



Speech By
Jessica Pugh

MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY

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MINERAL, WATER AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.13 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Mineral, Water and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. In doing so I will first address issues relating to water as covered in the bill. The Palaszczuk government wants to ensure that Queenslanders have the utmost confidence in their water supply, and they know that climate change is front of mind when we are planning for water. This legislation updates the Water Act 2000 in order to address the impact of water related effects of climate change on water resources as well as recognising the cultural values and uses of water resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Although climate change and variability are currently part of the technical assessment process, it is not always obvious or always clear how these assessments feed into the water-planning policy decisions or how they are reflected in the water plans as climate change is not currently an explicit consideration in the current legislation. What a difference 18 years makes as climate change is now front and centre in our policy and legislative agenda. The Palaszczuk government has a 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030 and we are focused and committed to doing everything we can to address climate change.

This bill is modernising the Water Act by adding requirements that the water related effects of climate change on water availability, use practices and risk to land or water arising from the use of water on land will now be considered in water planning. This bill places the importance of climate change beyond a doubt by requiring the minister to consider climate change in the water-planning process. This change will ensure that climate change is required to be considered in the water-planning process to ensure water management policies and practices respond to climate change. As I said before, we want to ensure that Queenslanders do have the utmost confidence that climate change is front of mind when we are planning for water because we know it is an issue that matters to them. These changes will ensure consistency and transparency when considering climate change as part of the legislative framework.

This legislation also recognises the cultural values and uses of water resources separate from other outcomes. While in many cases cultural outcomes will already be achieved by existing strategies, it is nonetheless crucial to ensure that these will always be considered. To provide clarity in how cultural outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will be achieved, the amendments also expand the definition of 'environmental flow objectives' to make it clear that they are intended to provide for social and cultural outcomes through the use of, or access to, water. Water plan provisions will continue to be designed in close consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. These measures are critically important to update this wideranging bill and reflect where we are today in terms of our understanding of climate change and our relationship with our nation's first peoples.

I would also like to note the wonderful work of our secretariat on this and the many other bills that our committee has had before it this year. We have had committee work ranging from agriculture to tomorrow's space inquiry hearing. We really have run the whole gamut and gauntlet. Key among that is the wonderful Jacqui and her trusty offsideer Natasha. They do an absolutely outstanding job in

organising inquiries, finding witnesses and organising relevant and meaningful site visits to help us as a committee better understand the legislation and reports that we are helping to write. We really could not do it without them. I know it has been invaluable for me as a member of this committee to have the opportunity to do all of these things. Without Jacqui and the secretariat we simply would not have that opportunity. I wanted to place on record my thanks to the secretariat for all their wonderful work. I commend the bill to the House.