




Speech By  
**Hon. Jarrod Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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**LIQUOR AND GAMING (RED TAPE REDUCTION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (9.27 pm), in reply: I acknowledge and thank all honourable members for their contributions in the debate this evening to the Liquor and Gaming (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. As I said in my contribution earlier this evening, as vegetation management was the enthusiasm of the honourable Minister Cripps last night, so too is this bill for me this evening, because this is common sense for our communities and common sense for our community groups right around Queensland. I note the honourable Treasurer is in the room this evening. The honourable Treasurer set up with the assistant minister this office of best regulatory practice, the best practice regulatory office, the office of best—that office that the Treasurer set up, that great office—

**Mr Nicholls:** If you ever used it, you'd know what it was called!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** That office that the honourable Treasurer set up, and he will be happy because what I am holding here, colleagues, is the community liquor permit—nine pages of the community liquor permit. Madam Deputy Speaker, no more—no more! We have saved the Queensland people 40,000 pages of regulation each year.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Lockyer, you have been in this House long enough to know that you must be in your seat to interject. I call the Attorney.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** As I was saying, the Treasurer and his office of regulation—

**Mr Johnson** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Gregory, you also have been in this House long enough to know that you must be in your seat to interject. I call the Attorney.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** This is a good start. We will be here all night. That piece of paper, that Labor Party regulation that I ripped up, was nine pages. In 2011-12 we had about 6½ thousand community groups filling out that document. This legislation will save 4½ thousand community groups times by nine approximately not having to fill that document out in one year. The Treasurer will do the maths, but it is about 41,000 pages of regulation that the community will not have to fill out. That should be added to my discount of regulation that I have reduced in this state—41,000 pages per year.

I thank all honourable members for their great contributions. This government is serious about change in Queensland. The difference between the opposition when they were in government and this government is that when we say we are going to do something we get on and we do it. It has taken us just over a year to get this important legislation through. We believe in the industry and our community clubs right across our electorates.

While talking about community clubs, I draw the attention of honourable members to the latest edition of *Club Insight* that came out today. Honourable members will not be able to see from afar but

*Club Insight* has the honourable Premier not as its centrefold—the burlesque girls are its centrefold—but on its title page. What is more interesting in *Club Insight* is the comments of Don Seccombe, the President of Clubs Queensland. He welcomed the Premier and the Attorney to the awards celebration recently and he said this, 'For the record this was the first time in the event's history that a Queensland Premier has attended our awards ceremony.' It is the first time in the history of the Clubs Queensland awards ceremony the Premier—

**Ms Palaszczuk:** I was there.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** But you are not the Premier; you are the opposition leader. I did not say it was the first time an opposition leader attended. I said it was the first time a Premier has attended. I know that the opposition leader has ambitions but she was there in an opposition leader's capacity, not as Premier. The Hon. Campbell Newman was there as Premier.

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I do take the interjection from the honourable member for Lockyer, who I note is in his seat. The honourable member for Gaven was not there. He said yesterday that he will be the next Premier of Queensland. But this is because this government supported an industry that employs about 40,000 people right across the state. We have great sporting groups and great surf clubs right across Queensland and they contribute most vitally to our economy. Funnily enough, another magazine came out today which I appear in: the *QHA Review*.

**Ms Davis:** Are you the centrefold?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I am not the centrefold but I am on page 17. The headline which they chose and only released today is 'Changes for the future' and it has a picture of a pair of scissors cutting through red tape. The industry understands this government is reducing red tape. We are cutting through the Labor Party bureaucracy of red tape. For the benefit of the honourable opposition leader and her six colleagues, I have copies of this article of the red-tape reduction strategy. When we talk about who supports this type of legislative response to the issues of liquor licensing in this state, this government certainly does. The opposition when in government had 20 years to cut red tape in this state and it did not. I note the honourable opposition leader says that they support the bill, but when the opposition left the chamber all her members essentially spoke out against the bill and against some of these reforms. I table a copy for the honourable opposition leader and her six members.

*Tabled paper.* Document titled 'Changes for the Future: message from Hon. Jarrod Bleijie MP, the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice' [2670].

