




Speech By
Stephen Bennett

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Subordinate Legislation

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (10.29 am): I rise to share with the House an unprecedented abuse of power. This House demands a response from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection in relation to his attempt to circumnavigate the respected conventions of this parliament—a clear breach of the separation of powers and a breach of the minister's executive powers.

For the benefit of members, I refer to the clear requirement of government to table subordinate legislation. In indicating that the subordinate legislation will not be tabled, we have problems with this. We now have a government and a minister entering areas of precedence that we all should view with a huge amount of concern. It is clear the minister is taking advice from others, providing poor direction, and that has exposed his clear inexperience. We call on the minister to advise why this legislation was not tabled as required. This, in effect, was intended to allow important legislation to go through unnoticed and in fact lapse and cease to exist. We spoke yesterday about the apparent abuse of executive powers in this place and we seek an immediate and appropriate remedy.

These are important regulations like the Environmental Protection (Water) Amendment Policy (No. 1) 2014, which is about environmental protection and water quality; the Environmental Offsets Legislation Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, which is about environmental protection; the Nature Conservation (Protected Areas) Amendment Regulation (No. 4) 2014, which is correcting an error in relation to declaring a nature refuge; and the Nature Conservation (Forest Reserves) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2014, which is about redescribing a forest reserve. Other regulations are to do with animal species, macropod harvest issues, coastal protection and management in relation to coastal mapping used in planning and development, and coastal protection and management in relation to integrated development assessment system.

When you consider the rhetoric from those opposite about being open and transparent and that this government is listening, Queenslanders should expect that this subordinate legislation be tabled immediately before 14 July and forwarded through to the committee process—something that we all talk about as important. This is important legislation that Queenslanders deserve to know and to prepare for the consequences of this government's actions.

When we in this place take liberties with our democratic processes we start to go down a very slippery slope. These attempts will affect small business owners, farmers, recreational activities and many more. We owe these affected stakeholders an opportunity to review and understand this government's intention in arbitrarily winding back this legislation without any notification or consultation. Does the minister understand what this will mean for Queensland and those who are now operating under this legislation, those who are making investments, those small businesses making important decisions? You cannot treat Queenslanders with such contempt. If this Labor government has a clear agenda, it owes it to Queenslanders to disclose its agenda, extreme or otherwise. This will cost jobs and many small businesses.

It is also disturbing that there are no reasons evident for these decisions and there are no issues in relation to the fundamental legislation principles detected after independent peer review. I acknowledge that this government has the right to instil its policies and ideological stamp on its anti-growth reform agenda, particularly when we have a new government with no clear agenda of political policy wind back. However, we should not and cannot accept unprecedented executive interference in the accepted principles of the parliament of Queensland.