




Speech By
Laura Gerber

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MOTION

Queensland Building and Construction Commission

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (5.41 pm): The Queensland Building and Construction Commission has let Queenslanders down, it has let my constituents down and it has let down the owner of an award-winning disability-friendly home. There are widespread concerns regarding the performance and integrity of the QBCC, as we have heard tonight in this chamber from several members. I want this House to hear from one of my constituents who is fighting tooth and nail to see his home made compliant and certified but has consistently faced barriers from the QBCC.

My constituent Scott Gordon is a C3 quadriplegic and an occupational therapist specialising in assistive technology. Scott has an incredible mind and a passion for engineering and he used these skills when designing an impressive multistorey accessible home that can be controlled and automated by people with high-level disabilities, including controls for high-level quadriplegics like himself.

Scott is an incredible advocate for the disability community. Turning his passion into reality, Scott creates extraordinary and practical occupational therapy gadgets. Scott has been involved in the creation of so many phenomenal gadgets including wheelchair accessible sidecars, allowing people the freedom to experience motorcycle travel. His home is the gadget benchmark—it is fully automated and voice controlled.

In 2019, Scott and his incredible home featured on *The Project*. *The Project* called Scott's home 'arguably Australia's smartest home'. Scott moved into his smart wheelchair accessible home over three years ago, but upon moving in Scott did not receive any compliance paperwork or certification from the QBCC licence-holding builder. That paperwork is needed to certify that the builder met minimum safety requirements when building the home. These certification documents are required for Scott to be able to do anything with his home—to insure it or to sell it down the track if he wants to.

Scott has done all the hard work to design and fit his home out with the technology he needs, and it was the QBCC licence-holding builder's job to ensure it was built properly. Scott has spent the past three years chasing the builder, chasing the certifier and subsequently chasing the QBCC to obtain these documents. Scott first contacted the QBCC in February 2018 with his concerns and, despite his matter not being actioned, the QBCC closed his case in July this year saying that the complaint was 'out of date'. Three years and no action was taken on behalf of Scott. That is not good enough. Queenslanders deserve better from the QBCC, and Scott deserves better.

As a result of the QBCC's delayed inaction, Scott had to restart his claim. That is not Scott's fault. That blame lies squarely at the feet of the QBCC and this minister. Finally, after three years of inaction, the QBCC notified Scott that they cannot assist. Scott's insurance runs out in December this year. Something must be done before then. I have written to the Minister for Public Works outlining Scott's case. I look forward to receiving a response. I hope that the minister is able to action it because we know that the minister has intervened in other matters that he has a personal connection to. Take the Kirra Vista Apartments, for example.

Last sitting week it was revealed that the minister's office will make personal representations to the QBCC, send senior staff to inspect a building on a weekend on overtime and will meet with complainants alongside his ministerial staff when they are a stakeholder of his previous portfolio or a constituent—but the minister is yet to even respond to Scott.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for McConnel, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

Mrs GERBER: Instead of Scott's complaint being met with responses directly from the QBCC commissioner within hours of a ministerial representation—just like when the minister referred the Kirra Vista Apartments to the QBCC late on a Friday night—Scott's complaint will not even be referred at all. A fast-tracked response within hours for the minister's friends involved in the Kirra Vista Apartment saga; three years of inaction for ordinary Queenslanders like Scott—this is not good enough. It is not good enough that after three years no-one is prepared to take responsibility for the lack of compliance in Scott's case. This minister needs to ensure that the QBCC does its job, not just in the cases that he has a personal stake in. He needs to do it for people like Scott.