




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

Record of Proceedings, 11 August 2020

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
BILL**

BIODISCOVERY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (4.00 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bills before us today. I am the chair of the Natural Resources, Agricultural Industry Development and Environment Committee. It has been very interesting to listen to the LNP speakers here today, but none were more interesting than the member for Callide. I do not agree with what the member for Callide said, but at least he had the wherewithal to actually say it. I know his opinion is shared by many people on the other side. He does have my respect for getting up to say what he thinks.

There are only a couple of things I want to say. The LNP have claimed that there will be a lack of enforcement involved in all these things. We can see that in their statement of reservation on this bill. The trouble is that no-one actually believes they are truly concerned about a lack of enforcement. Let me remind them that the LNP cut environment staff by 33 per cent last time they were in government. That is a full-time equivalent of 495 staff. No-one actually believes what the LNP say about improving enforcement, because we know that if they ever get in they cut, sack and sell every time.

The LNP have said that we do not need the Rehabilitation Commissioner and they do not believe it is warranted. That just shows that they do not really believe in any more protections. It is very clear that they have always wanted less protections every single time. I remind the House that it was the LNP that wanted to remove protections, ram through approvals and give retrospective approvals to illegal mining activities last time they were in government. Let me remind everyone that the LNP will cut our protections every time. I wholeheartedly support these bills.