This government is serious about red tape. We have the *QHA Review*, Clubs Queensland and P&Cs singing the praises of local LNP members because we are doing what we said we were going to do in a timely manner and cutting through the bureaucracy and the red tape. No-one believes members of the Labor Party anymore even when they come in here and they say they support the legislation because they had 20 years to do this. It is only that they have been forced in a position now to either oppose it or support it. They know if they oppose it tonight they will have press releases in all their electorates saying they oppose P&Cs. I remember once before when the opposition team introduced changes to empower independent public schools and to empower P&Cs and we gave maintenance money to schools. What did they say about the P&Cs? They said that they are not responsible enough to manage the money in the schools. The P&Cs will waste it. The principals will waste it. We have confidence and faith in our community members. We do not hold the hands of community members and walk them through legislative reform in this state because we understand and we want to ensure capacity. We want to be the enabler for communities to participate in this debate. We are not the socialists. The socialists believe they have to hold the hands of Queenslanders every step of the way because Queenslanders cannot be trusted to get it right. We do not hold that view of Queenslanders. We put an enormous amount of trust and respect in Queenslanders.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I hear the opposition leader interjecting. The opposition leader had 20 years to cut regulation and red tape for community groups.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** I have only been a member since 2006.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I note the opposition leader now says it was not her fault because she has only been in parliament since 2006. How long was the member a minister in the government? We have only been in government for 12 months and we can get rid of 40,000 pages of regulation in 12 months. The opposition leader had six years in parliament but the Labor Party was in power for essentially 20 years. The Labor Party did nothing because it does not trust Queenslanders, P&Cs or anyone to have a drink responsibly. It does not trust our local show societies, local fishing clubs, local

sporting clubs or local Rotary clubs to have an event or a show where the community can participate. The Labor Party does not trust them to do any of this.

This is a common-sense approach to the issue of reducing liquor licensing regulation and red tape in Queensland because people will not have to fill out a nine-page form. A few weeks ago I had an opportunity to attend the P&C meeting where my daughters go to school at the Meridan State College, a great school in the Kawana electorate. As I said before, they have their fete coming up. I also went to the Pacific Lutheran College, which has its fete coming up. The Pacific Lutheran College was particularly interested to know when this bill would be passed because it is going to responsibly sell alcohol at its fete.

**Ms Palaszczuk** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I say to the honourable opposition leader: I need no encouragement from the member for Gympie. I need no encouragement from the opposition leader.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Leader of the Opposition, I would ask that you not shout interjections at other members across the chamber. If you wish to have a debate, you and the member for Gympie can perhaps take it outside. The Attorney has the call.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I did need the break to have a sip of water.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was merely saying that all of the members here were encouraging—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Leader of the Opposition, that is not a point of order. I would ask that you resume your seat. The Attorney has the call.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The honourable members on this side and a large fraction on that side are encouraged by this bill because they know when they go out to their electorates from tomorrow they have a message to sell. The message to sell is: we trust Queenslanders and we are going to break through this regulation of red tape and start calling it the Labor Party red tape because that is all it is. It is Labor Party red tape because they did not trust people to get it right.

To turn to the elements of the bill and some of the contributions tonight, as I said, the honourable opposition leader supported the bill but most of her members opposed it, which will be interesting in consideration in detail. I thank honourable members on this side of the chamber in particular for supporting the most essential elements of the bill. I do thank them for all of their contributions. It is testament to a legislative response to see the number of speakers on a bill, because it really enlivens passion amongst members who have been looking at these issues.

My mother is the coordinator of the Melanoma Patients Foundation on the Sunshine Coast. We are lucky to have my mother, because had she not been diagnosed with a melanoma cancer she would not be with us today. In the last 10 years she has become actively engaged in fundraising events. I can recall particular Melanoma Patients Foundation fundraising events that are held at home or at local sporting clubs. You have to go through the process, pay an application fee of \$57, fill out nine pages of documents, wait for the documents to be approved or not approved—and we have seen the statistics; not many were not approved. It is just a bureaucratic mess that is not necessary in this state when we actually believe in individual responsibility. I might add in this debate that, if people go to these events which do not have community liquor permits because they are exempt and they muck up, they do the wrong thing and they break the law, they will be held responsible. The police will involve themselves—and we still have liquor inspectors. If anyone has done the wrong thing, they will be held responsible for their actions according to law in this great state.

