




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 19 April 2016

**QUEENS'S WHARF BRISBANE BILL; BRISBANE CASINO AGREEMENT
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (9.52 pm), in reply: I thank honourable members for their contributions to this debate. Once again, I thank the members of the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee, which considered the two bills. I am pleased that in his opening statement the member for Mansfield advised that the opposition would support the bills, because one would not know that from the tone of the speeches that followed. It was good to have that clarification early. It is pleasing that across this chamber all members of parliament support the passage of these bills and the development of Queen's Wharf.

I wish to clarify some of the points that have been raised. The hour is late and everybody is keen to finish, but I want to correct the record. The member for Mansfield stated that he is disappointed that the project does not have a theatre attached to it. I believe that he said that they had secured a theatre as part of the Queen's Wharf development. The problem is that when we came into government negotiations were continuing. A successful proponent had not yet been announced. Therefore, to say that they had secured a theatre is not accurate. They could not have done that, because negotiations about what would form the successful bid were ongoing at that stage. I am very pleased that through Labor's negotiations we ensured that the successful bid would generate more revenue out of the proposal and fewer poker machines. I think we did a very good job.

However, the scope, scale and location of the theatre was not properly resolved and it was becoming a distraction to the delivery of the Queen's Wharf Brisbane development. At the time of contract close, there was no guarantee that the state's need for a theatre could be adequately delivered. What did the Palaszczuk government do? In November last year, the Premier announced that the state government would commission a \$1.3 billion business case for a 1,500-seat theatre to report back in 12 months.

An opposition member: Another inquiry.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection. It was another review, because we believe in getting things right—and I will come to 1 William Street in a minute.

The Premier has said that the government is committed to delivering a second theatre, but first a thorough study into the best location, size and management model is needed. We have made that commitment, which is more than those opposite had secured under this proposal. To put that into starker contrast, we cannot forget that the LNP scrapped the Queensland Literary Awards. By rallying around the awards, sponsors and the community managed to keep them going. After taking office in 2015, one of the first and most pleasing announcements by the Premier and Minister for the Arts was the restoration of funding to the Queensland Literary Awards. In its first budget, the Newman

government cut \$12.4 million from Arts Queensland. The bulk of that razoring slashed the funding of arts organisations, particularly youth arts group such as Contact Inc. and Youth Arts Queensland. Last year, the Palaszczuk government began a process of restoring arts funding with an extra \$5.1 million in the budget to go towards the Queensland Arts Showcase Program. This government cares about the future of the arts in this state, and that includes the emerging and small to medium sectors.

I have to touch on 1 William Street because many members on the other side spoke about it, as did some of my colleagues on this side of the House who pointed out the obvious flaws in their arguments. I can understand why those on the other side spent much of their time beating their chests about Queen's Wharf and 1 William Street—1 William Street in particular, as it was the only project that they started in three years in government. Everything else was a Labor initiative that they claimed over and over again, for three years. They did start one project: 1 William Street. However, the Queensland Audit Office made it very clear that there were significant losses as a consequence of the way that the LNP went about procurement. They can crow about 1 William Street. We will let them have that, because it is all theirs and the Queensland Audit Office says that it is all theirs. They can claim it. For as long as they like, they can talk about their legacy of 1 William Street and how many state government dollars they blew. We will support them in that.

These bills are all about supporting jobs, supporting our economy and creating great hospitality and tourism hubs, for not only domestic but also international guests. The project will support jobs in the construction phase and, importantly, 8,000 operational jobs, as well as projected estimates of an additional 1.4 million annual tourists, which means 1.4 million opportunities for not just for South-East Queensland but also the entire state. The entire state will benefit from the flow-on effects as no doubt those additional tourists will take the opportunity to travel to other Queensland destinations and sample all that the state has to offer. The project will generate substantial returns to government by way of multimillion dollar payments to the state and a guaranteed \$880 million in casino taxes for the first 10 years of the Queen's Wharf casino operation. That money will add vital revenue to the state's budget for the benefit of Queensland. The Queen's Wharf Brisbane project is also a realisation of industry confidence in our state, which will attract further investment from those seeking to invest in an innovative and thriving economy.

The fact of the matter is that the Palaszczuk government is delivering this development and jobs for Queensland. In conclusion, once again I thank the members for their contributions during the debate and I commend the bills to the House.