




Speech By  
**Charis Mullen**

**MEMBER FOR JORDAN**

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

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (12.50 pm): I am very pleased to rise and make a contribution to the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. I wish to take a moment to reflect on this incredible moment in our history. Our state will be delivering the Olympic Games and the Paralympic Games. As someone of Greek heritage, the Olympics is more than an event every four years. It is a significant part of our history and a gift to the world of which we take great pride—and you're welcome!

We know the history of the games goes back around 3,000 years to the Peloponnese in ancient Greece. Whilst we do not know exactly when they started, the date of 776 BC is often cited in written sources. The Olympiad, the four-year period between two successive celebrations, became a chronological measurement and system of dating used in the Greek world. I vividly recall as a child visiting the archaeological site of Olympia with my parents. It is not only an outstanding example of a great Pan-Hellenic sanctuary of antiquity; it is a truly magical place. Clearly UNESCO agreed, recognising Olympia as a World Heritage site in 1989.

We know through the revival of the modern Olympics, from Athens in 1896 to the most recent 2020 Tokyo Olympics—of course, held in 2021 due to the global pandemic—we will witness an incredible and rich demonstration of courage, strength, fairness and transformation. In 2032, Brisbane and Queensland will have the opportunity to showcase to the world the very best of those traits and perhaps some uniquely Queensland ones as well.

We know the decision of the IOC to give Queensland this opportunity in 2032 provides the certainty and the confidence needed for increased investment in our state. The KPMG report that was prepared for the International Olympic Committee in early 2020 as part of the value proposition assessment clearly identified that, over the next 20 years, the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games are forecast to generate some significant economic benefits, whether it is increased international tourism and trade estimated at \$4.6 billion for Queensland and \$8.5 billion nationally or the approximately 91,600 full-time-equivalent jobs for our state alone. Importantly, there will be \$3.5 billion in social benefits to Queensland, including improvements in health, community connectedness and civic pride, which is something that we should never underestimate. There is also the 10-year pipeline of construction jobs, trade and investment opportunities, and legacy projects that will benefit Queenslanders for decades to come.

I appreciate that expectations are very high for what those legacy projects will be, whether it is the competition venues themselves, the training facilities, the accommodation requirements for visiting teams or, of course, how that is all interconnected. Our government has made it clear that the transport infrastructure required to support Brisbane 2023 will, first and foremost, be designed to meet the needs of Queensland's growing population. Our Olympics proposal was clearly based on upgrades to and the expansion of public transport infrastructure already planned and underway. By 2032, the transport corridors connecting the three games zones across South-East Queensland will have increased road and rail capacity connecting the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane.

Of course, the signature project in all of that will be Cross River Rail. That project will unlock the bottleneck at the heart of our rail network and allow us to increase system-wide capacity of more than 50,000 passengers per hour per direction. We also know that Cross River Rail will play a key role in our Olympics by providing a direct rail connection to the upgraded Gabba stadium and will also see the new underground station at Roma Street improve connectivity to Suncorp Stadium. Discussions are also occurring between funding partners to examine opportunities to bring forward additional transport infrastructure in time for the Brisbane 2032 games.

I note that the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors recently launched their 'Let's get moving' campaign, which certainly involved a lot of banner waving and excitement. I am equally excited to see the commitment of funding our SEQ councils will be providing towards the important infrastructure we will need to deliver the 2032 Olympics. Of course, as we get closer to Brisbane 2032, there may be opportunities for additional sports to be added to the program, which is at the discretion of the IOC.

**Mr Healy:** Bull riding.

**Mrs MULLEN:** Yes, bull riding. The Queensland government has indicated that it will continue to work with games partners to refine the delivery of the venues program because we want to ensure that all new and upgraded venues have been selected to meet long-term growth demands. I am pleased to see that the Brisbane Lions AFLW stadium, which is currently under construction in Springfield, has been identified as an Olympics 2032 venue for the modern pentathlon. I was on site only this week with the Brisbane Lions and Hutchinson Builders to see construction progress on the 10,000-seat stadium. It is going to be a really incredible facility for our region. My priority is and will always be how our government's contribution of \$18 million towards the stadium build will directly benefit our local community. Currently identified as 'Ipswich Stadium' under the Olympic Venues Master Plan, my fellow Ipswich members of parliament and I are looking forward to working with the Ipswich City Council on how we can get moving on maximising this incredible economic and social opportunity for our region.

