




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Crime and Corruption Commission

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.21 pm): It is good news week this week for the Maryborough electorate in terms of the budget. I would like to congratulate the Deputy Premier and Treasurer.

I rise today on a serious matter of public interest. Alan MacSporran and the entire team at the CCC have been ensuring local government officials are kept to the same high standards as other state representatives and officials who support us. What worries me is that while the CCC have been doing this hard work on behalf of Queenslanders, they have been criticised publicly. I say to those critics, 'Shut up and let the CCC do their job.' It is in the interests of every Queenslander that we can trust our local governments.

It was clear from the Belcarra public hearings and the recent convictions of people from the Ipswich City Council that everyone—the government, the parliament, the CCC and the opposition; even the opposition—have a job to do to make sure Queenslanders can trust their councils. I know more deeply concerning stories will arise before this is out.

The CCC have done a good job of looking at the recent past, but I have received complaints from my constituents about deals going back further. So serious are these matters I felt it was appropriate to provide them to the CCC for immediate investigation. These matters relate to a sitting member in this House during their time on council. The complaint that I have received and properly sent to the CCC raises concerns that a former councillor used their position to sell property for which he was the beneficial owner, without declaring the interest and without a transparent sale process. The same council presided over land deals that enriched a local businessman, who was a close personal friend of the council CEO, at the expense of local ratepayers.

As we saw in Ipswich, when the council becomes a property developer ratepayers need to be extra careful. These concerns with regard to Ipswich are not the concerns I raise today in this House. I will not name the member because I think it is for the member to advise the Leader of the Opposition what has occurred. It is a matter for the Leader of the Opposition to show some leadership on this matter.

I am sick of people bagging the CCC for cleaning up local government. It makes me suspicious when the people in positions of power, whom the CCC are supposed to keep honest, start attacking the independent watchdog. That is a risk to our democracy and to our reputation in Queensland.