



Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2015

QUEENSLAND PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.27 pm): I present a bill for an act to establish the Queensland Productivity Commission and to amend this act, the City of Brisbane Regulation 2012, the Industrial Relations Regulation 2011, the Local Government Regulation 2012, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Queensland Competition Authority Act 1997, and the Queensland Competition Authority Regulation 2007 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Finance and Administration Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2015 [[1059](#)].

Tabled paper: Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2015, explanatory notes [[1060](#)].

During the 2015 state election, the government committed to establish the Queensland Productivity Commission as an independent economic advisory body with the broad objective of lifting productivity. Improved productivity drives economic growth and improves living standards.

The Queensland Productivity Commission Bill establishes the commission as a statutory body to formalise its operational independence from government, confirm the commission's functions and mandate, and put in place its corporate governance framework. The commission will provide expert, professional advice in policy areas of particular complexity and, sometimes, sensitivity, as referred to it by government. It will conduct inquiries through an open and transparent process informed by widespread public consultation. The commission reports will be independent in character, of high quality and have the capacity to significantly contribute to the policy development process. However, as an advisory body, any commission recommendations will ultimately be a matter for government to decide upon.

The government has already announced that the first major task of the commission will be an inquiry into electricity prices. The inquiry will balance a range of competing interests by taking into account customer impacts and the need for a competitive electricity market, efficient investment in infrastructure and good environmental outcomes.

In parallel with the electricity pricing inquiry, the commission will also conduct an inquiry into a fair price for solar. This inquiry will investigate the public and private benefits of rooftop solar, including social, economic and environmental benefits. A longer term work program for the commission will be considered later this year, taking into account the government's policy priorities.

The commission will be led by principal commissioner Mr Kim Wood, who was appointed to enable the timely commencement of the energy inquiries. With his extensive knowledge of regulated industries and commercial operations, Mr Wood brings a strong set of capabilities to the role. The principal commissioner will have primary responsibility for the commission and, depending on the commission's work program, up to two other full-time or part-time commissioners may be appointed.

This type of independent economic inquiry and review body closely mirrors the Australian Productivity Commission and the New Zealand Productivity Commission. Similar to these bodies, the commission will also assume responsibility for best practice regulation, including ensuring agencies are developing quality regulatory proposals to support good policy development. It will also take over from the Queensland Competition Authority the competitive neutrality complaints function, aiming to provide a simpler, more accessible and independent competitive neutrality complaints system for any businesses with complaints against government owned businesses. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (12.31 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Referral to the Finance and Administration Committee

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Finance and Administration Committee.