




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

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LAND, EXPLOSIVES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (5.00 pm): I rise to make a brief contribution to the Land, Explosives and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. The LNP is not opposing this bill. I would like to thank the committee for their work in bringing it to us. The bill is designed to streamline key regulation within the Natural Resources and Mines portfolio and enhance worker and community safety and security in the explosives and gas sector. The bill will also support the protection and cooperative management of cultural and native values of Cape York Peninsula. I will firstly address the time frame and the consultation on the bill.

The bill has been on the *Notice Paper* for almost 12 months. I know we were debating it up to the Christmas break, but it should have been passed even in the 55th Parliament. Other speakers before me have remarked upon the tardiness of the legislative program of the government. I know my honourable friend the member for Buderim remarked eloquently about the truncation of consultation, the shabbiness of the government's legislative program and their fumbling. I well remember at the time hearing some belligerent croaking from behind me, from the member for Logan, about how it was ignoble that we should suggest the government is no good at consultation and that they always consult. That was news to me. I certainly have recollections of hundreds of farmers in green shirts out the front complaining about the lack of consultation.

One of the things that concerns us about the bill is that there is again a move towards allowing government officials—inspectors and so forth—onto someone's property without a warrant. In this instance it is perhaps appropriate because of the dangers associated with explosives, but the LNP is concerned about this creeping reduction in the rights of property owners. We feel that better consultation may have brought out more voices against that.

The Queensland Law Society has raised significant concerns regarding the powers this bill grants inspectors to enter a premise without a warrant or consent or a reasonable notice period. In their submission they argue that section 4(3)(e) of the Legislative Standards Act provides that legislation should generally 'confer power to enter premises, and search for or seize documents or other property, only with a warrant issued by a judge or other judicial officer', and I think that is very appropriate.

I turn now to amendments to the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 and the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 and their implications for Indigenous housing. One of the good things about this bill is the positive impact it will have in that sphere. The bill provides flexibility for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owner groups to nominate an existing registered native title body corporate to be grantee of land which is not subject to native title. The bill enhances opportunities for Indigenous people to achieve home ownership by providing an option to set a price for social housing. The purchase of social housing stock is the most feasible path to home ownership in Indigenous communities. By giving greater options to government to determine or agree on the sale prices of housing these amendments allow the state to respond to the unique circumstances in those discrete communities, in particular where there is limited or no active housing market.

Regarding the Explosives Act 1999, the bill regulates the manufacture, sale, handling, storage, transportation and use of explosives in Queensland and provides for the safety of people and property from the misuse of explosives. Queensland is the largest user of explosives in Australia, predominantly in the mining industry, using approximately one-third of the three million tonnes consumed annually. That is no surprise to me because we know that mining is such a central and fundamental basis for our economy in Queensland.

In relation to the Land Act, the bill provides compliance powers to stop inappropriate behaviour on state land where the department has direct responsibility in land management. The bill stops motorbikes and vehicles not only causing destruction on state land but also causing nuisance to properties which border state land. More broadly on the topic of mining, the LNP recognises that the mining industry is an enormous employer in Queensland. The royalties it generates, the economic activity and the pay packets, especially if they are spent in our regions, make a huge difference and they make Queensland the state that we are. We support those jobs. We are looking at 60,000 Queenslanders directly in mining and 180,000 indirectly and of course there will be even more if certain mining projects proceed. If honourable members know any black-throated finches out there, I suggest they have a word with them; I am sure they would not mind certain things going ahead.

We need to exploit our mineral resources, and the LNP is fully supportive of that. Without a strong economy and strong resources sector, governments cannot provide better services in our hospitals or better education for our children or invest in new technology and equipment to help police protect our communities. I know in my electorate of Southern Downs if I talk to people about a machinery-of-government bill like this they find it about as interesting as I do. However, the implications and the industries—

Mr Mellish interjected.

Mr LISTER: I take that interjection from the member for Aspley. When we in this House are given an opportunity to think about where our bread is buttered, it is always good to remind ourselves of the importance of the resources industry and mining to our state. Having said that, we support the bill. I commend it to the House.