



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**

**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 28 February 2017

### **RAIL SAFETY NATIONAL LAW (QUEENSLAND) BILL**

 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (5.53 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Rail Safety National Law (Queensland) Bill. The bill will apply a national law that provides for a national system of rail safety, repeal the Transport (Rail Safety) Act 2010 and amend that act, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999, the Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999, the Queensland Rail Transit Authority Act 2013 and the Work Health and Safety Act 2011. Before proceeding I acknowledge the excellent work of the then minister for transport, Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe, for his commitment and hard work in this portfolio and the proposal initiated in this bill for rail safety and delivery of regulatory harmonisation across the Australian states and territories contained in this bill. Equally, I acknowledge the experience and commitment the Deputy Premier shall bestow on the portfolio to ensure the delivery of transport needs for all Queenslanders.

Our government recognises the significance of rail. This is echoed in the following three rail infrastructure projects: the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2, which will open in time for the Commonwealth Games in 2018; the Redcliffe peninsula line from Petrie to Kippa-Ring, which has provided affordable and efficient transport links to Brisbane's north; and the duplication of the Gold Coast line between Helensvale and Coomera. Queensland needs a safe, efficient and reliable rail network. Rail transport operators in Queensland must be accredited in accordance with the Transport (Rail Safety) Act 2010. The act specifically requires operators to demonstrate that they have the competence and capacity to operate rail, that they have appropriate funding, effective management and control of their operations and a safety management system in place.

From 2010 Queensland has recorded a continued trend of improvement in rail safety. Previous speakers have identified those particular areas in their contributions. The safe, efficient and seamless operation of rail transport networks will be further reinforced by the Queensland government's decision to adopt the national reforms. Queenslanders can be confident that our high safety standards will be retained following commencement of the bill. This move to a single national law will result in substantial efficiency and productivity developments for commercial rail organisations operating in more than one state. It shall build on the substantial progress in rail safety achieved in Queensland since 2010. This bill will also benefit workers, including contractors who, by choice or by contract, will be working in different states and territories. These workers will better understand their responsibilities under the law and they might find the transition easier.

I acknowledge the excellent work in the report of the Transportation and Utilities Committee's examination of the bill and the continued commitment of the members of the committee, particularly Chair Shane King. After receiving submissions and holding a public departmental briefing on the bill in Brisbane on 12 October 2016, the members recommended the passing of the bill. As the report identifies, Queensland is the only jurisdiction that has not mirrored or applied the Rail Safety National Law. This bill will bring our state in line with every other jurisdiction. The Department of Transport and Main Roads informed the committee Queensland was the last jurisdiction to apply the Rail Safety

National Law and that Queensland's application of the law means that we would be again moving closer to a truly national rail safety regulation scheme. This has also enabled us to learn more from the experience of other jurisdictions and we believe that this will be a smooth transition for Queensland and all the stakeholders who are involved in the process. This bill will bring rail safety in Queensland into a national, harmonised and safe situation that will stand for more than 150 years into the future. I commend the bill to the House.