




Speech By
Stephen Andrew

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr ANDREW** (Mirani—PHON) (5.02 pm): I rise to speak on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. My first concern with this omnibus bill relates to the amendments proposed to the Land Act 1994 whereby the elected minister will delegate a further 70 instances of decision-making to the chief executive of the responsible department. While I recognise that cutting red tape by way of reducing administrative overheads has its place, in this instance I believe that the approach is flawed and potentially open to the abuse of delegated power.

Looking back through this state's early history, there is a precedent as the Land Court was created as a mechanism to curtail the misuse of power over the division and disbursement of land titles. I expect that, at the present time, land title matters would ordinarily be processed by the applicable public servants and passed up to the chief executive, who would make a guiding recommendation to the minister. Ultimately, that translates into the minister making the final decision, whilst oversight is afforded to members of this House and the people of Queensland.

We should not lose sight of the fact that matters pertaining to land titles often involve incredibly large monetary outcomes and, at times, decisions made on land titles and land use can have very broad impacts on a great number of people, communities and other economic stakeholders. Furthermore, this amendment bill dispenses with the requirement for the state based reporting of foreign landownership and infers responsibility and oversight solely to the federal register system which, in my opinion, is not up to the job.

My second concern relates to the amendments proposed to the Electricity Act 2014. I caution the government on the sensibility of forming another costly government owned corporation, namely CleanCo, when CS Energy and Stanwell currently exist within the electricity generation space. In the first instance, the creation of another silo of middle and executive management is likely to erode any financial effectiveness by the creation of CleanCo.

Furthermore, while the present Queensland government has made it abundantly clear that renewables are the future, in the next breath it pays lip-service to the skilled workers employed in our coal- and gas-fired industries, whose jobs are most at risk of being alienated. Has nothing been learnt from the mess caused by splitting up Queensland Rail, and the loss of permanent work and dignity for thousands of Queenslanders, particularly across regional Queensland communities? If the present and the future Queensland governments seek to pursue renewable energy, I strongly recommend that those currently employed by CS Energy, Stanwell and their cousins, Powerlink and Energy Queensland, be offered the first chance at a meaningful transition to the new opportunities that arise within the energy industry.

To conclude on a positive note, I appreciate the inclusion of the 15-year time limit of exploration permits. For far too long, resources and tenure holders have been getting away with sitting on mineral prospects that should be developed. The resources sitting in the ground are not serving the people of Queensland through export income or jobs.