




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GREGORY

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MINERAL RESOURCES (AURUKUN BAUXITE RESOURCE) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (9.03 pm): It is a great privilege to speak to the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill 2016. I would also like to thank the committee: the member for Mirani, the member for Burleigh and, of course, the member for Gladstone. I would also like to take this opportunity to wish the member for Gladstone all the best in his new role as chairman of the Agriculture and Environment Committee.

An honourable member: You'll have a beer with him at the Grand.

Mr MILLAR: I will. I take that interjection. I am more than happy to have a beer any time with any member out in Longreach. They are all welcome to come out, spend their money, help us out with the drought and enjoy the great hospitality that we have out in the Gregory electorate.

I would also like to thank the member for Dalrymple, the member for Keppel and also welcome the member for Lytton to the committee. The member for Hinchinbrook, the former minister for natural resources, explained the background to this issue at Aurukun and the amendment bill very well. He has been involved in natural resource management for a long time and has a great understanding of the issue.

This bill gives us an opportunity to look at employment opportunities for the people of the western cape. I have been there a couple of times and I understand some of the difficulties that the people in the western cape face when it comes to employment. There is good cattle country on the western cape, such as Delta Downs and Van Rook, but we also need to look at mining opportunities for the western cape and employment opportunities for our Indigenous communities. I believe that this mineral resources amendment bill gives us an opportunity to move a step closer to making sure that we can utilise the bauxite area at Aurukun to be able to provide an opportunity for employment for not only our Indigenous communities but also the wider communities in the cape, which is much needed. We talk about closing the gap. This is a way that we can close the gap in our Indigenous communities. This bill provides an opportunity for tomorrow's boilermakers, tomorrow's electricians, tomorrow's diesel fitters to come from our Indigenous communities and not only learn the trade at this bauxite deposit at Aurukun but also further their careers along the track. We need to get more of these sorts of opportunities going in the cape.

Royalties are so important for Queensland right now. I come from the Bowen Basin, where we have seen our mining resource towns suffer from a downturn in mining commodity prices. We need to look at every opportunity to increase these sorts of opportunities. Of course, the royalties from this project when it gets going will mean that we will see an increase in infrastructure expenditure and we will see an increase in roads expenditure, which is desperately needed up in the cape, such as on the Hann Highway. We also need to look at increasing services in the cape and, of course, increasing investment in that area.

The most important issue for Queenslanders is jobs, which is something that we have been speaking about this week. When we see projects like Adani continue to be held up, continue to be put on the backburner, I get really concerned. The Adani coalmine will mean so much for Central Queensland. I am talking about thousands of jobs and opportunities for young people in regional Queensland.

Mr Cripps: Two hours and 40 minutes so far.

Mr MILLAR: Two hours and 40 minutes. I am looking forward to seeing that mine approved as soon as possible. The Adani project means jobs for Queensland. That is why I support the Mineral Resources (Aurukun Bauxite Resource) Amendment Bill. For the people in the western cape, this bill is important. We need to get those jobs going. I would like to thank all the other committee members. Finally, I would like to pay my respects to our committee staff who do such a great job. As a member of the committee I look forward to working with them over the next 12 months. I certainly commend this bill to the House.