




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN BILL

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.07 pm): I am thankful for the opportunity to add a brief contribution to the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013. Some comments made here today by certain members I think belittle our institutions. The rule of law and the institutions that exist that make Queensland great have been inherited from Great Britain and the United Kingdom. They are things that have kept us safe and kept people well. They have ensured that good government has been able to be executed across Queensland and Australia. To belittle those institutions I think is beneath this parliament. I found it somewhat frustrating to listen to those comments.

This bill is about allowing succession regardless of gender. For those who may not be aware, throughout history Britain has faced several occasions where Queens have come to power and they have all served long reigns and served very well. Queensland, as people would know, was named after one of those Queens. My predecessor and first member for Toowoomba and Drayton, John Watts, came into this place to form Queensland over 150 years ago at the request of Queen Victoria because he felt and the people who formed Queensland at that time felt that Queensland would be better served by having people who live, work and have families in this great state run this great state.

That brings me to something that I hear time and time again. There has been some criticism that Queensland is supposedly going it alone with this piece of legislation. I remind people that Federation did not give the federal government control over Queensland. The powers given to the federal parliament in section 51 were quite limiting. The Queensland Legislative Assembly has been given control for many aspects of Queenslanders' lives. It is disappointing when a federal government wants to interfere with the rights of this House. Nowhere in the Constitution does it give them the right to tell us how to run our education department or to withhold taxes that they have taken from Queenslanders on the insistence that we shall follow their ordained description of how education shall be run. That is an affront to our Constitution. Simply, they should transfer any funds to the people of Queensland that they took from them so that the people of this House can administer education appropriately. It is not just happening in that area; the same thing has been tried in health and other areas. It is interesting because one of the powers they do have is to borrow money on the public credit of the Commonwealth. They seem to have been using that power an extraordinary number of times recently as they have brought the federal government to \$300 billion worth of debt. Another area that the federal parliament has control over is postal, telegraphic, telephonic and other like services. This has meant they have rolled out the NBN and they have done that very poorly in many areas and at great expense.

Returning to the Succession to the Crown Bill 2013, the federal government seems to want to interfere, when it suits them, with the rights of this House in telling us how we should look after Queenslanders when the right to do that was given to this House by Queen Victoria. I believe that Queen Victoria and her successors should certainly be in charge of Queensland from a succession point of view. I agree with the Australian Monarchist League. I think it has been a good form of government. It has certainly delivered for the people of Australia and for Queensland. I would encourage the federal government to stop interfering in areas that belong to this House, such as

education and health, and concentrate on areas that they should look after such as border control. I think the people of Queensland would be much better served with a local government, as my predecessor for Drayton and Toowoomba, John Watts, who stood in this place many years ago now, knew. He knew that Queensland would be best served by people who know Queensland. Knowing Toowoomba and my part of Queensland as I do, I will be a strong advocate for a range crossing. It would be nice if the federal government exercised their rights and ensured they funded that appropriately. There are many other projects for which they have taxed Queenslanders and then gone and spent the money in other states. I believe that we should ensure that the rights of Queensland are protected. We should ensure that the people of Australia know that we are our own house of parliament and we will have our own relationship with the monarchy and we will respect that relationship in the same way that the other realms have. However, we will not deliver that control to the federal government.

I congratulate the Attorney-General on bringing this forward and standing up for Queensland. During a game of State of Origin you do not hear many people calling out, 'Long live the republic!' When there is a game on at Lang Park Queenslanders shout out, 'Queenslander!', because that is what we are: Queenslanders. We are Queenslanders because Queen Victoria gave us the right to self-rule. The state was named after her. We should certainly recognise her and her succession line. I commend the bill to the House and I thank the Attorney-General for it.