




Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**

**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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**NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION (GDA2020) AMENDMENT  
BILL**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (5.14 pm): I rise to support the GDA2020 bill. I want to start by questioning the assertion of the member for Burdekin that Queensland is slowly drifting to the right. I think it is more akin to the *Rocky Horror Picture Show*: it's a jump to the left and then just a step to the right.

We have used different kinds of data over the centuries to tell us where we are, where we are going and where we need to go. Datum is the set of data that records what is on the earth—a model of the earth—the geographic features and where we can find them. Centuries ago it could have been a hand-drawn map, maybe a star map for sailors or longitude and latitude on a map, that sort of thing, but we know that nothing is as accurate as the satellite data we have these days. Satellite data is accurate because it focuses on the centre of the earth and not the geographical features sitting on the tectonic plate, but the official data we still use are controlled by fixed principle points on the Australian continent. If you go up a mountain, there is a cairn with a survey point affixed to the top of that. As we have heard, these points are moving north-west at the rate a fingernail grows. That may seem slow but it means they have moved 1.8 metres since 1994, so the position of your car as pinpointed by a satellite will be different to the location on a map that has been drawn up according to these fixed points.

Before 2000 satellites were accurate within 100 metres; now they are accurate to within a metre. In the future they are going to be accurate within centimetres, and that is the important thing to remember. We have so many services that rely on the accuracy of satellite services; for example, farm equipment uses satellite services to plant or sow, whether now or in the future, and furrows or delivered doses of weed killer need to be delivered accurately, not placed two metres away from where they should be. From June 2020 there will be new datum, a new accurate standard of geolocation. Firstly, we will recognise that all fixed plate datum has moved 1.8 metres; secondly, we will adopt a different location reference system, and that is a dynamic one. It will not be fixed on tectonic plate features: it will be by satellite. This is a new national standard and we all need to adopt it. All relevant acts will be amended to reflect these new standards.

Another important part of the bill is about reducing red tape for leaseholders. Currently, the CEO of a relevant government body can renew a lease under the Land Act 1994 only if the lessee applies for it. This bill will amend the act so that a CEO can make the offer of a new lease without the lessee lodging that application. There will be no changes to the requirement that the CEO must make sure that all provisions are met before deciding to offer a new lease.

Finally, I want to mention the initiative in the bill regarding the granting of unallocated state land to First Nation people. Currently, we are granting unallocated state land to native title parties as part of an Indigenous land use agreement. It helps First Nation people establish businesses and economic opportunities. Grants can be made in exchange for other parties to the agreement to get benefit from that land. Under the current Land Act we cannot grant the land in freehold if it does not go to a

competitive tender, and any land exchanged must involve land of equal value, which is a provision that has been weakened under a recent High Court decision. These amendments once again go towards reducing red tape and give broader and more flexible land settlement options. I commend the bill to the House.