




Speech By  
**Ros Bates**

**MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Gold Coast, Party Houses**

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.45 am): The Newman government has made some great strides forwards combatting the scourge of party houses on the Gold Coast and more broadly throughout Queensland. I note my colleague the member for Mermaid—

**Mr Stevens:** There is no beach anymore, it is just Mermaid.

**Ms BATES:** That is right. He has been very vocal on party houses. The hard work also expended by the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience in this regard, by handing the power to councils throughout the state to fine party house owners for excessive noise, is a significant step in the right direction. It should have been done years ago. The Labor Party truly dragged their feet on this issue.

However, noise is only one impact of many that stem from having a party house in your street, your block or your neighbourhood. I recently met with a constituent who lives outside where many would expect a party house to be located. He lives well away from the coastline, in an area whose primary appeal would be its tranquil and unspoilt environment—the suburb of Tallai.

The party house down the street from his place can barely be called a house at all. It resembles more a conference facility or a small hotel, yet it operates a short-term rental as other party houses do. Its professionally designed website boasts the features of this so-called house: 1,500 square metres of living area; two wings; street parking for 14 cars; a granny flat for nannies or security; and a 14-person spa. To quote the site: 'Nothing about this property is ordinary.'

Unquestionably, a facility like this is not a party house; it is a full-blown tourism and function facility with the detrimental effects accompanied by this for the neighbouring residents. The fact that the operators of this facility believe that accommodation for security is a selling point illustrates one fact. They understand that the possible uses of the property can lead to trouble. My constituent says he has witnessed rampant drug use with blatant disregard for discretion, nudity with little regard for the neighbours and groups of well over 50 people partying around the pool, clearly substantially under the effects of the consumption of significant amounts of alcohol and potentially drugs.

In the local Gold Coast paper, the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, Monday past was an article describing conditions not unlike those I am describing here today. I seek leave to table this article for the benefit of the House.

It goes to demonstrate that this issue is more widespread than just one property in Tallai. It is our responsibility to act for these residents who have been robbed of their ability to enjoy their own homes. We act to protect residents from highway noise with noise mitigation and sound barriers. We act to protect residents from the sound of hoons doing burnouts in the middle of the night with strong

laws against such antisocial activities. We act to protect all Queenslanders from automotive based noise pollution by placing restrictions on how loud car exhausts can be.

We should also be protecting residents from excessive noise created by party houses and the other negative impacts of these businesses. These are businesses not residential homes that happen to be rented out when the owners are away. The area in which some of these party houses are located—the beautiful Gold Coast Hinterland—means that delivering outcomes is all the more difficult. For starters, the impact of the noise, traffic and antisocial behaviour is all the more noticeable when it is the sole blight in a quiet and peaceful location. In addition, our police resources are focused where the population densities are higher. It means significant travel time out to the hinterland where resources are scarcer than we would like and it makes addressing the issues difficult.

I was recently copied into a letter sent by Gold Coast Mayor Tom Tate outlining the difficulties for council in taking full advantage of the government's changes to legislation. Council wants more police resources made available to monitor the activities of these party houses. While I do not think that this is necessarily the answer, we do need to broaden our approach to this issue from the recent changes in legislation.

Tallai is not the only area where there is a problem with party houses. It is more widespread than that. But having one of these businesses located in Tallai adds insult to injury. The people who live in Tallai choose this area in part because of its beauty, its tranquillity and its rural lifestyle despite being within a short drive of significant infrastructure. They are being robbed of what they believed they were buying into.

I urge our government to continue to work with the Gold Coast City Council in order to address the issues associated with party houses with an approach that takes into account the varied properties that come under the 'party house' banners and the enormous impact these properties have on neighbouring residents. We are the Gold Coast hinterland and people buy in our area because of its tranquillity. The last thing that my residents need is party houses.