




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS (FAIR WORK ACT HARMONISATION NO. 2) AND
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (8.07 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Industrial Relations (Fair Work Act Harmonisation No. 2) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill seeks to achieve a number of objectives, but there is one in particular that I wish to focus on today and that is the proposed amendments to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990.

Many members of this House would have heard me speak of my passion for this government's commitment to reduce red tape and regulation by 20 per cent, recognising the time and money that this can save for all businesses, which flows through to all Queenslanders. If members have any doubt about the need for this task or my enthusiasm, I would just say that when we came to office Queenslanders were subject to more than a quarter of a million government regulations that had been built up over years and years of toxic Labor government. That is why I am pleased to focus on those elements of the bill that aim to reduce the cost to businesses, in particular small businesses, when they require government decisions to be made. Currently, orders for trading hours for non-exempt shops, exhibitions and special displays need to be determined by the full bench of the QIRC.

This approach obviously limits the expediency with which the QIRC can consider applications in some cases. If I can give you a perfect example, it may be for a certain shopping precinct to put an application in to have extended trading hours for the Christmas period. Mr Trevor Evans from the National Retailers Association has made a submission to the committee in relation to this exact point. He has also been very active in raising this issue with our government. This is just one example of how we are engaging with the business community and industries to assist in removing these obstacles.

It is the fact that the proposed reforms to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act will provide that applications for trading hours orders may be determined by a single member of the Queensland Industrial Relations Commission in particular cases. I note the NRA in its submission said—

The NRA supports this proposed amendment, following its recent experiences of trading hours applications taking longer and longer to be heard and decided. NRA considers that this proposed amendment offers a sensible and workable solution to overcoming many of the causes of the delays now being experienced in the hearing of trading hours applications.

Whilst this reform will enable trading hours matters to be considered more quickly, it is important to state that, as with other reforms implemented by the government to reduce red tape, this bill ensures that appropriate safeguards are in place to protect both businesses and the community whilst making these decisions.

The proposed amendment will allow the commission discretion to have decisions made by a full bench in regard to complex or significant applications. The determination of trading hours orders by a full bench of three commissioners will occur when the vice president considers it appropriate in the circumstances. Clearly it is desirable to provide more flexibility in the process for dealing with trading hours orders and this reform achieves this aim.

Implementation of this reform will reduce costs associated with these trading hours applications, reduce the time applicants need to wait for these decisions and will allow for the more efficient use of the commission's resources. Clearly streamlining the decision making process related to trading hours orders through adoption of the approach outlined in the bill will be a good outcome for all businesses. I congratulate the Attorney-General for being such an active participant in his desire to reduce red tape and regulation for the state of Queensland. I support this bill.