



Speech By  
**Andrew Powell**

**MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE**

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### **BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS BILL 2021**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (11.29 am): I too rise to contribute to the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. I declare at the outset that I am incredibly excited about the opportunity that this announcement of the games coming to South-East Queensland, indeed to Queensland, in 2032 means for our state, for my kids and for my future grandkids.

As a child, my parents took us away from Queensland for a period. I remember visiting in 1988 during World Expo and the excitement that that brought to the city and the changes that that brought to the state. It was indeed in that same year that we returned to Queensland having been away for a number of years. I was privileged to be part of watching the state transform as a result of holding World Expo. I suspect that this presents an even bigger opportunity to transform South-East Queensland, indeed the state, particularly around two aspects—infrastructure and tourism, but I will come back to those in a moment.

At the outset I want to acknowledge a couple of people who I know have been intrinsic in ensuring that South-East Queensland, that Brisbane, has secured the games. I have to start with the former lord mayor of the Brisbane City Council, Graham Quirk. It was his foresight, his initiation and his leadership of the SEQ Council of Mayors that put this on the horizon in the first place. To Graham and his team, thank you so much for doing that. He was followed up by Lord Mayor Adrian Schinner. Thank you, Adrian, for continuing to keep that dream alive and for seeing it through to fruition.

He is going to hate me for mentioning him in parliament, but I also have to acknowledge the SEQ Council of Mayors CEO Scott Smith—the man behind the men in this instance—who for many years drove the Olympic bid. In my term as shadow minister for infrastructure we had a lot of conversations around what this would mean for South-East Queensland and Queensland and what it would mean for Brisbane.

I want to acknowledge my federal colleague Ted O'Brien, the member for Fairfax, and congratulate him on his appointment to important roles around the Olympics. He was the champion of the Brisbane Olympics within the federal government. He brought the federal team on board and ensured that Prime Minister Scott Morrison became part of the bid and got enthusiastic. I know he has had a lot to do with securing the 50 per cent funding commitment to the projects that will become part of the Olympics.

I also want to acknowledge another mayor, Karen Williams. I know she has now been appointed to the board of the organising committee, and she is an exciting addition. Karen and I have also had many conversations over the years. I know she is passionate about things that I am passionate about—infrastructure and tourism. I know she will be a huge addition to the team.

I am incredibly excited because, whilst I represent an area to the north of Brisbane, we have secured a number of important sports. The Sunshine Coast will play host to football. To the uninitiated, that is the round ball game, the world game—that is, soccer. We look forward to holding some of the round games of the round ball game on the Sunshine Coast. I know one that is near and dear to the Minister for Tourism's heart is basketball.

**Mr Perrett** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order, member for Gympie!

**Mr POWELL:** Thank you for protection, Mr Deputy Speaker, from my own members. Basketball is coming to the Sunshine Coast. The marathon is coming to the Sunshine Coast. I can already picture the footage—running along the ocean front at Alexandra Headland and Maroochydore. It is going to look fantastic, as will the road walking. We have mountain biking coming to Parklands. We have kite boarding—again, it is the perfect location for it.

The one I am most excited about, because I am hoping that it features in the electorate of Glass House, is the road cycling. You do not want road cycling to be all about the flats. It has to go up hills. The best hills on the Sunshine Coast are in the west, as the member for Greenslopes knows. He has trekked up a few of them. I am very confident that in both the men's and women's road races, we will be seeing the Olympics literally on our doorstep in the Sunshine Coast hinterland, and that is truly exciting.

I want to go back to where I started. I am excited about these Olympics because they are going to deliver two things, I hope—that is, 20 years of infrastructure and tourism. It is going to allow us not only to catch up where we have lagged in infrastructure but to get ahead of population growth. It is also going to allow us, if we do this right, to have a 20-year plan for tourism. This is our opportunity to showcase, particularly on the back of COVID and the shutdowns we have had, Brisbane, South-East Queensland and Queensland as a whole in the lead-up to the Olympics and at least for a decade after the Olympics.

