




Speech By
Robbie Katter

MEMBER FOR TRAEGER

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PLUMBING AND DRAINAGE BILL

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (5.13 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Plumbing and Drainage Bill 2018. I am a member of the committee that considered the bill. I pay credit to the chair and the committee secretariat. I think the inquiry was conducted well. We were exposed to a diverse range of contributors in the public hearings. They certainly brought out a lot of the technical issues that are very difficult to get one's head around at times. There was a divergence of views on some of the technical issues. Both sides of the committee did their best to work through those.

I understand the intent of the bill and also understand what the minister is trying to achieve. I believe the intent is good. It was very clear from the contributions made in the hearings that this is a specialised field with dire consequences. We heard evidence of a plumber in Nambour who in 2009 tragically lost his life after cutting through a high-pressure refrigerative gas line. We also heard evidence of a baby tragically killed due to the wrong line being fitted and it delivering nitrous oxide instead of oxygen. We want to make sure that people are trained and certified when it comes to handling these things.

At the other end of the spectrum we had representatives from the ARMA talk about the encroachment on their business or trade. They outlined how they have a four-year training period compared to the other disciplines which have three years. That contributed to a lot of rigour around the bill.

I took note of the issues around WaterMark products. It is an important safety net. I make the observation that this inadvertently maintains some of the diminishing manufacturing base in Australia by making it harder to bring in bathroom pods. I appreciate what the minister has done in that regard.

Training and competency are paramount in the industry. I think there has been an attempt to cover that area. I appreciate recommendation No. 2 in the committee's report as it is consistent with my statement of reservation. It reads—

The committee recommends the Minister consider investigating ways to help ensure the safety of contractors when installing and working with refrigeration fluids and single head split systems.

It would be appreciated if the minister would consider that.

When I first saw the bill I was concerned about the impact of more red tape and regulation, particularly in rural areas where training can be a lot more costly if people have to fly apprentices and trainees to the coast on the expensive Qantas flights we have. Safety and training comes at a cost.

I appreciate the changes made to mechanical services licence class. My understanding is that it only applies to above class 1A buildings so it does not impact the refrigeration area. I acknowledge what the minister has said. I think it went some way to addressing some of those contributions.

I was particularly grateful to Kim Limburg from the ARMA. She was very passionate about her cause and protecting the interests of her members. She brought a lot of issues to light.

In terms of the amendments around subcontractors, I do not have a big issue with those. In the three terms I have been in here it has happened a lot that amendments are thrown in. I think what the minister has done around subcontractors is excellent. I commend him for his push in this area. Changing the 25 days to 15 days in the progress schedule is all good. I think he has done a good job in that area.

They are my main concerns. The opposition raised some good points about greywater in their statement of reservation. Once again, I think the committee did a pretty comprehensive job of picking up on most of the issues.