



Speech By  
**Glenn Butcher**


**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 November 2016

**MOTION**

**Environmental Protection (Underground Water Management) and Other Legislation  
Amendment Bill**

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (6.15 pm): I rise as the chair of the Agriculture and Environment Committee to oppose the motion by the member for Nanango. It is interesting to hear those opposite talk about the importance of rushing this bill through parliament to get it done this week. As the new member for Gladstone, I have sat here many times and heard about the importance of not rushing these things through so that we get it right. That is what we want to do here. The committee handed down a report which was given to the minister to review. Our committee worked hard. We had a short time frame, which has already been mentioned, but we did make two recommendations in the report. I appreciate that the minister has moved a proposed amendment to the motion, and I table it.

*Tabled paper:* Proposed amendment moved by the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef, Hon. Dr Steven Miles, to the private member's motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Mrs Deb Frecklington MP, on 1 November 2016 [[1957](#)].

We have given ourselves a week. We always said we were going to do this next week, so we have given ourselves an extra week. We do not want to rush it through this week. We received nearly 2,000 submissions from those involved, 141 of which were written. The remaining 1,896 were from three different groups with different submissions but which were very similar. We held public hearings which were attended by New Hope, the mining company that we heard outside here today—I note that the member for Nanango walked in with one of the nice orange shirts they were handing out—the Environmental Defenders Office of Queensland, the Queensland Resources Council, the Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association, the Lock the Gate Alliance, the Adani Group, the Mackay Conservation Council and Landholder Services.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. If that was your interjection in the back corner, member for Gregory, I think you are ready for a warning. If you persist you will certainly receive one.

**Mr BUTCHER:** We made two recommendations as a result of the groups that provided information on this bill. The recommendation that those opposite are carrying on about was given to the minister to review, and I will read it. It states—

The committee recommends that the Minister examine the impact on relevant mining licence holders' short-term prospects, and the resulting impacts on affected communities, and present his findings in the Bill's second reading speech.

This is what ministers do after committees report to them. As I said, we heard from all different types of groups and, as funny as it may seem, we debated these issues.

As you on that side of the House all know, groundwater is a complex issue. The science is complex and the politics and the tension between agriculture and industry requirements are even more complex. We delivered a detailed report with two recommendations. The minister advises me that the

government is considering those recommendations, and his proposed amendment to the motion will be read during next week's sittings. That is how the process should work, yet the LNP makes a mockery of it by undermining the committee process and the functioning of our parliament.

The committee report was tabled on 25 October—less than two weeks ago. I think it is reasonable that we as parliamentarians should have time to consider this report, hear the minister's second reading speech and view any amendments foreshadowed by the minister, especially as the government has been very clear that it intends to debate the bill next week.

I represent a resource community. Nobody understands better than we do the impact of the mining downturn and the desire to get projects going. That is precisely what the Palaszczuk government is delivering. You can do what you like while also allowing the parliament to properly consider bills that have potentially wide implications for farmers, mining and the environment.