




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (8.00 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Liquor and Gaming (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013. I welcome the changes proposed by these amendments. If there is one thing that Labor has done well, it is to leave us a wonderful legacy of red tape. The changes proposed by this legislation free up community and volunteer groups, and that is important.

I would like to talk about a typical committee meeting with a volunteer group or a school P&C, because my wife and I over the years have been to many. Typically, they start like this: I think we might do something to raise some money for the school or for a charity or for a sporting group. How about we put on a do, we organise an esky with a few beers and some wine and we run a raffle? Then somebody says, 'Hang on a second, there could be some problems with that. We might need some permits. We do not know whether we need public liability insurance.' So then they say, 'Okay, we will do something simpler. Maybe we will run a trivia night or put on a dinner dance or hold a big raffle at the school.' Then the conversation ends with, 'We will probably need a community liquor permit. We will have to organise designated drinking areas. We will have to find out how to get this permit. Who is going to pay for the permit because there is no money in the account at the moment?' It just goes on and on. Today I heard the opposition talking about the need for security risk assessments.

Mr Johnson: That's the Labor way of red tape.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the member for Gregory. That is exactly what Labor do. They load us up with more layers of red tape, more rules and more regulation—more layers than a Sara Lee pastry. I am showing my age, I know. Those ads about Sara Lee pastries were a few years ago—layer upon layer upon layer. It is these layers that are making it more and more difficult.

From my experience, trying to find volunteers on a committee or trying to get people to help out with a fundraiser or a fete is getting harder because people are frustrated with all the rules and all the regulations. I have seen it all in the last decade, I can assure honourable members. Earlier this evening we heard the member for Mulgrave using terms like 'safeguards' and 'proper designations'. Then he spoke about the need to protect children at these community events. There are some valid concerns there, but I for one am tired of Labor's nanny state view of the world because under Labor we have become more and more regulated.

Mr Krause: They've got to take responsibility.

Mr MOLHOEK: That is right. Labor's approach to the community and volunteers has been typically to shoot first and ask questions later. Its approach has always been the presumption of guilt. Let's focus on what could go wrong. Let's focus on systems and process and how we can control all these things. Its approach has always been about assuming the worst. Let's create as many rules as we can. Let's cover every possible risk. Let's use all means possible for control and when we have done everything we can to demoralise well-meaning, hard-working volunteers with as much needless paperwork and regulation as possible then let's bring in some more rules. Who knows, had the

previous Labor reign continued we probably would have seen them regulating family gatherings in our backyards, parks and beaches.

I am pleased we are stripping away these onerous red-tape burdens. I can speak with a little authority in this respect because my wife and I have personally been confronted with these on many occasions through our involvement with the school P&Cs and some of the local charities we have been involved with. It is these sorts of rules that really suck the life out of enthusiastic, well-meaning volunteers and community groups. I have heard many parents on many occasions say, 'It's all too hard. I really don't need this much grief in my life. I can't be bothered.' So you end up with the same two or three battle hardened, battle weary people on P&Fs, committees and sporting groups carrying the load because they are persistent and tenacious. But why do we have to make it so hard for people to get on with these things?

On a more positive note I want to talk this evening about the great work of the Gold Coast Community Fund. In the late nineties I was approached in a former career as a radio station manager to join with a whole bunch of other businesspeople and community people, and we decided that we would create an approach that would get around some of this unnecessary red tape, and that is that we went out and got a master permit. We created a particular Art Union process that lots and lots of groups could get involved in. Over the years I am proud to say that the Gold Coast Community Fund as an umbrella organisation has helped many groups on the Gold Coast. Over the past 10 years it has raised and given away some \$1½ million to individual groups on the Gold Coast such as Riding for the Disabled, Paradise Kids, AEIOU, Hopewell Hospice, ACT for Kids, Rosies, the Gold Coast Project for Homeless Youth and the Musgrave Hill Early Childhood Development Unit. It has also provided personal support for many families and individuals in financial and practical terms for children with cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and many other families connected with the Southport Special School.

I want to pay tribute to some of the people who said, 'Even though Labor are making it really difficult for us, we are going to persist.' We had one of the best lawyers on the Gold Coast volunteer his time. He has been the chairman of that board for the last seven or eight years—Mr Simon Bennett from OMB Solicitors. Ian Cousins, who was the vice chairman right from the start some 10 years ago and who used to work for the Macquarie Radio Network, continues to be on the board of the Gold Coast Community Fund. Every year Steve Cavalier and Rutland Smith from Harvey Norman have donated the major prize that has enabled us to raise the dollars. John Applegate and Jim and Suzy Kinsel from Surfers Inkspot have printed the tickets, made sure they met the permit requirements and had the right numbering, the right colour code and the right font size. The regulation in this space has been ridiculous. I want to pay tribute to all the people on that committee: Roy Miller, the former managing director of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*—

Mr Stevens: Rocky.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection. Joe Condon, the dual vice chairman; Troy Niebling, the treasurer of the fund; Kate McFarlane, who has been the secretary for many years; Michael Thorburn; Corey Bell; Nicholas Scott; Colette Gallagher—all of these people have worked really hard in spite of the red tape that the former government has overlayed to find a way to work with local community groups and charities, run some great functions and raise hundreds of thousands of dollars.

It would be remiss of me to not acknowledge Col Torrington, one of the most outstanding volunteers you will ever meet on the Gold Coast. He is someone who is patient and persistent. He has sat with all these other school groups and charity groups and walked them through the complications. He has coordinated appeals, organised raffle tickets and prizes, and then sat out the front of Harvey Norman Bundall nearly every Saturday and Sunday for the last eight years selling tickets to raise money for some of these groups. I need to also mention Karen Phillips, who is one of the board members. It is her 50th birthday today. It is all over Facebook and Twitter.

Mr Stevens: Fifty is the new 40.

Mr MOLHOEK: It is the new 40, apparently. She does not seem to be too concerned about us knowing her age. Karen, through the Early Risers events, has raised a million dollars or more for Gold Coast charities. It is these sorts of people that these changes to the legislation will help. It is these sorts of people who will benefit as they go out there and roll up their sleeves with a genuine desire to make a real difference.

It is ironic that our colleagues across the chamber, who love to beat their chests about the battlers and the workers, have done so much to make it difficult for people and for community groups to help themselves. I am surprised because I am not sure they really get the concept of community,

because community is actually about giving back. We need to have legislation that gets out of the way of community and makes it easier for these people to continue to work and achieve great things for the many community groups, schools and sporting clubs in society. Our job as a government is to get out of the way and to encourage community, to foster a society where people can get involved without onerous burdens. Our job is to encourage initiative and to release our thousands of community organisations to do what they do best.

This is great legislation. It is not just good for the many small charity groups and organisations out there; it is also good for small business, it is great for tourism, it is good for the events industry and, more importantly, it is very good for our communities. I am proud to stand here tonight and to commend this bill to the House. I congratulate the Attorney-General on the excellent work that he has done in drafting these changes. I also congratulate the committee on their work in reviewing the legislation. I commend this bill to the House.