




Speech By  
**Stephen Bennett**

**MEMBER FOR BURNETT**

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### **BUILDING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (3.19 pm): I rise to support the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which seeks to make an application process easier for building over new sewers, water mains and stormwater drains. With a background in the building industry, I thoroughly understand the frustrations and difficulties that landowners and other builders have faced in the past with the red tape involved in these circumstances.

The existing process can be confusing and often quite illogical. First the building certifier must seek permission from a service provider who owns the water infrastructure; however, there is no consistent process across different service providers describing how this should be done.

Seeking consent from the service provider who owns the infrastructure may also trigger a requirement to lodge a planning development application with the local government, meaning more paperwork and more fees. Finally, there is not even a consistent design standard for building over or near water infrastructure.

The lack of uniform processes and standards means that building costs and time frames often blow out beyond what is reasonable and what should be a straightforward job often becomes a bureaucratic mess. It is no surprise that, in their submissions to the committee, groups such as Master Builders and the Housing Industry Association strongly supported the changes proposed in this bill. When legislation such as the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill is presented to this parliament, I welcome the opportunity to slash red tape and to make processes easier. This is as it should be.

This bill will eliminate the need for building certifiers to seek permission from water service providers and local governments to build over or near relevant infrastructure. One of the key service providers, Seqwater, indicated in their submission to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee that they would support this amendment on the basis that the bill also provides specific safeguards to protect their infrastructure. These safeguards are indeed covered in the form of the new mandatory part of the Queensland Development Code.

This amendment to the code will mean that work involving class 1 structures, such as houses, and class 10 structures, such as backyard sheds, can now be assessed directly by the building certifier against consistent, state-wide standards rather than against individual local government schemes and the requirements of individual service providers. Class 2-9 buildings or applications for class 1-10 buildings that do not fall in line with the new uniform standards will be referred to a concurrence agency for a suitable response. In the event that the applicant does not agree with the decision made by the concurrence agency, they will have a fast and affordable appeal mechanism at their disposal through the Building and Development Dispute Resolution Committee.

This legislation provides outcomes for all parties concerned. Landowners who wish to develop their land can do so sooner and be less out of pocket due to application fees. For the owners of water infrastructure, consistent design standards ensure their assets are protected, and more streamlined

processes will potentially save them thousands of man-hours previously spent considering applications for permission to build over or near the infrastructure. Finally, builders, on whom our economy relies so much, can get on with what they do best, rather than getting buried in dreaded red tape. In their submission to the committee the HIA indicated that they were aware of builders who had turned down work on sites where water infrastructure exists because the associated approvals were so complex and complicated. We do not need that; we need people working in this great state of Queensland.

It is expected that thousands of people will move into the region of my electorate over the next 10 to 20 years. Naturally, we will need new homes for many of these people to live in. We need our building industry working as effectively as possible, and legislation like this will allow this to happen. In closing, having witnessed firsthand on many occasions how bureaucracy and red tape hinder the building industry, I thank the minister and his department for their foresight in bringing this bill to the parliament. I commend this bill to the House.