




Speech By
Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 10 May 2017

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL (TRANSPARENCY AND
ACCOUNTABILITY IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (5.32 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Local Government Electoral (Transparency and Accountability in Local Government) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. This bill delivers on the Palaszczuk government's commitment to Queenslanders to improve transparency and accountability in political donations at the local government level. As the Premier has stated, Queensland now has some of the most progressive, open and transparent political donation laws in the country. Since March 2017 voters have been able to access information about state government election donations within seven business days of the donation being made. This means that Queenslanders will be informed about who has made election donations, to which candidates and how much they have donated before the next state election. This bill will ensure that voters will have access to real-time information about donations being made to local government candidates before local government polling day.

The Crime and Corruption Commission report *Transparency and accountability in local government* recommended changes be made to Queensland's local government electoral donation legislation to improve transparency and accountability and to remove confusion about disclosure requirements. One of the recommendations of the report was to amend disclosure time frames to make the disclosure of donations more contemporaneous with the receipt of the donation. The CCC found that not having this information available before the election hampers voters' ability to make an informed decision about a candidate on polling day.

Like the Electoral Act 1992, which governs state elections, the bill will provide a head of power for a regulation to prescribe the time frames within which donations must be disclosed. Amendments have recently been made to the Electoral Regulation 2013 requiring returns to be made within seven business days after the donation is made. The Deputy Premier stated in her second reading speech that, subject to the passage of this bill, it is proposed to make amendments to the Local Government Electoral Regulation 2012 to prescribe disclosure time frames that are consistent, where appropriate, with the state election time frames. The bill will address concerns raised by the CCC by ensuring that information about who has made donations to local government candidates and how much they have donated is available to voters before elections. This means that Queensland voters will be able to make informed decisions about the suitability of candidates for election as mayors or councillors before they go to the polls. I commend the bill to the House.