



Speech By  
**James Martin**


**MEMBER FOR STRETTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 October 2021

**MOTION**

**Queensland Building and Construction Commission**

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (5.46 pm): Week after week those opposite have come into this House and sought to undermine confidence in Queensland's building and construction industry, an industry which we learned this week now contributes \$47.4 billion to the Queensland economy. In fact, on my morning walk today not far from here I walked past the entrance to the Queen's Wharf development. It was early and I saw many construction workers in their hi-vis on their way to clock on for their shift. It is disappointing for the 230,000 Queenslanders working in the industry that we have an LNP focused on taking them down. As the minister has pointed out, it is nothing but petty exploitative politics.

The reality is that Queensland's building industry has never been stronger, fairer or safer—and so is our regulator. Despite those opposite, there is confidence in the industry: confidence that tradies and subbies get paid for their work, confidence that home owners can invest in building and renovating, confidence that the products on our construction sites are safe. That last point is important because every Queenslander has the right to feel safe in the buildings they live in, work in and visit.

It was made even more real when flames engulfed London's Grenfell Tower in June 2017. Every state in Australia is faced with the complex issues of potential combustible cladding, but it was Queensland that was recognised by the Grenfell Tower inquiry as a global leader in our approach. That approach has seen 93 per cent of government buildings and 97 per cent of private buildings cleared of cladding risk.

The safety of Queenslanders will always come first. If those opposite were genuinely concerned about the industry, they would not be sitting here undermining its confidence. They would not be exploiting the unfortunate but small number of examples that they do not understand for political gain.

If those opposite were wanting to do something productive and improve regulation in the construction industry, they would get on the phone to Canberra. They would call Prime Minister Morrison and tell him to back in local manufacturing jobs by banning dodgy cladding at the border. It is not surprising that, when it comes to something dangerous coming over the border, the LNP are all for it.

When a major industry group like the Property Council and a Senate inquiry are both backing a ban, I think the message to the Morrison government is that it is common sense—but no, they continue to dodge this responsibility to the people of Australia.

It was the Palaszczuk government that introduced the most comprehensive chain-of-responsibility laws in the country, with an independent regulator now holding everyone in the building supply chain accountable for ensuring products are safe and fit for their intended use. It was the Palaszczuk government that banned flammable cladding with a PE core greater than 30 per cent on Queensland construction sites. It is our cladding materials library at the University of Queensland that provides fire experts with comprehensive information on the flammability of building products.

Queensland construction is strong and so is its regulator. You do not get a building boom like this, where more homes are being built and renovated, home owners are moving in happy and tradies are being fairly paid for the work they do, without an effective regulator. It is high time those opposite stop with the undermining, stop with the exploitation and start backing the 230,000 construction workers who are building a better Queensland.