




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 27 October 2021

MOTION

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (5.55 pm): I rise to speak against the motion. The opposition motion is aimed at nothing more than undercutting confidence in Queensland's critical \$47.4 billion construction industry and the 230,000 Queenslanders who work in it. On this side of the House we will not let the LNP undermine the achievements of the regulator, this government, industry, workers and unions. Together we have kept this industry going during what has been the most challenging time in living memory. While other states have been locked down and workers locked out of building sites, we have worked together to keep Queensland building booming. It has been our health response and focus on keeping Queenslanders safe that has allowed our homes to continue to be built and major projects to reach high into the air.

On top of that, we are investing \$52.2 billion into our infrastructure program, building a better Queensland, and setting us up for when we leave the shadow of COVID looking forward to the safe and strong future Queensland holds. It has only happened because we, unlike those opposite, have not given in to petty politics and cheap political point-scoring. Instead, with our strong independent regulatory and industry leaders, construction companies, unions, tradies and government, we have worked together and kept Queensland building.

We have kept construction sites open and tradies on the tools. Onsite, tradies have masked up, staggered start times and socially distanced in bigger crib rooms. The alternative seen in southern states has been devastating. At one point, Sydney's construction lockdown cost New South Wales at least \$1 billion per week. In Victoria it was \$455 million a day. In contrast, here in Queensland construction sites have stayed open. From day one tradies, subcontractors, major construction companies, suppliers, unions and employer groups have worked together to keep this critical sector working. With 230,000 jobs at stake, we will not allow the LNP to do what COVID could not: destabilise the construction sector. We are all focused on working together to ensure construction sites stay open, powering Queensland's economic recovery and not giving in to cheap political point-scoring. Our strong, fair and independent regulator has played its role.

Queensland's construction industry works best when it works together. COVID-19 is proof of that. Master Builders Queensland's chief executive officer Grant Galvin said that keeping the building and construction industry open has been critical and that the situation in other states showed the success of Queensland's COVID plan. The mighty Electoral Trades Union state secretary Peter Ong pointed to proper planning and implementation as well as education as what is required to keep workers safe and employed. Plumbers Union state secretary Gary O'Halloran said, 'We have been able to stay COVID-safe, keep people employed, keep apprentices coming through and projects going by doing the right thing onsite.'

Together, government, industry, the independent regulator and unions have not let Queensland tradies down. That is what makes it all the more disappointing when those opposite undermine and exploit this good work as only they can. This motion is a nonsense and it should not be supported.