




Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

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

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.44 pm): I rise to address the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. The power, potential and transformational nature for Brisbane from being awarded the honour of hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games cannot be overstated. The economic, social, educational, cultural and, of course, sporting and health opportunities and benefits that come with hosting an Olympic Games are endless. However, in order to have a successful Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032, we will need to recover from the COVID-19 health pandemic.

As I have said in all of my parliamentary speeches, social media posts and electorate communications on these matters, people need to get vaccinated. Vaccinations are the best public health strategy in order to protect against and recover from COVID-19. I have made that very clear. As a specialist physician and elected representative, I have supported the COVID-19 vaccination program. I have been vaccinated myself. In fact, I had the booster injection last Sunday, that being a third injection. As I have also said many times, I certainly support mandated vaccinations as recommended by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee or as determined and issued under health directives or mandates. They are based on expert medical advice. These are matters that come under the auspices of the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Health Officer.

It is very important that people in Queensland continue to get vaccinated as we recover. That will be an important part of the planning for the Olympic Games as we head towards 2032. I cannot be any clearer than that. I again take this opportunity, as part of the debate on this bill, to stress that because it is an important part of the recovery that needs to continue to occur so that we can ensure that the state can adequately plan into the future to deliver the games not only here in Brisbane but in all of Queensland.

As the LNP shadow minister for education, I am certainly very enthusiastic about the unique and exciting opportunities that hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will present for Queensland's students, whether that is by inspiring our next generation of sporting champions, by having the ability to learn about our great state of Queensland or by experiencing and learning about the many and varied nationalities and cultures that will descend on our shores and call Brisbane and Queensland home in 2032. The opportunities are endless. It will be a unique opportunity for Queensland students to be in a front-row seat for the next 11 years.

Certainly many students in the electorate of Moggill will aspire to be sporting champions when the Olympic and Paralympic Games are held here. My own children enjoy sport. My 12-year-old daughter does gymnastics. I know that many of her fellow gymnastics competitors and the clubs that they represent are looking forward to the many events that will take place not only for the competitions that they compete in now but also for those that will be held in the lead-up to 2032.

These Olympic and Paralympic Games are a once-in-a-generation opportunity and it is an opportunity that Queenslanders must seize. Importantly, it is an opportunity that the Queensland state government must absolutely get right. Therefore, it is critical that the development and coordination of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games be established correctly and with the strongest of governance

frame works. When Brisbane was elected to host the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games by the International Olympic Committee on 21 July 2021, an Olympic host contract was formally entered into with the International Olympic Committee.

Under the Olympic host contract, the hosts of the Brisbane games—the state of Queensland, the Brisbane City Council and the Australian Olympic Committee—are ultimately entrusted with the planning, organising, financing and staging of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Accordingly, this legislation before the House begins to formalise the organisation and coordination of the 2032 games. The bill's explanatory notes state—

The primary objectives of the Bill are to:

- establish the Brisbane Organising Committee for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games (the Corporation) to undertake and facilitate the organisation, conduct, promotion and commercial and financial management of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games; and
- establish a board of directors of the Corporation (the Board) to ensure the Corporation performs its functions in a proper, effective and efficient way.

In its examination of this legislation the Economics and Governance Committee of the 57th Parliament of Queensland made seven recommendations, including that the legislation be passed. Through the committee's consultation on this legislation there were a number of significant concerns raised which deserve due consideration and a comprehensive response from the Palaszczuk state Labor government. These concerns pertain to specific provisions within the proposed legislation which deal with matters related to right to information and the exclusion of categories of documents.

As articulated by Liberal National Party colleagues and through the statement of reservation tendered by the LNP members for Mermaid Beach, Coomera and Ninderry, exemptions to the Right to Information Act 2009 should only be granted in the most exceptional of cases. Further, whilst it is acknowledged that there may be legitimate purposes for the exemption of a small set of specific documents from right-to-information provisions, the Palaszczuk state Labor government has failed to provide Queenslanders with an acceptable justification for such use of a broad-ranging exemption to the Right to Information Act 2009. Concerns have also been raised with respect to conflict-of-interest provisions, with the Crime and Corruption Commission going as far as to suggest that the legislation in its current form poses a potential corruption risk. These concerns cannot be ignored and must be comprehensively addressed by the state government.

As I said earlier, the Olympic and Paralympic Games are a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, which is why it is so critical that it is not squandered by the Queensland government and that every single opportunity and potential to enhance our state is achieved. The planning and coordination of these Olympic and Paralympic Games will also usher in a wave of infrastructure across our state. This, too, must be comprehensively planned for and implemented appropriately. This in and of itself is an opportunity to skill and train Queensland's future workforce to unlock the potential of new construction, hospitality and tourism jobs along with other associated industries.

Make no mistake: the infrastructure built to deliver these Olympic and Paralympic Games has the potential to leave a lasting legacy for all Queenslanders and to transform our region in Brisbane, in the south-east corner and across Queensland for decades to come. Nowhere is this more evident than in the western suburbs of Brisbane, where traffic congestion and vital road and public transport infrastructure have long been neglected under the current state Labor government. Only this week, the RACQ reported in its *Average travel speed, and cost of congestion on major state corridors* report that average speeds across Brisbane motorway sections during the morning and afternoon peaks were higher now than they were in October 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. What is more, both Moggill Road and the Centenary Motorway feature prominently in the top 10 most congested roads and road sections of Brisbane. The last thing that we need leading up to the Olympics in 2032 is for these issues not to be resolved, because certainly there will be significant movements of people around Brisbane—athletes and visitors from all over the world as well as local residents.

With traffic congestion only set to become worse between now and then, particularly on the Centenary Motorway, as reported by Infrastructure Australia and the RACQ, the state Labor government cannot squander the next decade when it comes to planning for this infrastructure. The government certainly needs to plan now and have a collaborative approach with all levels of government—the state working with Brisbane City Council and the federal government—to ensure that the vital road and public transport infrastructure required not only for these 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games but also for all residents, particularly residents in the western suburbs of Brisbane, is planned for and delivered.

In closing, I wish to acknowledge and reflect on the incredible bipartisan support and the spirit of goodwill that accompanies these 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. It has been decades long in the planning and I wish to acknowledge just a few of the visionaries and key members who have

contributed along the way: former Brisbane lord mayor Sallyanne Atkinson AO; the South East Queensland Council of Mayors, including former Brisbane lord mayor Graham Quirk; the Australian Olympic Committee; the federal Morrison coalition government; the current state government; and Brisbane City Council. This is certainly only the beginning and it will take more years of dedication, effort and collaboration. If it is done right, there can be no doubt that Queensland will deliver for the world an unforgettable Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2032.