




Speech By  
**Lachlan Millar**

**MEMBER FOR GREGORY**

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Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

**REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; APPROPRIATION  
(PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); AND APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)**

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (3.50 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate of the bills. Many of the amendments in the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill will be of benefit to my constituents in Gregory. Firstly, the bill contains provisions to support e-conveyancing. This is much needed and will be of great benefit to people in regional and rural Queensland. It also amends the Taxation Administration Act to make charitable institutions include clauses which specify the use of the entity's income and property. I realise that this will require charities to check and possibly amend their constitutions in order to ensure they comply; however, I do believe that this reform is needed to prevent disputes such as the recent Victorian dispute between an individual CWA branch and the state hierarchy over how some of the locally raised funds should be spent. There are so many local charities that work so hard in country Queensland. Despite the paperwork, this clarification is welcome because it will ensure that the time and effort dedicated by local volunteers is expended where it can support and progress local community life. This amendment will safeguard the efforts of all those who volunteer.

The bill contains another suite of amendments which will be of enormous benefit to the constituents of Gregory and indeed every family owned primary production business in Queensland. These are amendments to the Duties Act which give retrospective legislative effect to a number of beneficial administration arrangements around the transfer duty concession for family businesses of primary production. This bill will extend the concession to all types of dutiable property used to conduct primary production business. The Land Tax Act is also amended to give retrospective legislative effect to a beneficial administrative arrangement which ensures that land from deceased estates is assessed for land tax as intended.

In the US and many EU countries, agriculture has become dominated by huge global conglomerates that undertake industrial scale farming. While this is not unknown to us, Australian agriculture remains strongly supported by family owned farms. When you compare the two models, the family farmer rates amazingly well in terms of productivity, food safety and innovation. Of course, in history dreadful famines occurred when nations lost their family farmers. Family owned agriculture turns out to provide a good foundation for food security as well. If we are to retain our family farm sector, we must have successful succession planning in family farm businesses. This process is always stressful and personal. How could it be otherwise? These amendments remove some hurdles, making it easier for farming families to have a succession plan in place. This is good for the older generation looking towards retirement and good for the younger generation because they know that they will receive the fruits of their current labour. I think it is a good idea. Of course, family farm succession is paramount today as many baby boomers are looking for retirement and the next generation of farming is certainly coming along.

I note merely in passing the amendments to allow a new case management service delivery model for the State Penalties Enforcement Registry. It is sincerely hoped that this will better assist all Queenslanders in their interactions with SPER. I take seriously my duties to assist constituents in their

interactions with Queensland law and departments. Like all members, I have experience with constituents who have struggled in their dealings with SPER, and I hope that this new service model will make these dealings easier.

I would particularly like to mention the amendments to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities (Justice, Land and Other Matters) Act 1984. My constituents in the township of Woorabinda are directly affected by this act as under Woorabinda's alcohol management plan they have a policy of zero carriage of alcohol. It is my overwhelming impression that this policy is strongly supported by both the leadership and the people of Woorabinda, who see it as having a very positive outcome on the community. I know that it is also strongly supported by the local police and by health and social services agencies delivering services to that community because it supports better social outcomes on a number of measures including physical and mental health for young and old.

The zero-carriage-of-alcohol policy affects both commercially sold alcohol and home-brew concentrate. This ensures that the dry place declaration cannot be undermined. Easy access to relatively low cost ingredients used to make homemade alcohol, combined with the ability to use common household items in its manufacture, means that home-brew continues to challenge the intentions of a dry place declaration. Of particular concern is the emergence of turbo yeast, because it allows the production of bulk alcohol at an accelerated rate and produces a high-alcohol beverage—as high as 23 per cent. A recent court decision found that turbo yeast is not covered by the act because it contains no malt and hops. This amendment will close that loophole in section 38 of the act and will ensure that the community of Woorabinda can continue to manage this issue under current laws. This is timely. I welcome that amendment.

I move on to the appropriation bills, which seek more money for departmental budgets. It concerns me that, including these bills, this government has racked up over \$3.16 billion in unforeseen expenditure from 2015-16 to 2017-18, displaying a complete inability to set limits on its use of taxpayers' money. All families try to run a good household budget. As the member for Glass House said, can you imagine if a family overspent their budget by \$300,000? Where would they go to get the money? They could try to go to a bank, but they would probably find it pretty hard to get the money. These massive amounts of unforeseen expenditure are concerning. In 2016-17 there was over \$2.2 billion in unforeseen expenditure. In the year before there was \$390 million in unforeseen expenditure.

Only Labor could get a massive coal royalties windfall, bring in five new taxes and still have to increase borrowings to plug the budget black hole while racking up more and more debt. The CommSec State of the States report puts Queensland in sixth place. I note that those opposite have talked down the CommSec State of the States report. I can assure members that when those opposite were in opposition they talked up the CommSec report. Now that they are in government they are talking it down. They cannot have it both ways.

CommSec puts us at sixth, on the bottom half of the economic ladder, behind South Australia. Queensland should be an economic powerhouse and should be in the top two or three behind New South Wales and Victoria. We should even be above New South Wales and Victoria. We have the Bowen Basin. We have royalties from the coal industry. We have a massive agricultural industry. In fact, the Central Highlands region has the biggest cattle herd in Australia. We have massive opportunities with agriculture and mining, yet we are now sixth—on the bottom half of the economic ladder, behind South Australia. We have to do a lot better. We have the potential to do a lot better. We have the opportunities. The economic powerhouse for Queensland is in regional Queensland. You only have to go to places like Moranbah, Dysart, Emerald and Blackwater to see the rebound in the mining industry and the economic opportunities that is providing, not only for local employment but also for royalties to the state government.

Like I said, only Labor could get a massive coal royalty windfall, bring in five new taxes and still have to increase borrowings to plug the budget black hole while racking up more and more debt. We cannot continue to rack up the debt because someone has to pay it back. You have to pay the piper. You cannot keep spending other people's money. You have to pay it back. My concern is that it could take a couple of generations to get this debt under control. Going towards \$83 billion is a massive debt that our children and our grandchildren may have to pay back, so we need to rein that back and we need to ensure that Queensland becomes the economic powerhouse that it should be. It should be an economic powerhouse and it should be up in the top two, not in the bottom six.