




Speech By  
**Barry O'Rourke**

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

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**HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND  
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.11 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on report No. 12 of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee. The report presents the findings from an inquiry into the state's pharmacy industry, referred to the committee by the Legislative Assembly on 3 May 2018. The committee has made 11 recommendations to the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services to implement from its inquiry to strengthen our pharmacy industry and improve health outcomes for Queenslanders. I want to thank all 210 submitters to the inquiry and the many others who wrote to the committee and gave evidence to the inquiry.

Across Queensland there are over 1,100 pharmacy businesses. Collectively, they dispense about 1.5 billion prescription medicines every year. That is on top of all the other medical and health related products and services they provide every day. One of the key issues that the committee considered in its inquiry was whether to establish a pharmacy council to administer pharmacy ownership laws in Queensland. To assist in this work the committee asked the Deputy Premier to task the Queensland Productivity Commission with conducting a thorough cost-benefit analysis for the establishment of a pharmacy authority. I thank the Deputy Premier for agreeing to the committee's request.

The Queensland Productivity Commission conducted an excellent study, which found no evidence that other Australian states with pharmacy councils had better community outcomes, no evidence that the existing premises legislation is resulting in unsafe conditions in pharmacies in Queensland and no evidence that more intensive enforcement of ownership restrictions would provide greater consumer benefits for Queenslanders. Therefore, the committee recommended against establishing a legislative pharmacy authority—a move that will save the state over \$10 million in additional administrative costs. Those costs would have been passed on to pharmacy customers.

The committee believes that laws relating to pharmacies should be administered by Queensland Health. However, the committee identified the need for a pharmacy advisory body to advise Queensland Health in its administration of the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act in the fulfilment of its regulatory responsibilities. I look forward to the minister's response to the committee's recommendation. I commend the committee's report to the House.