




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 21 March 2018

HOSPITAL FOUNDATIONS BILL

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (4.14 pm), in reply: I thank all members for their contribution to the debate and for their support for the bill. Hospital foundations are an important part of our state's public health system. It has been great to see the work undertaken by foundations, which was highlighted by so many members during this debate. Foundations raise funds to improve facilities, support educational and training opportunities for staff, fund research and support the health and wellbeing of communities. The bill before the House supports the hospital foundations to continue their important work by providing a modern and streamlined legislative framework.

In developing the new legislative framework, foundations told us that they wanted a new and improved act to enable them to run their day-to-day operations more efficiently. This bill does that by replacing the 35-year-old Hospitals Foundations Act 1982. Business processes and operations have changed a lot in those 35 years. This bill reflects contemporary practices.

This legislation delivers an appropriate level of business autonomy and government oversight. It provides for ministerial oversight of higher-risk financial matters while removing the need to obtain the minister's approval for low-risk financial transactions, such as receiving or disposing of gifts. Foundations have the financial expertise that is needed to manage these types of transactions without oversight.

The bill provides for the composition of the board of a foundation, but removes the current level of prescription requiring board members to have particular qualifications or hold specific positions. That will improve flexibility. The bill also recognises the diverse and unusual role that foundation board members perform as they govern a statutory body that is also a charity. The changes before the House today will allow Queensland's hospital foundations to focus on their core business: supporting Queensland's public health system to deliver world-class health care.

The amendments to the Drugs Misuse Act and the regulation follow changes to the Australian New Zealand Food Standards Code, which came into effect on 12 November 2017. The change will bring Queensland into line with New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia by allowing low-THC hempseed to be grown for human consumption.

I would like to thank the member for Mudgeeraba for her consideration and the constructive approach that she has taken to the amendments to be moved during consideration in detail and for her advice that the opposition would not be opposing these amendments. The amendments to be moved during the consideration in detail will make important clarifications to ensure that Queensland's criminal justice system operates as intended. It is appropriate that these changes be made quickly. I assure the House that the amendments proposed to the Mental Health Act will have no impact on offenders. In fact, the amendments will provide clarity for both offenders and the authorities involved on the calculation of time served.

I would like to thank the members of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee and the staff of the committee for their detailed consideration and report on the bill. I acknowledge that the Queensland Nurses and Midwives' Union and the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service took the time to provide feedback on the bill to the committee. The bill was the subject of extensive consultation with hospital foundations and hospital and health services prior to its introduction into the parliament. I thank the foundations and the HHS officers who provided feedback on the draft bill, which has ensured that the bill reflects the operational needs of both the foundations and the HHSs. I commend the bill to the House.