Of course, it all begins with good planning and the bill before us sets the framework for a successful 2032 games. The bill establishes the organising committee for the games to undertake the organisation, conduct, promotion and commercial and financial management of the games, and will establish a board of directors to ensure the organising committee performs its functions in a proper, effective and efficient way. As the Premier and Minister for the Olympics has stated, the legislation was closely consulted on and was approached in a collaborative manner, which is indicative of how our government proposes to progress with the planning for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for our state.

The organising committee will proceed as a statutory body rather than as a government department and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, via the parliamentary committee report, has outlined why this has been the preferred legal form. This includes enabling the corporation to operate at arm's length from the state with control over its own funds; and being subject to the public sector accountability regime rather than the Corporations Act 2001, which is appropriate given the public money and interest in the successful delivery of the Brisbane 2032 games. Ultimately, as the Premier indicated, this structure will provide the organisation with the necessary operational and financial independence and flexibility to achieve its objectives and to ensure it is subject to an appropriate level of public accountability.

The membership of the organising committee has been of particular interest to many, especially some who have clearly been briefing the media on their inclusion. We have already seen some jockeying, interestingly only between LNP mayors—Brisbane, Gold Coast, Redlands, Ipswich! The bill provides for a total of up to 17 nominated directors to be appointed as board members by the Governor in Council. The AOC will be able to nominate either the president of the AOC or an honorary life president. Bronte Barratt has been confirmed by the AOC and Kurt Fearnley by Paralympics Australia to represent the athletes and they are welcome additions. Five independent directors will be nominated by the state minister, subject to a joint nomination process with the Prime Minister of Australia. Up to another four directors will be nominated by the Prime Minister, four directors will be nominated by the Premier of Queensland and one director will be nominated by the Lord Mayor of Brisbane.

Pleasingly, the bill does require that regard must be given to gender diversity. In fact, this is reinforced by a specific requirement that 50 per cent of the nominated directors are female, recognising the Palaszczuk government's very strong policy on gender equity on boards. Equally, it is terrific to see our First Nations people represented with the inclusion of at least one independent director nominated to be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent.

The parliamentary inquiry heard from a number of submitters who want to see a range of additional representatives included on the board, including local community representatives, school representatives, urban and city planning experts, architects, public transport and sporting experts.

Whilst it is not feasible for the board to be broadened to such an extent, there is certainly scope for such individuals to provide input to the planning and organisation of the games through the commissions that can be established by the board and provided for through this legislation.

In fact, the parliamentary committee noted that it expects there will be a broad range of specific professional skills and expertise upon which the board will need to draw in undertaking its legislative functions and notes the capacity for commissions, in particular, to provide a mechanism for this. We want that knowledge, we want that experience and we want the innovative ideas that will make the 2032 Olympics uniquely Queensland and enduring. The interest we have already seen from our communities and the thought-provoking ideas that have emerged since the announcement that Queensland will be hosting the Olympics in 2032 are very important. I believe it speaks to a sense of responsibility that we all share of wanting the 2032 Olympic Games to be a transformative and enduring legacy for South-East Queensland and our regional cities.

As has been written, the ancient Greeks understood the significance of the Olympic Games, where athletes benefited from a three-month sacred truce and came together from all the Greek cities of the Mediterranean world to compete, demonstrating peaceful and loyal competition between free and equal men—of the time—who were prepared to surpass their physical strength in a supreme effort, with their only ambition being the symbolic reward of an olive wreath. We know that the modern Olympic Games continue to illustrate the lasting nature of the ideal for peace, justice and progress. We have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to provide that progress for our state and I am confident that we will grasp it with both hands. I commend the bill to the House.