I thank the member for Broadwater for her great contribution and her contribution in the Deputy Speaker's chair at the moment. The member for Broadwater talked about honouring the government commitment to reduce and cut red tape. The member for Broadwater raised an interesting proposition, which I have not explained to the House. Having 18 minutes remaining, I thought I might take the opportunity to do that. It is about the government's overall plan for setting a path for red-tape reduction for the liquor industry in this state.

The first thing we did when we were elected was to look at the low-hanging fruit—the low-hanging non-controversial fruit—in the liquor industry that we could chop off, and we have done that; we have achieved that. The honourable the Premier set up the expert panel on liquor licensing red-tape reduction and that panel has been going exceptionally well. They are reviewing the entire Liquor Act with particular focus on the elements of the Liquor Act that we had in our discussion paper. We got some of the low-hanging fruit sorted out. We set up an expert panel. We issued a discussion paper on reform in Queensland.

Honourable members will recall that included in the discussion paper were some controversial issues on which the Queensland community have had a chance to have a say. I am happy to say that

we have had over 300 submissions to the discussion paper. Over 300 responses to the discussion paper have now been sent back to the expert panel that the Premier and I set up to help and advise us on future reforms in this state. The expert panel looked at this bill and looked at these issues. After having dealt with these 28 initiatives through this bill the expert panel, with the 300 submissions on controversial matters and some non-controversial matters, will be in phase 2. We will have another debate with the Queensland community in terms of what the government response to that expert panel will be.

We have a clear plan. We have set out a clear path for the future direction of liquor licensing in this state. It is not just a review that we do in-house and then we just do what we want to do; we are actually engaging with the Queensland community—having a chat and conversation with the Queensland community—and we will get it right. We will get it right because we have engaged the public and we have taken on board their views, hence why it is exciting that this bill we are debating tonight deals with a lot of those matters. This bill deals with so many matters—things like no longer having to advertise for some low-risk permits, saving Queensland businesses \$1,500; only having to advertise in the online *Government Gazette*, not having to put it in the published gazette. It is all about practical solutions to help small businesses in this state.

People, particularly members on this side of the House, will know that business is still struggling in Queensland; they are not out of the woods yet. If there is anything the government can do to assist small businesses, particularly in this industry such as the local cafe or corner restaurant that is struggling for clientele, such as a reduction in fees—for instance the licensing fees—and a bit of red-tape reduction, I think they would be very happy.

The Minister for Tourism, the member for Currumbin, talked about how we are engaging with the stakeholders. I think this is the message that the Queensland community are hearing at the moment. Having released the discussion paper, the government believes the Queensland community will really have input into the future direction and reform of these issues in the state.

The member for Ipswich West talked about 14 submissions from the various stakeholders and gave a good history of the licensing provisions in this state. The member for Woodridge said that not many people in her electorate drink but had an issue—

**Mrs Scott:** I didn't say that.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** You did. The other thing the member for Woodridge talked about is the guidelines and how we see those working in practice. What we have come up with are guidelines for community groups that will no longer be subject to the Liquor Act; they will be exempt from the Liquor Act. Therefore the Liquor Act will not apply to these community groups. Following the commencement on 1 July 2013, we will have guidelines. These guidelines are all about local members going to their P&C meetings, for instance, and saying, 'Look, if you have a school fete, you don't have to have your community liquor permits anymore, but here are the guidelines. This is a suggested approach to these sorts of events.' Honourable members may find that a school fete still wants to have restrictions on where the alcohol may be sold or where people can walk around. That is empowering the actual group to come up with that and plan their own event. They would have to do a risk assessment for themselves. They take on board that consideration.

**Ms Palaszczuk:** Where is the community safety?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the opposition, 'Where is the community safety?' Here we go, back to the regulation and red tape in this state—nanny state! But they support it, saying 'Where's the community safety?'

