




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS BILL 2021

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (2.21 pm): I rise to support the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. What an opportunity the Olympics and Paralympics provide for Brisbane and Queensland! As a government, we stand ready to welcome the world to Brisbane for the Olympics from 23 July to 8 August 2032 and for the Paralympics from Tuesday, 24 August to Sunday, 5 September 2032. Although it might sound like that is far away, it is amazing how quickly 10½ years can pass. I think about how old I am going to be in those 10 and a bit years!

Mr Minnikin: You'll still be young at heart.

Ms GRACE: I do wish that those years would go a bit slower. I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth: I will still be young at heart. Although I cannot wait to have the Olympics in this great state and in this great city, I hope that the next 10 years do not pass any quicker than the last 10 years. If they do, it will be here before we know it!

The Palaszczuk government is now going full steam ahead with its plans to ensure Brisbane is Olympic ready for 2032. I believe that it is going to be a golden age here in Brisbane and Queensland. I think of the opportunities that this will lend this great state and this great city. The world is our oyster, so to speak. No matter what you think of the Olympics, I know we were all glued to the Tokyo Olympics recently. They were disrupted. Nevertheless, when they finally went ahead I know we all thoroughly enjoyed them. As the Premier has often said, Queensland as a state—were we leading the world? We probably were, but I do not know whether that is necessarily correct. We were close to it. The opposition leader and I drew the line when we said we were better than Italy. We had to draw the line there. We were in unison in that regard.

We are accelerating infrastructure projects not only to align with the Queensland COVID economic recovery plan but also to ensure the games will benefit all of Queensland, not just the south-east. That is true leadership. The Premier said from day one, when the presentations were held in Tokyo, it was about all of Queensland. We know the south-east corner is going to gain from the Olympic and Paralympic Games, but it really is the games for all of Queensland. Plus, it is an opportunity for us not only to showcase our beautiful state—it truly is fantastic and perfect one day and excellent the next, or whatever the saying is. I cannot think of it at the moment.

Ms Enoch: Beautiful one day and perfect the next.

Ms GRACE: Thank you, Minister Enoch. Queensland truly is beautiful one day and perfect the next, and we are going to be able to showcase that to the rest of the world. It will be an incredible experience. In taking the interjection from Minister Enoch, it will be an opportunity to link the true culture of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander First Nation peoples as well and the opportunities that that brings to showcase the wonderful history of our First Nations people in this state and in Australia.

I support this bill to establish the Brisbane Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the associated board of directors to ensure the smooth running of the games. Thank goodness this bill puts those arrangements in place. In listening to some of the submissions from those

opposite in this debate, they are already starting to fight about venues. This is supposed to be an opportunity for us to come together—for all three tiers of government to come together. Imagine if the Premier were fighting with the Lord Mayor of Brisbane. Imagine if she were fighting with the minister at the federal level. We have not even established the committee and already there are arguments about venues on the north coast. Honestly and truly, this is supposed to be unifying. We are entering a golden era. Let us put the bickering aside and showcase what we truly have in this great state.

The organising committee will be responsible for the delivery of the games including the sports program, the torch relays, the ticketing, the accommodation for athletes and officials, the opening ceremony and the fine conduct of the games here in Brisbane, Queensland. These are big issues we have to address. You do not want to be squabbling over crumbs here. Importantly, the bill includes a requirement that at least 50 per cent of the nominated directors are women. I think that is an excellent step forward in that we can bring all of the elements together and work cooperatively over the next 10 years to deliver a fantastic games. Let us not start bickering already before we have even sat down for the first meeting.

The venue master plan identifies 37 competition venues located within South-East Queensland including 22 in Brisbane. I am thrilled to see that five of these major venues will be located within my electorate of McConnell, barring any redistributions of course and any changes that may be made. A decade is a long time. These are indicative sites. We have a lot of work to do in regard to those. I know others are advocating for various sites. Assuming that the indicative venues are the ones going forward, I think the RNA showgrounds will be fantastic for equestrian. I know they will benefit from the legacy project of upgrading their stands and stables and showcasing that most wonderful and iconic part of Brisbane in the heart of my electorate. I think it will be absolutely fantastic, and what a great opportunity for the RNA to upgrade some facilities that they have had there for a long time. I cannot wait to see it after all the upgrades have been done.

Victoria Park is already on the drawing board for a major upgrade. They are talking about having cycling and equestrian cross country there. What a great use of that facility. It is an amazing park in the heart of my electorate. It used to be a golf course. We are now transferring it into a park, but the people in the inner city of Brisbane can benefit from what happens there. I look forward to seeing where we end up with that wonderful park.

We are already injecting, with the Commonwealth government, \$30 million in upgrades to Ballymore Stadium. I thank the former minister for sport, the member for Springwood, in relation to the \$15 million that we have put in. We are going to be upgrading that facility. Hopefully field hockey will be held there and maybe at some other venues. It is going to be fantastic to see Ballymore used for the Olympics.

There is talk about Albion Park being transformed into a Brisbane indoor sports centre. We will then have to work out what happens to the greyhound and harness racing at Albion Park. Planning for that is well under way, with a fantastic centre soon to be announced with regard to the greyhound and harness racing. It will be wonderful to welcome a brand new venue to be constructed to host our exciting swimming, water polo and diving events—the exciting new Brisbane Live arena on the site of the old Roma Street station.

Cross River Rail is a fantastic opportunity and the Minister for Transport should be congratulated. We did not turn away nearly \$1 billion worth of federal funding at the time, as was the case with the BaT tunnel, which was never going to see the light of day. The Minister for Transport did see the light of day, because Else broke through the other day. They are no longer in darkness; the light came shining through. We are building major infrastructure in this city in my electorate, with a station in Albert Park and one at Woolloongabba. It is incredible. The RNA will get a year-round station as well. We did not turn our back on this incredible infrastructure; we funded it and went forward. It held us in good stead to get these Olympic Games. It is wonderful, and Brisbane Live will sit right near that Roma Street station. Imagine the events and concerts that are going to happen at that venue afterwards, being able to beautifully transition from the public transport group. It truly is going to be a golden age in Brisbane and Queensland, there is no doubt about it.

I am looking forward to catching up with Chelsea Warr, the CEO of the Queensland Academy of Sport, to work out a strategy for the schools and future Olympic and Paralympic children who want to compete. This is truly wonderful. I cannot support this bill strongly enough. I support the amendments put forward by the Premier; I do not support any other amendments. I commend the bill to the House.