




Speech By  
**Michael Crandon**

**MEMBER FOR COOMERA**

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## **COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (12.24 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the COVID-19 Emergency Response and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I note that we are talking about an extension of the operation of COVID-19 related legislation. On 8 March 2021 the Public Health and Other Legislation (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Amendment Act 2021 received assent, extending the operation of temporary legislative provisions introduced in 2020.

The committee, as has already been noted, met with stakeholders in a COVID safe environment, all of the stakeholders appearing via video link or similar. The report itself is very self-explanatory. It is a very clear report and was supported by both sides of the committee, if you like. All members of the committee reached agreement that the bills should be passed. The feedback that we received from stakeholders was generally positive. There were a couple of stakeholders, may I say, who took the opportunity to speak to us and 'kick for the corner' on a couple of local issues they seemed to have a few problems with but which indeed had very little to do with the extension of the bill. That is fine. It was a public forum and they had the right to make those comments.

One particular comment was of interest to me and I looked it up when we got the material through. A group from the Redland City Council area were talking about and criticising the Redland City Council because they were not going live with their council meetings. Upon questioning they confirmed that indeed it seems like the full council meeting was put to air a couple of days later. One comment they made was that, 'It seemed like it was okay for someone from the clergy to go into the meeting,' and on that basis they thought it should have been also open to others. I took interest in that because I wondered what that was all about. I did say to the witness that 'it appears the Redland City Council rates prayers over ratepayers', although it looks more like the Redland City Council simply had a member of the clergy come into the meeting at the beginning of the meeting, perhaps do a prayer with the committee and then leave so they were able to get underway with their meeting.

The document itself which has been put together by our secretariat—who always do a wonderful job—is a very, very good document for anyone who wants clarity on what legislation has been changed without having to go into the legislation. The document itself runs for something like 60 pages. At the back of it there is a very useful appendix D, 'COVID-19 legislation extended by the bill'. It outlines all of the legislation that is impacted. There are some temporary measures that are outlined there, so it is a really good quick reference for people to try and establish exactly what has been done in relation to this.

There is a proposed extension until September. We have noted already that this is an end-of-September bill. It means there is little likelihood of the rate rises everybody seems to be a bit worried about. They have a window of three months. I doubt that any of the councils around Queensland would use that as an opportunity to gouge their constituents in additional rates. I think it is a sensible

measure to have that capacity there. It is unlikely to be used. As far as I am aware, it has not been used up until now and it has been there all the way through. It is unlikely to be used, but it is there as an important backstop in the event councils do need to do something.

It is also the case that, if councils wanted to provide a particular cohort in their community with a discount on rates or to waive rates and that type of thing, then it would be possible for them to make amendments to their budget retrospectively and give those people that opportunity to not have to pay rates et cetera. Having said that, I will leave it for others to round out the debate on this. It is very straightforward. It makes a lot of sense. I indeed do commend this bill to the House for the benefit of all Queenslanders.