Turning back to infrastructure, I think there are some key projects that need to be delivered to ensure that not only the athletes can get around and they can enjoy their time here in South-East Queensland but those who come to watch the Olympics—the officials and the viewers—and also we as locals can get around. Obviously there is the Bruce Highway. Again, I commend Ted O'Brien, Andrew Wallace and Terry Young for their advocacy in getting 80 per cent funding for a number of projects on the Bruce Highway. We have recently opened the section between Caloundra Road and Sunshine Coast Motorway. We have the roadworks going on between the southern end of Steve Irwin Way and the Caboolture-Bribie Island exit. Hopefully we will ultimately see, when we see a state government commitment, the three-laning of the Bruce Highway in each direction between the southern end of Steve Irwin Way and the northern end of Steve Irwin Way. That has to happen.

We also need to progress, I believe, the western alternative. I acknowledge that the government has finally started consultation on that. They have secured the corridor through the vital Caboolture West development. They are currently talking to people on the southern side of Caboolture River Road through my part of the electorate of Moorina and Rocksberg. I do acknowledge for those residents that this is a very stressful time. I will be meeting with them next week to try to engage how I can best assist in that consultation. Equally, we have already started conversations with constituents north of the D'Aguilar Highway where the potential western alternative will link up through to maybe Beerburum Road or maybe Steve Irwin Way. We are not too sure. To those constituents impacted by the western alternative to the Bruce Highway, please know I am here to represent you, I am here to hear your concerns and I am here to convey them to the government.

North coast rail is a must. I know we are now seeing that commence—thanks again to a significant contribution from the federal government, a contribution that for 10 years they were not required to make because this Labor government was going to build it 100 per cent state funded. We have seen the car park at Landsborough start. We have seen contracts awarded for the moving of Steve Irwin Way. I anticipate we will see works commence very soon on the duplication of the north coast rail through to Beerwah. Obviously work needs to be done north of Beerwah through to Nambour, particularly through some of those hinterland communities that need certainty, and cleaning up some of the traffic messes such as at Palmwoods at the intersection of Woombye Palmwoods Road, Jubilee Drive and Chevallum Road. We need that critically.

Equally, this gives us the opportunity—and I am pleased again to hear that the Minister for Main Roads has jumped on board—to link through to Maroochydore town centre. We need to see heavy rail all the way from Brisbane through to Maroochydore, where we will be hosting an athlete's village. Yes, we need to see mass transit on the Sunshine Coast, particularly east of the highway. I am not a huge fan of the light rail option. I noted in the outcomes put forward by the Sunshine Coast that there are a number of much cheaper and much more flexible options. They certainly have my backing. We have an opportunity now with the Olympic Games coming to get that right.

Of course we are the one region without an entertainment and convention centre. This gives us the opportunity, particularly with sports like basketball—

**Mr Watts:** You'll find there is more than one region.

**Mr POWELL:** Toowoomba does not need one. You have that theatre up there. That suits fine! The Sunshine Coast desperately needs an entertainment and convention centre. I know there are discussions about where the basketball is going to be held. This is the opportunity for us to get that right.

As I said at the start, this is an incredibly exciting opportunity. If you are a sports nut like me, this is going to be one hell of a couple of weeks. I will be there in some capacity, whether it is in an official capacity if I am still fortunate enough to be the member for Glass House or in a volunteer capacity. I know my kids and hopefully my grandkids—

**Mr Bleijie:** I don't think you'll be an athlete!

**Mr POWELL:** I will not be an athlete, member for Kawana. My days for that are long gone.

**Mr Stewart:** A volunteer.

**Mr POWELL:** I will potentially be a volunteer. I take that interjection from the minister. I am very happy to consider that. I want to be part of an opportunity to get the infrastructure our region desperately needs. I want to be part of an opportunity to showcase our region, our state and our nation to the world and to leave a true legacy for all Queenslanders long into the future.