




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**

**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2019

### **HEALTH AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (4.37 pm): I rise to speak on the Health and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018. The reforms in this bill will help to protect and improve the health of Queenslanders. They will remove barriers for patients and doctors seeking access to medicinal cannabis treatment and will ensure Queenslanders are notified of pollution events that pose a risk to public health. Importantly, the bill will also establish a register of occupational dust lung diseases such as pneumoconiosis—or black lung—and silicosis.

One of the key reforms of this bill is to repeal the medicinal cannabis act and amend the Health Act to streamline the framework for regulating medicinal cannabis in Queensland. By repealing the medicinal cannabis act the bill will reduce the complexity and duplication associated with doctors prescribing medicinal cannabis in Queensland. The reforms will not affect how medicinal cannabis products are dealt with by the Therapeutic Goods Administration, including the scheduling of medicinal cannabis products and the quality standards that are imposed. The TGA already has processes for separate medicinal cannabis approvals, clinical trial approvals and dispensing approvals, so the bill removes duplication of these by Queensland based requirements.

Specialists will be able to prescribe for any patient they believe medicinal cannabis will benefit from. Removing their Queensland based approval requirements will also mean that visitors to Queensland who have a valid prescription for medicinal cannabis from another jurisdiction will not require any Queensland approvals in addition to their TGA and home state approvals where required.

We have seen a recent increase in cases of silicosis, which is a matter of great concern, among workers who work with stone benchtops. We all know about the long history of cases of black lung in our state. That is why this bill will require medical practitioners to notify Queensland Health when they diagnose a patient with a particular occupational dust lung disease, like black lung or silicosis. These notifications will be recorded in the new Notifiable Dust Lung Disease Register. This will allow Queensland Health to better monitor and analyse these diseases and exchange information about them with other entities.

The bill gives new powers to Queensland Health to help deal with the public health risks caused by pollution events and to help keep Queenslanders safe. In the event of a pollution event, the chief executive will now be able to direct the person responsible for the pollution to publish a pollution notice. This removes the responsibility for issuing this notice from Queensland Health or the local council and places it on the person responsible for the pollution, as it should be.

The bill also includes important amendments in a number of other areas. The bill will remove duplication in the regulation of licensees under the Radiation Safety Act; amend the Transplantation and Anatomy Act to provide clarity around circumstances under which tissue can be removed for clinical research studies; enable the respectful disposal of donor body parts by schools of anatomy through amendments to the Coroners Act, the Cremations Act and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act; and amend the Retirement Villages Act to ensure that freehold units are treated in the same way as other tenured types of units.

In relation to the amendment, I have been advised that, given that retirement villages are regulated under the Retirement Villages Act 1999, in late 2012 the review of the act was referred to the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee of the parliament. The committee subsequently published a report, titled *Review of the Retirement Villages Act 1999*, which recommended 37 reforms. Throughout 2013 a ministerial working party—of the previous government, clearly—of key industry representatives met to discuss the report before proposing a series of regulatory changes to best address the committee recommendations.

Four critical issues covered by proposals of the working group were discussed in their regulatory impact statement. Clearly, the RIS was commissioned by the previous government so those opposite should know all about it. It was canvassed extensively by the committee. There were 10 pages, I am advised, in relation to retirement villages—far in excess of all other issues. It is very clear that there was due consideration given. That is certainly the case.

Minister de Brenni has confirmed that the Department of Housing and Public Works can extend its services to resident operated retirement villages to help them understand their obligations, assist them to go to QCAT if required, provide advice regarding appropriate legal structures, and market and sell their units. This is an independent service funded by the department to provide independent advice and support to these resident operated villages.

The Palaszczuk government is absolutely committed to ensuring that Queensland's health legislation is serving the needs of Queenslanders as medicines advance, as knowledge grows and as science grows. We believe in science, knowledge and research. It is a shame that not everybody in this chamber does. We are working on that. We are looking to improve that as time goes by. We certainly improved it at the last election. We are looking to improve it again at the next election. It is the choice of any member in this chamber to join the government in our faith and belief in research, knowledge and science. I commend the bill to the House.