




Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 11 November 2015

SUSTAINABLE PORTS DEVELOPMENT BILL

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Sustainable Ports Development Bill 2015. I would also like to take the opportunity to thank my fellow committee members on their efforts in reporting on this bill, and I thank our secretariat and Hansard who travelled with us on our journey particularly to Cairns to have a look at what was happening up there. It was time away from their families to come and support our committee.

Mr Rickuss: It would have been a tough trip.

Mr BUTCHER: It was a tough trip; it sure was. I take that interjection. We were only there for a couple hours but it was great to go to Cairns and see what a wonderful part of the world it is and why they need to protect it.

A government member: There's a good local member in Cairns.

Mr BUTCHER: I take that interjection: there is a good local member in Cairns. The recommendations of our committee were very fair and were a good representation of the many public hearings and concerns that were raised with us in regard to this bill. I thank the minister for taking on the responsibility of implementing most of the recommendations that we have made. As the previous speaker, the member for Mirani, said, I believe it is a fair balance between the recommendations that we made and what is actually being delivered. It is good to see that the port of Cairns can be worked on and still progress with the way that they run business in Cairns.

I would like to concentrate on a particular part of the bill, and that is master planning. This bill will implement the government's commitment made in the Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan to require master plans at the long-established major bulk commodity ports of Gladstone, Hay Point, Mackay, Abbot Point and Townsville to optimise the use of existing port infrastructure and address operational, economic, environmental and social relationships as well as supply chains and surrounding land uses. Port master planning will be guided by the National Ports Strategy 2012 and the 2013 independent review of the port of Gladstone, which is in my electorate. This review, undertaken on behalf of the Australian government, recommended the development of comprehensive port master plans incorporating environmental considerations and aligning with planning for port areas beyond the port boundaries.

Port master planning will consider boat marine and land based impacts including port and supply chain capacity and connectivity, and environmental and community values. The regulation of port planning in Queensland has historically been limited to land use planning for land owned, or regulated by, a ports corporation. Planning for the priority ports will extend beyond traditional port boundaries, with master planned areas to include local government areas regulated by a local government authority, state development areas regulated by the Coordinator-General, and priority development areas regulated by the Minister for Economic Development Queensland.

These regulatory authorities will be the key participants in an open and transparent government led master-planning process including the preparation of port overlays. Adopting a coordinated approach to port planning will increase transparency and rigour in planning for priority ports, of which Gladstone is one; integrate planning instruments across a master planned area; maintain the autonomy of existing regulatory authorities while ensuring the state retains control of key aspects of port planning to safeguard state interests; and provide potential benefits to proponents including greater planning certainty.

Extending the boundary of a master planned area will require the impacts of port development to be considered in all planning decisions in a master planned area and provide more strategic consideration of the best use of a priority port. This will bring all the existing planning jurisdictions in a master planned area together to ensure there are no inadvertent land use conflicts and that future development decisions reflect a coordinated approach to land use planning. Through master planning we will better manage areas needed for the effective operations and development of the port including, road, rail, electricity and gas pipeline corridors now and for the long term while protecting community and environmentally sensitive areas.

The bill, as a facilitating piece of legislation, will rely on existing planning jurisdictions and processes under current legislation. While planning instruments must, in time, reflect the requirements of a port overlay, it is essential to note that regulatory authorities will retain their autonomous decision-making power and will continue to be responsible for the preparation and approval of their existing planning instruments including port authorities for land use plans; local government authorities for planning schemes in a local government area; the Coordinator-General for development schemes in a state development area; and the minister for economic development for development schemes in a priority development area.

Master planning will set a clear pathway for growth in and around Queensland's priority ports to deliver sustainable regional development and protect our reef. In my electorate of Gladstone, we are uniquely placed to attract large-scale projects and investments in the state of Queensland with 30,000 hectares of serviced and unencumbered State Development land. Port master planning will help better manage the impacts of port operations and port development on adjacent land and marine areas.

With this bill, Gladstone will be designated one of the four priority ports in Queensland, and for that I am glad. The Gladstone port will benefit from a master plan which will optimise infrastructure and address operational, economic, environmental and social relationships as well as supply chains and surrounding land uses. This is particularly relevant in my electorate given the size of State Development land that sits with direct access to this wonderful port facility.

The port of Gladstone handles over 30 different products which are exported to 30 different countries. The 2014-15 financial year saw a record throughput of over 100 million tonnes across the three ports of Bundaberg, Gladstone and Rockhampton, a two per cent increase from the previous year and a record-breaking achievement in our port's 101-year history. I am proud to say that I stand here as the member for Gladstone who helped save that port from being sold. A total of 99.3 million tonnes is transported through the Gladstone port alone.

The past year has also seen the completion of a \$30 million tug base in the port of Gladstone and the first shipments of liquefied natural gas, as I spoke about earlier today. Despite the downturn in the coal market, the Gladstone port—

An opposition member interjected.

Mr BUTCHER: I will take that interjection. It is not sold, yet you keep saying that it is being leased. I find that ridiculous. It was to be sold. The Gladstone port maintained record level exports thanks, in part, to QCLNG commencing exports of LNG in December 2014 following the completion of its first train facility. LNG exports totalled 1.6 million tonnes in 2014-15. The LNG trade is forecast to grow significantly in the 2015-16 financial year, with all LNG proponents—QCLNG, GLNG and APLNG—either commencing operation and/or bringing their second trains into production.

The Gladstone Ports Corporation forecast tonnage for LNG exports for 2015-16 is approximately 12 million tonnes. The community benefit delivered by the Gladstone Ports Corporation cannot be undersold. This has been, and remains, a port corporation with a vision for the community—one I am pleased to say will now be captured in this new master plan. This past year has seen the opening of the East Shores stage 1A community development and the announcement that cruise ships will dock in the port of Gladstone from March 2016. In May this year, the Gladstone Ports Corporation marina was awarded the prestigious title of Best Public Boat Harbour in Australia in the Marina Industries Association's Marina of the Year Awards. This government is committed to the sustainability of the Gladstone port, investing \$62 million in the RG Tanna Coal Terminal. Not only did this government stop

this profitable government owned corporation's assets from being sold; we are now investing in infrastructure and upgrades which will generate jobs and prosperity in our region and our state now and into the future.

As I said, this government is committed to the sustainability of not just the Gladstone port but all major bulk commodity ports in Queensland. Committing to master plans that incorporate environmental considerations and align with planning for port areas beyond the port boundaries will see effective and efficient investment in the future of these assets. I commend the bill to the House.