegal, a grace period where they would not automatically be prosecuted would be in place. Instead, programs with local Indigenous groups liaising with the Department of Fisheries will be in place to work with the community in relation to the new changes to the legislation. During the initial stages of this legislative amendment only in cases of either repeat offenders or extreme brutality will offenders be taken straight to prosecution. To make such a significant change in the approach a culture takes towards its own practices will not occur overnight, but with supportive programs and assistance from the local community groups the smoothness in transition will occur. After 12 months of this legislation being in place the committee recommends that a review occur to ensure that the legislation has been successfully implemented and is meeting with its objectives whilst not creating a negative impact on the traditional practices observed on our land. It is through these initiatives that an equal balance between preservation and tradition will occur, strengthening both elements of traditional hunting. It is for this reason that I am proud to support this bill and commend it to the House.