



## Speech By **Rob Molhoek**

**MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT**

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### **BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS BILL**

Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (12.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. What can we say but bring on the games! I have had the great honour and privilege of attending the opening ceremonies of both the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games and the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000. What a spectacle that was! What an incredible event. What a magnificent opportunity to showcase all the very best that Australia and our region have to offer to the world, to show off our culture and our heritage and it goes without saying our sporting process because Australia knows how to turn out gold medal champions, we know how to turn out medallists and we know how to demonstrate great sporting spirit to the world.

Back when the Sydney 2000 Olympics were being organised, I also had the privilege of being on the Olympic 2000 team fund for Queensland as a board member. Our role was to raise money to support Queensland athletes who were going to compete at the games. It was such a great honour to stand by then mayor Gary Baildon, who was the chair of that fund, and other board members like Glynis Nunn and work together side by side for two or three years running events and raising money for our Queensland athletes.

I have to say that one of the amazing things about the Olympic Games is the culture. There is just an incredible culture around the games. There is so much pomp, so much history and so much heritage that you cannot help but be caught up in the aura and wonder of this truly global event. I know that for Queensland the hosting of these games, which both sides of the House have said repeatedly we fully support, will be a great triumph for Queensland and a great moment in Queensland's history.

I was also lucky enough during the 2000 games to be the general manager of Macquarie Southern Cross, one of the official broadcast partners of the 2000 Olympics. It was just an incredible journey working through the negotiations, looking at the contracts, coming to understand what it meant to have broadcast rights and what we could and could not say.

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Mr MOLHOEK (Southport—LNP) (4.00 pm), continuing: I rise to continue my contribution on the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. Like a few of my colleagues, and I particularly mention the member for Mermaid Beach, I am also concerned that when we look through the list of representatives to be included on the board of the 2032 Brisbane Olympic committee, there is no guaranteed spot for someone from the Gold Coast. We have seen many reports in the media from Mayor Tom Tate and suggestions that perhaps the deputy mayor should be involved.

The Gold Coast has demonstrated capacity and experience in running events of this nature and this size. We only have to look back to the recent Commonwealth Games to see how proactive our city was in hosting and running that event. We also understand the importance of legacy and the great legacy to come out of the Commonwealth Games. The original plans presented by the original Labor government for those Commonwealth Games included temporary facilities at the Broadwater as

opposed to permanent facilities in Coomera and Carrara, where we now have magnificent indoor sports facilities. Those facilities were designed and built to cater for the Commonwealth Games and to provide a legacy and facilities for a growing city. I want to particularly acknowledge the former deputy premier, Jeff Seeney, and the former treasurer, Tim Nicholls, who actually supported suggestions from our community for those facilities to be not temporary but rather permanent facilities moving forward with games planning.

The Gold Coast was also the first city to fully integrate the para-sports program at the 2018 Commonwealth Games. What a thrill it was to be at the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre for the swimming events and to see para-sports athletes competing alongside our non-para-sports athletes. It was a magnificent week of events not only at the Aquatic Centre but at Carrara stadium. Again, I say that the Gold Coast really does get it. It is certainly one of the most multicultural and inclusive cities in our nation.

We are also the sixth largest city in our nation. On that basis alone, there should be a seat on the board of the Olympic Games organising committee. The Gold Coast should be represented. I have heard people talk about the fact that there will be nine venues on the Gold Coast. Many of those venues are there now, and the Gold Coast council and the ratepayers of the city will be required to maintain those facilities in peak condition for many years to come in readiness for those games.

The Gold Coast can be incredibly proud of our sporting prowess. There would not be a person in the House who would not agree that we have produced more than our fair share of Olympic and Commonwealth Games champions over the last 20 or 30 years. We only have to run through the gold medal lists of the 2000 Olympics, the Tokyo Olympics and former Commonwealth Games around the world to see how many Gold Coast athletes have performed. I go right back to people like Andrew Baildon, the son of our former mayor who was a medallist in the Commonwealth Games in his younger days.

On the Gold Coast, we know how to run an event. We run a lot of them. We run the Australian Masters Games every year—although COVID has certainly been disruptive in the last couple of years—where some 50,000 athletes come from all around Australia to participate in a range of seniors events. We have run the Surf Life Saving Championships. We have run Indy and the Supercars for more than 20 years on the Gold Coast. We have run some of the nation's most prestigious and well-known triathlons and marathons. We have run the Pan Pacs. We have run some of the most prestigious world surfing events. In fact, the world surf championships were born on the Gold Coast at Burleigh back in the early 1970s.

I simply put forward an appeal to the Premier and to those who are in a position of influence to determine the outcome. I advocate in the strongest possible terms for a representative from the Gold Coast—our mayor or deputy mayor—to be included on the Olympic Games organising committee because we have a lot to contribute as a city. We have the hands-on experience to ensure that we would play an active role in delivering a great Olympic Games in 2032.