




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING (RED TAPE REDUCTION) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (8.21 pm): It is always a pleasure to follow the member for South Brisbane and bring some sense back to the debate. I rise to add to the debate on this important piece of legislation. I will get to the member for South Brisbane later. In particular, I want to bring to the attention of the House the positive impacts that this legislation will have for my electorate of Burleigh with the amendments to the Sustainable Planning Act to give the Gold Coast City Council and other Queensland councils the power to deal with out-of-control events and behaviours that happen in party houses.

This bill deals directly with two things: firstly, red tape. The latest report card on red-tape reduction shows the government is on track to deliver its commitment to reduce red tape by 20 per cent over six years, and this legislation furthers that agenda. We have already started work on more than 500 reforms, 350 of which have already been implemented and have successfully removed over 9,000 regulatory requirements imposed on business by the former Labor government. While considerable progress has been made in the fight against red tape, much more needs to be done, and I will continue to look for ways to make doing business in Queensland easier. This bill contributes to our agenda by reducing the statute book by repealing five acts: the repeal of the Clean Coal Technology Special Agreement Act 2007, the repeal of the Eagle Farm Racecourse Act 1998, the repeal of the Gurulmundi Secure Landfill Agreement Act 1992, the repeal of the Racing Venues Development Act 1972 and the repeal of the Wild Rivers Act 2005.

Secondly, this bill will drive economic growth. For the benefit of those on the other side of the House who do not understand what economic growth is, this government has a strong plan for a brighter future. The Leader of the Opposition's admission last month that she is 'not going to guarantee jobs growth' if elected confirms that Labor has no plans and no policies to take Queensland forward. In contrast, the Newman LNP government has focused on building the four pillars of Queensland—tourism, agriculture, resources and construction. Only the LNP has a strong plan that will see Queensland continue to pull ahead of other states by creating the right environment for business to grow and create jobs.

I would just like to comment on a few things that the member for South Brisbane said. The member was actually present during our committee hearing on 12 June when we took evidence from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. The member quite clearly to my recollection asked the department why the wild rivers legislation was in fact being repealed. The reason that the Wild Rivers Act was being repealed—and I asked this question myself as a follow-up question just to make sure that everybody was on the same page—is that it is no longer required. It is no longer required because all of the items, all of the policy decisions, that were in the Wild Rivers Act are now contained in other legislation. Under the strategic environmental areas under the Sustainable Planning Act, the Regional Planning Interests Act and this bill, all of those policy outcomes are all being met. Hence, there is no requirement for the Wild Rivers Act. There is no conspiracy here at all,

as the member for South Brisbane and her green mates would have you believe. This act is no longer required. It is covered by the other acts that this government has brought in over the last couple of years.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to be standing here today as part of a government that is committed to improving the lives of all Queenslanders, particularly in relation to tackling the ongoing problem that is party houses. As I said before, I am from the Gold Coast. It is a major issue there. Party houses create unwarranted disturbances on the Gold Coast, and I am hearing from my community that this problem was swept under the rug by the former Labor government and put in the too-hard basket. It was too hard for them. I am proud to say today that this government is not afraid of making the tough decisions, and the people of my electorate of Burleigh strongly support the government in making these strong, sometimes hard, decisions.

The committee travelled to the Gold Coast and we sat at a round table with a group of people who are heavily affected by party houses. They are in one particular street on the Gold Coast—and I am sure we will hear from other LNP members on the Gold Coast about these particular party houses. We heard where there was one house that had, I think, 22 rooms. They had 30 or 40—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mr HART: The member for Mudgeeraba, I am sure, will have some more to say about that shortly. The people who live near that house are putting up with people wandering the streets, with people breaking into their houses, with people cavorting—

Ms Bates: Nude tennis.

Mr HART: I will take that interjection from the member for Mudgeeraba—nude tennis. Does everybody have a picture of that? Anyway, we will move on.

Mr Costigan: Where's the member for Bennelong?

Mr HART: I will take that interjection as well. You can imagine the sorts of problems these people are having with these sorts of things happening in their backyard. And it is their backyard. They are out on their back patio, watching across the valley or looking across to the house next door and they are seeing these things happen. It is out of control.

The police have the powers to deal with some of these things, but there are some things they cannot deal with. So we really need to put these sorts of planning provisions in place to give the council the power to act and to stop these party houses from happening. As I said, we heard from a group of people on the Gold Coast. They were very concerned. We stepped through every part of this legislation. They had some concerns about how long people might stay in the house because, if they rented out their houses for more than 10 days, it was no longer deemed to be a party house.

We have to start somewhere. We have to give our local councillors the power to start this process. If it means that we have to come back and look at this and tweak it in some way, I am sure that we will. In fact, with the Leader of the House being a keen advocate of this particular piece of legislation, I am sure we will come back and look at it. That is one of the reasons that the committee recommended that we review this part of the legislation within 12 months.

The provisions of the bill actually complement the police powers that are already in place to deal with behavioural issues related to party houses. The provision proposes that the bill will empower the local governments, including the city of the Gold Coast, to regulate party houses from a planning and development perspective, that is, if they choose to act—and they do not have to act. This is an opt-in piece of legislation. The council actually has to decide that they want to opt in, they have to put the designation in place that this particular area is not designated for party houses or is designated for party houses. Then people have to apply under the planning regulations to have a party house in those particular designated areas. Outside of those areas, they are simply not allowed. It will be completely up to the council as to whether they decide to opt in or they think that they can take care of it. We have heard from our local councillors down there—and I am sure every other member on the Gold Coast has heard the same thing numerous times from their councillors—that something needed to be done about this. We have heard from our councillors. We have taken action. This is the start of the process.

I commend the minister for bringing this forward in the manner that he has. The party house restriction area is not intended to remove development rights. The underlying principle is that a residential dwelling can be used to host parties. This does not stop parties per se. It stops the business of party houses where somebody finds a property and they decide they can make more money renting it out on a nightly basis as a party house than renting it out full time. As I said, the provision will mean that local government can decide if and how to regulate a party house as a use in a way that is locally appropriate. It is important to point out that the proposal will not prevent the owner of a residential dwelling from leasing their premises or a property owner or tenant from hosting

celebrations. The proposal will not regulate behaviour on the premises as this is outside the scope of the land use, planning and development. The amendment is to enable local government to regulate party houses so that a lawful party house must have development approval to operate.

I would like to thank the committee members for the way that they dealt with this particular piece of legislation. Our recommendation was something that we talked long and hard about. I must say that I was very happy again to see that, when the Deputy Premier stood up and gave his speech today, he accepted the five recommendations that the committee made and that he gave very concise replies to the five points of clarification that the committee asked for. Once again, this reinforces to me—and it should reinforce to every other member of this House—that our committee system is working. When our ministers accept all the recommendations that our committees put forward or they give constructive reasons why they do not, the committee system is working. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.