



Speech By **Dr Christian Rowan**

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.26 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2018. It is an old adage but one that has held true for generations: without trucks Australia stops and Queensland stops. I listened intently to the contribution of the member for Gregory. He and those in his electorate understand the importance of the heavy vehicle industry to rural and regional Queensland. I also mention the former member for Gregory, who is a former minister for transport and main roads, Vaughan Johnson.

Mr Millar interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I take that interjection from the member for Gregory. The current member for Gregory and the former member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, understand the importance to rural and regional Queensland of the heavy vehicle industry with respect to trucking cattle, fresh produce and other goods.

There is no question that trucks and our heavy vehicle industry play a pivotal role in our day-to-day lives. We on this side of the House, the Liberal National Party, recognise the vital contribution the trucking industry makes to not only the Queensland economy but also the Australian economy as a whole. That is why any efforts that can be made and any measures that can be introduced within this parliament that will boost productivity and safety for all in this industry and ultimately reduce the complexity of compliance are very worthy of consideration and support.

As has been outlined in the explanatory notes to this bill, amendments will be made to implement key heavy vehicle policy initiatives to reduce the complexity and improve the effectiveness of the investigation and enforcement of the heavy vehicle national law, and improve the productivity of the road network and freight fleet by increasing the allowed volume on certain heavy vehicles where mass is not a constraint.

I also wish to reiterate the bill's other amendments, which, while classified as being minor and technical, are nonetheless worthy of note. These include amendments which will reduce the administrative or regulatory burden for the regulator and/or the heavy vehicle industry, clarify existing requirements or otherwise aid interpretation of the heavy vehicle national law, and address technical drafting issues.

There is one thing you can be sure of in this House—that is, we the Liberal National Party will always aim to reduce administrative and regulatory burdens on industry when it is appropriate and safe to do so. Those other amendments that I have just listed, while minor, are in fact incredibly important to the heavy vehicle industry. I take this opportunity to acknowledge my colleague the member for Scenic Rim, who spoke in this parliament on this very issue last year when he was then the member for Beaudesert. As the member for Scenic Rim highlighted, confusion and inconsistencies in the application of the heavy vehicle national law have resulted in many truck drivers who simply want to do the right thing left with no idea what to do or where to go. Anything that can be done to reduce complexity and assist in the compliance with legislation is worthy of both consideration and implementation by this parliament.

I also want to note the significance of this bill's impact on road safety—an issue which I am very passionate about in my electorate of Moggill. With Queensland Road Safety Week now behind us, it is quite timely and indeed appropriate that we consider these amendments. In my electorate of Moggill and surrounding western suburbs, road safety and addressing our road networks and infrastructure are front and centre issues that must continue to be addressed. Recently we saw yet another crash on Moggill Road, this time involving a young girl left with major injuries, and I was inundated yet again with calls asking just what it will take for the state Labor government to care and act. Only in the last month we saw the release of yet another damning RACQ travel time report featuring the Centenary Highway as the second slowest section of road for inbound travel and taking all top 3 positions for the slowest section of road travelling outbound.

While supportive of this bill, the question must be asked: just what good is it for the industry to have these productivity and safety gains if its trucks will only end up sitting idle in bumper-to-bumper traffic in the western suburbs each and every day? This again only reinforces my call for a comprehensive integrated road and public transport plan for the western suburbs to ease traffic congestion on Moggill Road and across the western suburbs. The Liberal National Party is the party for business, of enterprises small and large and everything in between and they all, in one way or another, rely on our heavy vehicle industry. That is why this industry deserves our continued encouragement and support so that Queensland and Australia do not stop. I commend the bill to the House and I also pleasingly note that Queensland is the host jurisdiction for this legislative framework.