




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2015

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (3.20 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2015. The Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee examined this bill in detail during its inquiry, which involved a public hearing, review of submissions from stakeholders and a departmental briefing. The committee has recommended unanimously that the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2015 be passed.

The policy objectives of the bill are to correct an inconsistency between the Local Government Electoral Act 2011, the City of Brisbane Act 2010 and the Local Government Act 2009 relating to making accepted how-to-vote cards available for inspection at the local government's public office during the caretaker period for a local government election. It also aims to remove an obsolete reference to mayoral first-past-the-post voting in the LGEA; enable local governments to seek an extension of up to two years to have a local government infrastructure plan in place; and enable an applicant to advise a local government or distributor-retailer that the applicant is not seeking information about an offset or refund in an ICN.

There was some concern, as previous speakers have mentioned, that the proposed two-year extension time frame for local governments to prepare their LGIPs was too long. The Property Council of Australia and the Shopping Centre Council of Australia both expressed concerns relating to the extension. The PCA was concerned that the proposed two-year extension demonstrated that local governments were not being held to account in meeting a statutory deadline associated with infrastructure planning.

The committee was advised, though, that the proposed amendment is necessary as many local governments had advised the department that they would not be able to finalise the preparation of their LGIPs by the current 30 June 2016 cut-off date. The department advised that extending the cut-off date would also allow local governments enough time to prepare considered LGIPs. The department confirmed that many of those councils which did not expect to have a plan in place were concerned that they had rushed the process and that they would probably have to go back and revise it anyway. So they were appreciative that they would have some extra time to do a better job than if the deadline remained at 30 June 2016.

With regard to waiving the right to information about an offset or refund in an ICN, an infrastructure charges notice is issued when a development application or connections application is approved. The bill seeks to change the SPA and the SEQ water act respectively to allow developers to indicate to a local government or distributor-retailer their preference to receive an infrastructure charges notice without offset and refund information. This arrangement will allow for those applicants who either are unconcerned about the prospect of an offset or refund or are prepared to receive this information at a later time and will allow for a speedier development approval.

This is a sensible amendment. The department advised that the impetus for this particular proposed amendment came from the development industry and that the amendments are supported by

the LGAQ and the infrastructure charges working group. Having worked as a town planning consultant in the past, I know that this amendment will be welcomed by councils, developers and planners across the state. It is a sensible amendment which reduces time frames for development applications but does not compromise in any way the integrity of the development assessment process.

I thank those organisations and individuals who lodged written submissions on the bill. I also thank the departmental officers who briefed the committee: Mr Mark Saunders, Director, Planning Scheme Support, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; Mr Jan Cilliers, Manager, Infrastructure, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; Ms Josie Hawthorne, Manager Legislation, Department of Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning; and Ms Anita Sweet, General Manager, Water Supply Policy and Economics, Department of Energy and Water Supply. I also thank the committee's wonderful secretariat and the Technical Scrutiny of Legislation Secretariat. I commend the bill to the House.