




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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MINERAL AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.38 pm): I rise to add to the debate on the Mineral and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016. I am not going to take up too much of the time of the House on this this afternoon, but I would like to counter some of the arguments put forward by the member for Mirani. I will not go into too much detail about this because I think the member for Hinchinbrook has outlined very succinctly exactly how I feel about this particular bill and how I suggest other members on this side of the House feel about this bill.

We did travel quite a bit in looking at this bill. We visited some properties and we held a few public hearings and we heard from people who were concerned about notification and objection rights, and rightly so. Some of the people whom we talked to live in sight of some of the mines. I think that they had every right to object to the mining tenures that are applicable to some of these coalmines. The people we visited were very passionate about their properties, about the water that they felt might be affected on their properties and about how their lifestyle might be affected.

While I am happy to look at expanding objection rights slightly, I still have a real issue with expanding objection rights to the whole world, and that is what we are talking about here. If we were talking about neighbours, people within a line of sight of the mine, people who are affected by changes in the water on their property, people who are affected by vibrations, dust, noise, smell—any of those things—then absolutely those people should have objection rights. The reason the committee accepted to pass this bill is more about the construction of the committee because there are three Labor members and one Katter's Australian Party member. It was the majority of the committee that decided to pass this bill.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if you read the report you will see that on a few occasions it talks about the majority of the committee voting a certain way. That is why it was necessary for me and the member for Gregory to write a nine-page statement of reservations. As the member for Hinchinbrook quite clearly said, it would be advantageous for those opposite to sit down and read that statement of reservations—in particular, the history that lays out how the Mineral Resources Act and MER(CP) Act work and how this bill changes particular provisions of the MER(CP) Act.

Once again, we see a Labor Party that is intent on reversing everything that the LNP government did. This bill does exactly that again. I have lost count how many times I have stood in this House and said exactly that—that a particular bill was simply reversing the position that the LNP government had put in place when we were in government. LNP bills have benefited this state in a great way. They have led to the number of cranes that we see out there on the skyline today. That will quickly evaporate under conditions that are put in place by this government—this government that is intent on reversing everything that the LNP did.

I was intending to talk about quite a few other things, but I think I will tackle the member for Mirani's assertion that there are no vexatious claims being made in our courts to stop mining tenures. I am glad that the member for Mirani brought up the EDO's statement to the committee. I will read it again for the benefit of the members opposite. The report states—

Despite mining stakeholders' claims that frivolous or vexatious cases are extensively used by landholders and other groups, the majority of the committee was unable to find evidence to support this view.

The majority of the committee did not find that evidence because they did not bother looking for it. It is not too hard to find if you look at this particular document which was given to the committee. This document is titled *Stopping the Australian coal export boom: funding proposal for the Australian anti-coal movement*, and it is from Greenpeace. In this document Greenpeace are seeking \$3.725 million to run a campaign. What sort of campaign is it? I table this document for the benefit of the members opposite.

Tabled paper: Document, dated November 2011, titled 'Stopping the Australian Coal Export Boom: funding proposal for the Australian anti-coal movement' [761].

I would strongly encourage them to read this because it lays out the strategy of their extreme green friends who aim to stop the coal industry dead in its tracks. They state—

Our strategy is essentially to 'disrupt and delay' key projects and infrastructure while gradually eroding public and political support for the industry and continually building the power of the movement to win more.

That is the strategy and the aim of people who are raising vexatious claims in our courts. I am not sure whether the member for Mirani has in fact sat down and read this. I would hope that the other members of the committee have bothered to sit down and read this because it is damning.

Mr Pearce: What does it say about the vexatious claims?

Mr HART: I will take the interjection from the member for Mirani. The issue with vexatious claims in our courts revolves around the definition of what vexatious is. It is very hard to lock that down. It is wide open to interpretation. I would suggest to you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that our courts are being very careful about what they do and they are not ruling anything out as vexatious. Quite frankly, that is what they are doing. We have people such as Greenpeace who are out there putting forward these documents. Their proposal, if you turn to page 6 of this document, is to provide legal challenges. They state—

Legal challenges will draw on a range of arguments relating to local impacts on wetlands, endangered species, aquifers and the World Heritage Listed Great Barrier Reef Marine Park ...

How often do we hear about issues with the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park that are affected by mining applications? Is it any wonder that those applications are appearing in courts constantly when we have documents like this floating around seeking funding from people who fake, in a lot of instances, concern for the environment?

I am glad that the member for Mirani mentioned the EDO in Queensland. Part of the funding proposal in this document seeks funding for the EDO to process litigation on behalf of these people. They are looking for \$225,000 for two extra lawyers for the EDO in Queensland and \$170,000 for litigation costs. In total, if these people get their way, if they get the necessary funding that they want from this, they want the EDO in New South Wales and Queensland to have additional funding of \$1.35 million—\$1.35 million—in order to shut down the coal industry. That is what they are attempting to do.

We hear from those opposite that they are all about jobs over there. Are they supportive of this document? This document will kill jobs in Queensland. It will kill jobs throughout Australia. If they are supportive of this document, they are out there killing jobs. There is no doubt about it.

Mr Pearce interjected.

Mr HART: If the member for Mirani cares to have a look at this, on page 15 there is another amount of money listed—\$220,000. What is its aim? 'Creating investor uncertainty'. 'Creating investor uncertainty'—is that what we really want in this state? Do we want our investors to be uncertain? As the member for Hinchinbrook said—

Mr Minnikin: Sovereign risk.

Mr HART: I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth. This is all about sovereign risk. In everything they do, every time they turn around, the government are introducing more sovereign risk into this state. This state will be strangled under a Labor government. The more legislation we see, the further backward we are going. We are going back years and years. We had massive advancement under the LNP. We had massive advancement under the member for Hinchinbrook as our minister in this area. We are going backwards at a great rate of knots. It is only an LNP government that can fix this state because the Labor government are taking us down that big black hole that we do not want to go down.