



Speech By  
**Samuel O'Connor**


**MEMBER FOR BONNEY**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2019

**ADJOURNMENT**

**NightQuarter**

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (7.04 pm): I rise today to bring to the attention of the House the sad loss of a major local entertainment venue in my electorate: NightQuarter. Since opening in 2015 it has given thousands of locals a festival every weekend with food, drinks, markets, entertainment and one of the largest live music spaces on the Gold Coast. That meant it could handle artists who otherwise would have likely skipped coming to the Gold Coast. I was a regular there and I have great memories of seeing Flight Facilities, Amy Shark, Baker Boy, The Cat Empire and, most recently, the final evening with UB40. Their landlord recently asked for a significant rent increase leading them to close their doors. The public outcry at this move has been overwhelming. Passionate local Robert McKenna started a petition and within days it had reached thousands of people. I table that today with its 18,906 signatures.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding Save Nightquarter at Helensvale [147](#).

Our city needs this venue and it is time for the government to see what help it can provide. I think the solution could be state land within the health and knowledge precinct in Southport which was the site of the old Commonwealth Games village. The owners, Michelle and Ian, agree and they recently put a proposal to the government. Unfortunately, last week it was rejected by Economic Development Queensland. Tonight I call on the minister to review this decision.

Let us look at some of the facts. We have a state owned precinct of 9½ hectares available for commercial use. NightQuarter are keen and they say that the space could work. They would only be looking at taking up to half a hectare at most and there is already a suitable section that was used as a car park during the Commonwealth Games. JLL, the managers of the Smith Collective residential area in the precinct are very supportive of having NightQuarter move in next door. Up to 50 per cent is permitted for non health and knowledge related use and out of the 15 lots up for rent only three have been used. The land use setting out the rules for the area allows for food premises to be located at ground level and for indoor entertainment. This is a chance to have a live entertainment venue within walking distance of light rail, buses, Griffith University and Australia's largest build-to-rent community. The precinct used to be called Parklands and it was an entertainment area. Big Day Out was held there. With its loss surely a component of that should remain within it, even if it is just in the short until the site is fully developed.

I do not want to take away from the aims of the precinct. I fully support it and believe innovation and excellence in health is essential to bring job opportunities to our area, but until it is realised NightQuarter should be allowed to make use of a small amount of space. It would even bring in some rent. If a larger and more permanent tenant appears then they should be allowed to use that space. I urge the government to take up this opportunity before we permanently lose this local icon. If not, every time my residents drive past that empty site they will be reminded that the state government either does not care or is too arrogant to do the right thing and try everything possible to keep a community icon alive.