




Speech By
David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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**JUSTICE AND OTHER LEGISLATION (COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (4.20 pm): I am going to make a contribution to the Justice and Other Legislation (COVID-19 Emergency Response) Amendment Bill and I will do it in a few parts. Firstly, I will make a contribution as shadow environment minister about the changes to the Environmental Protection Act. As the local member for Broadwater, I will touch on the changes to the Gaming Machine Act. Then I want to make some comments with regard to other elements of the bill, particularly around hardship and what I am seeing at the moment on the Gold Coast and, indeed, across the state.

Firstly, I turn to the changes to the Environmental Protection Act. The LNP will be supporting these changes. Yes, they are wideranging powers. However, I understand that in an emergency like this we need to be able to act on things like waiving compliance when it comes to environmental approval if those changes are needed to muscle up against the fight that industry is having in terms of things like supplies, so we will be supporting it.

As the local member for Broadwater, I speak in terms of the changes to the Gaming Machine Act. This is something for which the LNP has been fighting tooth and nail. We do so because we understand the importance of community clubs—clubs like Paradise Point Bowls Club and the Runaway Bay Junior Leagues Club. They are pillars of the community I represent. The Paradise Point Bowls Club has taken to selling morning burgers and coffees from the side of that facility just to try to get some activity. It will not make them enough money to keep the doors open but it will keep the community intact as it is a key part of the community. The Runaway Bay Leagues Club continues to support the RSL. At the moment those clubs do not have the revenue they need to keep the doors open. This will help them ensure they do not have those massive overheads or bigger overheads in their hour of need.

I want to talk about the assistance provisions, particularly hardship. I will tell honourable members what it does not take into account and that is the hardship that operators are facing because of the mixed messages on the border closures—and mixed messages we have aplenty. In the space of 10 days we saw a road map that was delivered on 8 May which had a July border reopening date change 10 days later to September because of one comment on television from the Premier. What medical advice changed during those 10 days? Was there a spike in Queensland? No. Was there a spike interstate? No. Absolutely nothing changed in those 10 days other than a comment that was made on television. There is no medical advice that changed for the Premier to have contemplated making that decision the way she did.

Ms Boyd: Misleading the House.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Member for Pine Rivers, I would love to see that medical advice. We would love to see it on schooling. We would love to see it on borders.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Through the chair, please.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am going to issue a challenge to the Premier. The Premier said in this House today that she looks forward to going to New South Wales and telling people when they can come here for a holiday. I would like the Premier to come to the Gold Coast and tell those operators why she has pulled the rug out from under their livelihoods. That is what I want to see, because there has been no change in advice. There has been no change in medical advice.

I am not advocating for anything that the Premier herself did not put in her road map. The opposition is not saying that it should be weeks before that; we are saying stick to the plan. If there is contrary advice, we would like to see it. Today I say to the Premier please come to the coast and look those operators in the eye and give them the justification. Do not be a warrior in William Street and a coward in Cavill Avenue. Come down and look those people in the eye. The member for Gaven is in here; she is very quiet on this issue. She stands up and talks about all manner of things.

Ms Scanlon: What?

Mr CRISAFULLI: Member for Gaven, I want to know your position. I will tell you why.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Comments through the chair, please.

Mr CRISAFULLI: My phone has rung from operators from the Far North to the Gold Coast and everywhere in between not because they wanted to see the date brought forward; they were willing to stick to a plan. They signed up to a plan. They did everything they were told—everything. They put their businesses on hold; they put their lives on hold; they put their families on hold. Then one media comment made 10 days after a road map was released has derailed that recovery, and those opposite sit in silence. They kowtow. Their day of reckoning is coming. I hope that every day between now and when those borders are open the Premier is reminded of the decision to change what was set by her own government—not by the opposition, not by business.

Mr Saunders interjected.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Maryborough, the next time I warn you it will be a warning under the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I take the interjection from the member for Scenic Rim, who points out the giggles from those opposite who think it is humorous. Let me tell them a fact that is not humorous. Destination Gold Coast believes that two months will cost the economy \$500 million—\$500 million. Do honourable members know what is in that \$500 million? There are broken dreams. There are house payments that will not be made. There are car payments that will not be made. There are kids who will not be able to afford to play community sports. There are businesses who put everything on the line and took a chance.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members to my right.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I know that those opposite do not know much about business, but I can tell them one thing. When people put everything on the line only to see it washed out from underneath them they will accept it. They will accept it, but they will not accept politics coming in the way of a recovery. Unless we see medical advice, this decision is nothing but bad leadership at a time when the community is crying out for it.

Finally, I want to touch on two issues quickly. One is around the QRIDA Jobs Support Loans. I thank the government for increasing the fund, which I spoke on last time in this House—an additional \$500 million. That is certainly welcome. May I also suggest, with the greatest of respect, there is a need to properly assess the applications for the remainder of the funds and to open it to new applications. Initially we thought that the assessment would run until September, but instead it is now closed. There has not been thorough analysis. It has been first in, first served; that was never, ever in the guidelines that were issued. There will be people who are most needy who will miss out. I respectfully ask for that to be considered.

Finally, I turn to that section of the bill that mentions the tenancy matters. I support wholeheartedly what the government is doing, but I issue a call to arms, and that is to please give some certainty to the commercial tenants and landlords. Every state has managed to find a way through, but this government cannot find a way to make tough decisions. It cannot continue to put off tough decisions and assume the problem is going to go away. The federal government put forward a framework and all the state government needs to do is make a decision, bring it in and make it law because at the moment there is a Mexican stand-off between landlord and tenant. In some cases they are both doing their best. In other cases one side might be playing hardball to the detriment of the other.

I am not suggesting that the government needs to pick a winner; it just needs to make a decision so that people can get on with their lives. People need to know whether or not they can afford to trade out of the situation they are in, whether they own the building or own the business. I do not believe that is too much to ask after so many weeks when other states have been able to get their act together. I say to the government that here are some good, positive changes. We respectfully ask that we continue to take every opportunity to allow our communities to get back on their feet.