




Speech By  
**Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe**

**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2016

### **PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (5.56 pm): I rise to speak in support of this vital legislation that delivers on the Palaszczuk government's election commitment to re-establish a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body. Although the bill addresses other important matters, such as tenants' rights, I will focus my remarks on those amendments in the bill that relate to the plumbing industry.

As promised at the election, the Palaszczuk Labor government is strengthening the industry to give it back its voice. The industry lost its voice under the former LNP Government when it dismantled the Plumbing Industry Council. Once again, it is Labor governments that stand on the side of certainty and fairness for Queenslanders, listening intently to industry to ensure growth and proper representation.

This bill re-establishes a form of plumbing regulation that has been in place since the 1950s. Although from time to time it is appropriate to reform and improve some things, demolishing them is not the right way to go. The abolition of the Plumbing Industry Council is a great example of that. In a former government, I served as the minister responsible for plumbing regulation. I played a role in the appropriate reform of this regulation with the establishment of the Plumbing Industry Council.

The move last year to create the Service Trades Council, which will take over the plumbing and drainage regulatory responsibilities, is a very good move indeed. Stakeholders constantly have come to the government supporting this move, as we know that this system will help deliver world-leading health and safety outcomes for Queenslanders. Importantly, the Service Trades Council will create a panel of experts to review complex licencing applications. These experts will uphold the standards that Queenslanders expect to be maintained.

The Service Trades Council will play a critical role in ensuring that the industry is properly represented. I note that, in March 2015, the Department of Housing and Public Works met with industry stakeholders to develop a model for the Service Trades Council. The Service Trades Council will also represent the industry on national policy development and will directly report to the Minister for Housing and Public Works on issues relating to plumbing and drainage.

The membership of the Service Trades Council will be diverse and ensure that it is well represented by industry and government. Members will include the assistant commissioner as a representative of the QBCC, representatives of a range of relevant departments and industry entities and, importantly, a consumer representative.

I lament the fact that the opposition opposes the move to support the creation of an assistant commissioner. I know that the Master Plumbers' Association of Queensland—a very fine body that is focused on best practice in the industry—is strongly in support of this position. Members on this side of the House also know that that position will play a vital role in ensuring the proper functioning of the Service Trades Council.

As I have alluded to earlier, this position is simply the recreation of a previous position, that of the Plumbing Industry Council Registrar. I note that there were some concerns outlined by the member for Redlands in his letter to the chair of the Transportation and Utilities Committee about the costs of this role.