




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (5.15 pm): I also rise to contribute to the debate on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. As we know, this is an omnibus bill. It goes for 234 pages. It is quite a large bill. Each of the pages of the bill changes a word or a number of words in various acts. I understand there are something like 29 separate acts that this bill alters. Anybody on the other side of the House who says that they have gone through the whole bill, torn it apart and looked at how it is going to affect the people of Queensland is probably not telling the truth necessarily. The explanatory notes go for 126 pages. There is a page in the explanatory notes for every two pages of the bill.

There was not long offered to the committee to have a look at this bill. There was a very short time frame for anybody who was interested in contributing to the outcome of the committee's consideration to give feedback to the committee and for the committee to examine it. Members would be surprised to learn that, at the end of the day, the committee only made one recommendation even though they were presented with a lot of information which said that the people involved did not have enough time to look at it and had some concerns. The committee, which is obviously controlled by the government, made one recommendation concerning the bill. That recommendation was to pass the bill. There was another recommendation unrelated to the bill.

It was interesting to read the statement of reservation from the member for Condamine, the member for Buderim and the member for Bundaberg. They were actually paying attention during the committee hearing. They had a few things to say with regard to why the committee only made one recommendation. I would encourage members in the chamber to read the statement of reservation. It states—

The report contains some quotes that would indicate the Queensland Resource Council and the Queensland Law Society both were happy with the consultation process.

We have heard from numerous members today that that is clearly not the case. Andrew Barger from the QRC said—

In introducing it, Anthony Lynham must have almost tossed up whether it was easier to list the bills that it did not amend.

That is the length that this bill goes to. It covers a lot of different areas. Quite frankly, the QRC and the Queensland Law Society were not happy with the consultation process, yet the committee report seems to indicate that they were. The statement of reservation also states—

There were a number of times during the public hearing in Brisbane where QRC stated consultation was ongoing which would indicate the committee was being asked to pass a Bill that was not complete.

One would have to wonder about that statement coming from three members of the committee. The QRC was giving them an indication that they were still talking to the government about aspects of this bill. It was a moving target while the committee was considering the bill. The committee system in this House has worked quite well in the past, but I suspect that it is not working as well as it has in the past.

Many members in the House have talked about CleanCo, which is part of this bill. They have raised the issue of renewable energy and the ongoing race of the Queensland Labor Party to get to a 50 per cent renewable energy target and the impact that may have on the people of Queensland and the cost that may have on electricity bills. I would like to add to the contributions of those members by stating that at last year's estimates hearing I asked the minister where the initial funding, the \$250 million that was announced overnight, was coming from and whereabouts I would find that \$250 million in the budget papers? The minister said that it was coming in the fullness of time. I am not quoting the minister. I am perhaps putting words in the minister's mouth. He is a nice bloke; I accept that. At the end of the day the minister could not tell us where that money was coming from. He could not tell us when it would be put in place. In the next couple of weeks when the budget is handed down we will look for where that \$200-odd million is going to come from. Given that this government is in quite a bad financial position at the moment, finding that \$250 million is going to be quite difficult.

According to the Powering Queensland Plan, CleanCo is going to add a thousand megawatts of new renewable energy into Queensland on top of the renewable energy that we already have in order to reach this 50 per cent target. Typically, renewable energy, if you are looking at wind power or solar power, costs between \$2 million and \$3 million a megawatt. A thousand megawatts of new renewable energy put into the system is going to cost somewhere between \$2 billion and I suspect closer to \$3 billion on top of that \$250 million that I said the government would struggle to find. Where are they going to find \$3 billion? We will be watching the budget closely to see where that money is coming from. The bill provides for CleanCo to become part of the national energy market. This will align CleanCo with CS Energy and Stanwell. It will have the same conditions and RTI protections as CS Energy and Stanwell. The point is that at the end of the day where will this money come from?

I will briefly touch on a couple of other things in this bill. As the shadow minister has said, the LNP agrees with the majority of this bill but there are some provisions that we have an issue with. We certainly have an issue with the removal of the requirement to provide a list of foreign ownership of land. You have to ask: what is the government trying to hide? After all, this is a government that tells us that they are transparent and accountable. When you take away access to things like registers of foreign ownership of land—the government is collecting that data after all, but it is not going to make it publicly available to the people of Queensland. I accept that the Commonwealth government has its own reporting scheme, but a lot of people rely on the Queensland list for certain information, especially the media. If we are collecting all of this data—

Ms Leahy interjected.

Mr HART: I take the interjection from the member for Warrego. The Commonwealth information is different and is presented in a different format. You have to ask: what is the government trying to hide? They have gone to great lengths to collect the data but they do not want to make it available to the people of Queensland. That is not being transparent and accountable. I would like to hear from the minister as to what his thinking is behind this.

Then there is the increase in ministerial powers in the decision-making process. We all know what happens when we let a Labor minister, even though he might be a good bloke—

Ms Leahy: Dracula in charge of—

Mr HART: I take that interjection from the member for Warrego again, even though she did not finish it. It is like putting Dracula in charge of the blood bank. Quite frankly, we do not trust Labor ministers to make decisions on anything. We only have point to what has been happening with the Carmichael Mine and the chopping and changing all over the place and the sovereign risk that the state now has because we have allowed ministers to make on-the-run, on-the-fly decisions.

Then there is the provision for authorised officers to go on to freehold land to have a look at state land. We are taking away the property rights that our farmers have had for years and years. There does not appear to be any good reason for that. Again, an explanation from the minister about that would be beneficial for members of the House.