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Nanango, if you wish to interject please return to your seat.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Here we go. We have had the opposition leader stand in here and say, 'We support it. For political purposes we support it,' but then they just cannot get away from the nanny state. They just cannot understand. They do not get it.

**Mr Newman:** It's in their DNA.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the Premier. It is in their DNA to hold people's hands as they progress in life. We do not do that. We want to empower the individual to take responsibility for their actions. Then the opposition leader, after the seven hours of debate we have had, at the 11th hour, says, 'What about community safety?' As I just said, it will be the responsibility of the people concerned and the community groups to ensure that they have the adequate environment in place to protect whomever they want to protect, but government will not be engaged in that process. Government will be out of that process and the community will be better off for it.

The member for Gregory would know, his electorate having a lot of the shows, and the Deputy Premier would know, his electorate having 17 rural shows—those great country shows.

**A government member:** He has a drink at them, too.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I would imagine. I have been to the electorate of the honourable member for Gregory. I have had a beer in the pub there—

**A government member:** Ha, ha!

**Mr BLEIJIE:**—or it might have been a Midori.

**A government member:** I bet it was a shandy.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It was not a shandy, it was not a Midori, it was—

**Mr Newman** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I did. I met the future King in Longreach. I had a beer up in Longreach as well at the community barbecue.

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I did. It was a real beer for a real man.

**Mr Stevens:** With an umbrella in the top!

**An honourable member:** It's getting worse.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It is like when you dig that hole and you keep digging and digging. I enjoyed the company of the honourable member for Gregory out in his rough-and-tough electorate of Gregory. Suffice to say the honourable Deputy Premier has about 17 shows that are held in his electorate. This is all about saying to these local show societies, who were doing this long before government intervened and regulated how they should do it—they were doing it long before politicians and government got involved and regulators got involved because they just knew how to do it. For the record, can I just say that the regional and rural members of this government fight for their shows. Can I put on record how the Deputy Premier fought to make sure that rural shows and their local show societies had the proper protection under this legislation and that as many were made exempt from this legislation as he could. We do recognise the fact that for large events, high-risk events or medium-risk events, certain protections still need to be in place. That is why with the amendment that I will be moving in relation to small shows—and this will be through regulation at a later date—we will make sure that we can get as many of those rural shows into the exemption as possible so they can go about their business. Therefore, if a rural show society wants to have a hessianed off area, that is their business. We will not regulate it. We do not tell them they have to do it. However, if they want an environment where the mother, the father and the children can watch the fireworks at night and the father can have a beer with the children while watching the fireworks, then that is a matter for them. Government does not regulate that space; they should not regulate that space. The Labor Party do, because that is all they ever knew how to do: introduce regulation and red tape because they do not trust Queenslanders to drink responsibly.

**Mr Seeneey:** That is the Monto show amendment.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I take the interjection from the Honourable Deputy Premier, who has named this amendment the Monto show amendment. I will ensure that the Monto show is exempt in this amendment. That is why we are doing this. It is because of great places like those. We went out recently—I think it was during the Melbourne Cup—to the Kumbia races where we had the community cabinet. There are great atmospheres at these local shows, races and rodeos. This is what we are trying to achieve. The Leader of the House has spoken about mateship and the spirit of camaraderie that is established by going to these—

**Mr Stevens:** I'd love to have a beer with Jarrod!

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The honourable Leader of the House will not be singing, and I will not be taking that interjection. The member for Toowoomba North, who did not disclose his bias towards the club industry tonight, having owned and operated nightclubs in the past, made a great contribution. Thank you too for your support for this type of industry and for your common sense.

I grew up at the Ettamogah Pub. My uncle was the owner of the Ettamogah Pub, both in New South Wales and Queensland, so I understand this industry. I understand local pubs. I remember attending football games at the—

**A government member:** Are you serious?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Yes, my Uncle Coop was the original owner of the Ettamogah Pub. I grew up at a pub in Albury, and then we moved here in the late eighties and built the Ettamogah Pub up here—or

my uncle did—so I know this industry. I know the struggles, and I have seen the regulation and the red tape. Whenever we talk about alcohol related violence, everyone always blames the operators without trying to instill a sense of responsibility in people and actually getting them to own up and take account of their own actions. That is what we will do.

