




Speech By
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (3.28 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2). This bill makes a number of very good and technical amendments. The bill amends the City of Brisbane Act and the Local Government Act to make how-to-vote cards available for inspection at a local government's public office during the caretaker period for a quadrennial local government election. I think that makes sense in that it removes the inconsistencies between the abovementioned acts and the Local Government Electoral Act 2011. Therefore the same scrutiny as is used in the state election is applied to local government how-to-vote cards, so we are getting consistency across both tiers of government.

This meets the government's election commitment that local government elections will be conducted to the same high standards of independence and efficiencies as do state elections. When it comes to the manner in which we are both elected, I think that the residents in those local government areas and the general public at large want to know that local governments and state governments have consistency.

The bill also makes it clear that prohibited actions under the City of Brisbane Act and the Local Government Act do not apply to making an accepted how-to-vote card available for public inspection before polling day under the Local Government Electoral Act. So it removes that inconsistency, which I believe is a step in the right direction.

The bill proposes an extension of time for local government infrastructure plans, providing local government with a further two years to 30 June 2018 to have a local government infrastructure plan in place if that is approved by the relevant minister. Importantly, the bill requires local governments to justify their ability to meet the extended time frame and the reason they may want to have that extension. As we know, infrastructure planning is really important. I think that the two-year extension is a step in the right direction for those local governments that are having trouble meeting the current deadline. The plans are designed to provide information about essential infrastructure in a transparent and consistent way and may include only infrastructure for water supply, sewerage, stormwater, local transport or public parks—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Honourable members, could I ask members to keep their conversation to a minimum, please? The level of audible conversation is rising. I think we need to show the member for Brisbane Central respect in hearing her speak.

Ms GRACE: Madam Deputy Speaker, thank you. That is great—community facilities, commonly referred to as trunk infrastructure. So the legislation provides for a definition of trunk infrastructure. The bill meets the needs of many local governments that have advised that they will not be in a position to meet the current deadline. As I said, this bill allows the relevant minister to extend the deadline on a case-by-case basis. Without these amendments local governments would not be able to impose infrastructure charges on a development approval after 30 June 2016. Of course, these amendments will have no impact on those local governments that will already have a plan in place by that time.

Another sensible change is the ability of a development applicant to receive information about an offset or refund to be provided at a later date and time regarding information on an infrastructure charges notice, commonly known as ICN. Currently, there is no existing ability in any legislation to allow that to occur and, therefore, that can cause unnecessary days in development approvals when this information is not sought at that particular time by the developer applicant. They are more than happy to wait. I think it is sensible that this bill now allows them to wait to receive that information on any of those charges. With those few words, I commend the bill to the House.