




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (4.02 pm), continuing: I am pleased to have the opportunity to continue on from yesterday in speaking about my support for the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Yesterday it was my privilege to talk about some of my personal experiences as a director of a community club, the Runaway Bay Junior Leagues Club. I also made some references to my time as one of the founding directors of the Gold Coast Titans and some of the challenges around sponsorship, and I would like to continue in that vein.

I want to again stress how important it is that we have provisions in the legislation to ensure that major events and sports events will not suffer at the hands of scrupulous organisations that would seek to undertake ambush marketing at these events. It is particularly important given that many of the major venues across the state are state government owned venues. If we look at some of the major facilities, particularly in my patch on the Gold Coast, we have the Cbus Super Stadium, which was a purpose-built facility to support the NRL bid a number of years ago. It was one of the conditions of the Gold Coast receiving its licence. Those venues cost a lot of money to operate, so protecting the sponsorship rights and the income of not only the venue operator but also the teams that will play there is so important.

If we look at the other venue on the Gold Coast, Metricon Stadium, it is a multimillion dollar facility developed by the state government in partnership with the local council. Again, it is so important to protect the sponsorship rights and the revenues attached to that venue. There is some history here that I would like to raise in respect of the venues, and some of it includes the member for Mermaid, Ray Stevens. He may remember that back in, I think, 1999 a number of us met with Terry Jackman and Paul Wyatt, who was then the CEO of the Southport Sharks AFL club. I think Geoff Smith and Roy Miller may have been there in those early days. At the time we had come off the back of a fairly miserable defeat in trying to save the Gold Coast Chargers, but we regrouped and we started working with the council on a feasibility plan to look at the possibility of securing funding for a multipurpose venue.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid. Ray and I were both very keen to be on the board of the NRL Chargers. We were co-opted in at one point as temporary directors only to be unceremoniously dumped by that evil Tom Bellew from the New South Wales Rugby League in a last-minute ditch to try to wind up what was one of the better teams to perform through the Super League war.

What came out of that was that Ray, I and others were able to secure the support of Gary Baidon and the council of the day to put up some funds for a feasibility study. The legacy of that today is that we now have some of the best stadiums in the country. We have a purpose-built Rugby League stadium at Robina. We have a revamped Metricon Stadium at Carrara. I do not believe that we would have even been a look-in for the Commonwealth Games had we not seen that investment and that work by our council at the time and subsequently with the support of the state government and then the local

business community. Protecting these sponsorship rights is so important. If we look forward, in only 18 months time we will host one of the biggest sporting events in the Southern Hemisphere this decade. I am sure that Goldoc will appreciate this provision, because the last thing we need to see during the Commonwealth Games is some form of ambush marketing around the venues and events that will occur as a result of that major event on the Gold Coast.

I want to turn briefly back to the discussion around some of the licensed clubs. This is an important issue in my patch. I have quite a significant number of licensed clubs in Southport. There is the Southport RSL club, which is a significant club within the heart of my electorate. It is well run by Paul Burton, who also heads up the licensed venues alliance within Southport. There is the Tigers Rugby League club at Owen Park. It is a small club; it struggles, but what a great legacy and contribution it makes to the community. Then there is the powerhouse club of Southport Sharks, which is right in the centre of my electorate, with some 50,000 or 60,000 members. That club has gone from strength to strength thanks to the legacy of Wally Fankhauser back in the eighties and nineties. He has been a mad Aussie Rules fanatic over the years. It is a great legacy and a great community club that contributes so much not only to Southport but also to the Gold Coast community.

Even though it is just on the fringes, the Labrador Tigers AFL club is a club that the member for Broadwater and I share an interest in. In fact, I had the privilege of being their club patron for a number of years during my time in the Gold Coast City Council. I worked very closely with their board of directors as they struggled through some really challenging times around maintaining the financial stability of the club. I am pleased to report that that club has continued to thrive. It is growing and that is a great thing for the community and it is great for all the juniors who are involved there. The club also takes a very active role in supporting a cricket field with irrigation, and in the off-season it serves as a great venue for the local cricketers.

The Musgrave Hill Bowls Club is just up the hill from my office. They serve some of the best roasts of the day and all-you-can-eat buffets on the weekend. They also host a large number of charity events, with barefoot bowls on the weekend. I am very grateful for the opportunity to have been involved there.

I also mention the old Southport Workers club, and I am sure colleagues on the other side of the House would have an appreciation for the role of that club. They have been through some challenging times, but under new management and a new name—the CSi Club Southport—they have certainly gone on to thrive. I have to relay a very funny story. A new general manager was appointed at the Southport Workers club about three years ago when I was in my first term of parliament. They duly invited me down to the club for a board meeting and they wanted me to meet the new board and the new CEO. About two or three days later, I got a phone call saying, 'We would really love you to be our club patron.' I subsequently got a phone call about two days later saying, 'We didn't realise you were with the Liberal National Party. It's probably not appropriate to have you as a patron of the club so we're withdrawing our invitation.' That was a funny little incident that occurred.

The member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek, and I also share an interest in the Southport Surf Life Saving Club. We have both been members there and have both enjoyed the magnificent view they offer. It is tremendous to see the money that is poured into surf lifesaving at Main Beach and into the nippers programs to the many hundreds of young people who participate there.

These changes are important. It is only a fairly minor amendment, but I think the provision for bigger clubs to be able to take on a caretaker role or even some sort of management role without penalty, where there is the need for a larger club to get in and support a smaller club, is a significant amendment. I am pleased to be able to stand and support this particular proposal as outlined in the bill. As I said earlier, I am particularly pleased that we are introducing provisions to ensure that there will not be ambush marketing of major events and major sporting events, and for that matter ambush marketing that would take away the value of sponsorship with some of our major facilities that the state government owns and controls across the state.