




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (5.29 pm): I also rise to speak in favour of the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. There are many parts of this bill, but there are three specific parts that I want to address. We have heard a bit about the first part of the bill that I want to talk about, and that is the amendment to chapter 1 of the Land Act to enable the state to grant tenure over non-tidal watercourses and lakes—water bodies where the cadastral boundary is the banks.

Under this bill, a lot can be created and leased over a non-tidal watercourse or non-tidal lake. This means that, if a local authority wants to put a jetty or a landing over a lake or a creek perhaps as part of a park redevelopment or a structure that could be used as part of a restaurant or a wedding venue, they can do that. The state would hold that lease and then they can sublease it to another party. This is about making it easier for communities to provide community infrastructure, to provide something over a lake or creek, something that helps build local tourism, making local communities more attractive to locals and visitors. It is something that allows local communities to really enjoy their local water bodies. This provision can be used if the local project does not involve tidal waters, does not interfere with the watercourse or involve the taking of water, and has consent from neighbouring properties. This is a small part of the bill, but it can have a really beneficial impact on Queensland communities which want to use the full potential of their natural environment as they build up visitors and tourists.

Another part of this bill I want to talk about is that which will help us deliver the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. As we have heard, Transurban Queensland is preparing a market-led proposal, the Logan Motorway Enhancement Project. If approved, this project will improve sections of the Logan Motorway and Gateway Motorway extension, the Mount Lindesay Highway and Wembley Road interchange. I am sure the member for Logan will talk about this, but this is a project that will support about 1,300 jobs and have more than \$1.2 billion in economic benefit.

To get the funds for this project, we need to amend the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994. The Minister for Main Roads needs to be able to declare a toll on a section of the Gateway and Logan motorways. There would be an increase in tolls for heavy vehicles and new tolls on south-facing ramps at Compton Road. The toll declaration would be limited to the scope of this project. As we can see by the papers attached to this, the RACQ and the Queensland Trucking Association are on board with this.

This is about providing the infrastructure we need in our most rapidly growing urban areas. We need this bill to get up a project that will ease traffic, ease congestion and improve the lifestyles for Queenslanders who reside in the outer urban areas beyond Brisbane—people such as those in my electorate. It is making sure that freight shipped by road has an easier flow between the producer and the market. This is a big and crucial piece of infrastructure, and we need this bill passed to make sure it can happen.

The third and last part of the bill I want to touch on—one of the most welcome parts of this bill—is how it helps community clubs in Queensland. We heard some disturbing facts in the hearings on this bill; namely, 69 community clubs have closed in Queensland since 2011. Two of those were in my home community: the Deception Bay Bowls Club and the Deception Bay Sports Club. We heard the member for Indooroopilly mention that there was some concern initially that this may allow superclubs to come in. From working with the Deception Bay Sports Club and Deception Bay Bowls Club, I can say that they really wanted the assistance of those large clubs. They wanted someone to come in who could handle their payroll, who could handle all the HR issues and who could help with stock management. Once a club gets gaming machines, it is a whole different ball game and they do need assistance. Some members of the sports club were very dear people to me, but they need assistance to manage what is a multimillion dollar organisation, and that is where those large clubs can come in and help out. If this amendment was passed earlier, perhaps it would have been able to help save those two local clubs in my area.

There are very few new clubs opening up in Queensland, especially in outer urban areas of Brisbane where land is really expensive. This bill will give clubs a better financial capacity to help look after those smaller clubs which are struggling and establish new clubs in those expanding areas. This bill removes the taxation disincentive for clubs with multiple premises. Currently, clubs operating multiple premises under a single gaming licence have their wins aggregated before the relevant tax is applied. Essentially they are paying more tax because their machines are treated as being in one premise or one group, but a major hospitality company has the ability to have all of its different premises treated as separate venues. For example, it might have 100 machines, but if they have five venues they could be taxed at the rate for only 20 machines for each of those venues. Clubs with more than one premises cannot do that.

What this very welcome bill does is even up the field. I want to pay tribute to the member for Morayfield, because he has been a fierce advocate of this initiative. I think it will be a great feather in the cap of his community and ours when it is passed. This initiative will not have a big impact on the state. There are only 21 clubs with additional gaming machine premises. That is only 4.8 per cent of clubs licensed under the Gaming Machine Act, but it will have a big impact in my community. It will allow the Caboolture Sports Club to better finance its new project, the North Lakes Sports Club, which I have talked about in this chamber before. This is a \$25 million project providing hundreds of local jobs and it is opening early next year. Without it, this major regional hub of North Lakes would not have a major community owned venue which the community can call its own.

While we see that the state will lose \$2.5 million to \$2.9 million a year, there will be an increasing amount of payroll tax generated by the hundreds of new jobs generated by this new initiative. This bill will have a beneficial impact in Queensland and in Murrumbidgee, and I commend it to the House.