Over the years, particularly at the Albury Ettamogah Pub where we lived, I have seen the football games. It used to be an environment where you could go with your family on a weekend and just have a great day out without, as the member for Gregory said, being boxed in by a cage at the local show or the races, and people were free to move around responsibly and do what they wished at those shows. So that is where we are going back to: common sense.

The member for Logan made a great contribution. I was worried, considering his American background, that he was going to get into the issue of the drinking age in Australia and Queensland, but he did not go that far. The member for Mundingburra, who represents a great regional area in Queensland which is so important to the economy of Queensland, really hit the nail on the head when he spoke about the fact that this is a shining example of what the government is trying to achieve in this state.

In a couple of years, people may not remember this government for this and they may not thank us, but they will know—and we will know—that they will not have to fill out nine pages for a liquor permit when they want to have a local P&C trivia night or a show day. That is the sort of stuff that we want to be remembered for.

Thank you for your contribution, member for Lytton. He spoke about this being a public campaign and a public drive, and he took those issues into account. The member for Bundamba, in one of her normal interesting—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** There was not much coherence in the member for Bundamba tonight. For the honourable members who were not in the chamber at the time when I pulled a few interjections and points of order on the member for Bundamba, she tried to get into this debate what she could not get in two weeks ago during the parliamentary sittings on another bill which was completely different. She tried to table documents which she forgot to table two weeks ago in another parliamentary debate on a completely separate matter. Thankfully, the Deputy Speaker pulled her up and said that that debate is done and dusted; it has probably had royal assent; and it is a bit too late to be debating that matter in parliament because we are talking about a completely different bill. So the member for Bundamba has made an interesting contribution tonight which was totally irrelevant, as usual.

The member for Beaudesert and the member for Southport, thank you for your contributions. The member for Mermaid Beach talked about a couple of local issues, as always, in terms of restaurants turning into bars at 10 o'clock at night, toilets, and all that sort of thing.

The member for Mulgrave talked about the amendments I am moving with respect to small regional shows. As I said when I introduced it—and we will talk about it in the amendments—we will make sure that we have the regulation in place at 1 July or just after when we look at who we target in terms of small shows and what the real definition of that will be in terms of the rural communities. It could be based on the number of patrons or other things, but it will certainly not be the number of show bags that one sells at these show days.

**Mr Seeney:** Monto will qualify, let me assure you.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Monto will qualify, because I have said it, Deputy Premier, in my contribution. We will ensure Monto qualifies. Can I say in conclusion, bearing in mind time is quickly approaching and the hour is near, that I thank all honourable members for their contribution. I know I have talked a lot about community liquor permits tonight.

In fact, honourable members may like to know that I offered the opportunity for the Leader of the House to move an extension of time for me because I have got so many other matters, but he said he would have to vote against his own motion. So I will take that total rejection. I do not want to be put in that no confidence position by my own team.

In conclusion, this bill also does a lot for the local club industries such as the surf lifesavers. It will get rid of the managers registers. Can I give another example of regulation in this state by the Labor Party. We used to have licensees who were responsible for pubs and clubs in Queensland. When the Labor Party came along, they said, 'Maybe you should not just have licensees; you should have approved managers.' So then not only do you have to have approved managers; you then have to have a register of approved managers. When an approved manager left the building or went down to do the banking, particularly in rural and regional Queensland, they had to sign in and out. This bill

will get rid of the register. The approved manager will remain, but the bureaucracy and the red tape behind it will go.

That is a practical example of what this government is trying to achieve. The Labor Party had so many years to do it. We talked about the position void over there from the opposition. They have one policy, Premier: they are going to bring back Labour Day in May. That is their big policy. That is their stump speech. The next policy that they have, which they will probably announce tomorrow, is 'Do not worry! We are going to reintroduce all of this legislation that the LNP deleted tonight.' That is what the Labor Party will do because they do not trust Queenslanders to get it right.

This is a great state with great opportunities. We want to supercharge the economy right across Queensland. We want to supercharge the economy in every electorate across this great state, and this is the first step.