




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS BILL

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (4.26 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bill before the House, the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill. We have heard a lot of people in the chamber over the last two days talk about the importance of what this will bring to their communities. As a Townsville resident and a lover of Townsville, we cannot miss out and we are not going to. We have seen that the recommendation to the Olympic committee is that we host some of the football games, and why not? It was the Palaszczuk government who built the Queensland Country Bank Stadium, and what a great stadium that is.

We saw how North Queensland and particularly Townsville embraced that State of Origin. It was absolutely brilliant. The whole idea of locating the stadium there was about activating the CBD, and that is exactly what we saw happen for that State of Origin. They closed down streets; it was an absolute party atmosphere. It was like Caxton Street on steroids right throughout Townsville. This is what will happen when we have the Olympics coming into Townsville for those two weeks. These will be the things that our kids, grandkids and those who miss out will talk about for our entire lifetime. This is what it is about.

There is one thing that I remember from when I was teaching phys. ed, and honourable members can tell I am a former phys. ed. teacher by my sleek greyhound physique! In the lead-up to the Sydney Olympics we were charged with talent identification. On one day every kid in our school went through a series of physical tests to identify whether they would be suitable athletes in the future. This was where we saw those kids who may not have thought that rowing was their thing or that cycling was their thing or that running 200 metres was their thing. However, through this talent identification we saw the development of our future world-class athletes. It paid off because the Sydney Olympics had the best outcome: the best medal tally ever. That was because there was the investment in infrastructure and in our future athletes and the legacy has followed on from there. This is about what it can bring to our towns and to our cities before the Olympics happen. We may not host the USA team or the Great Britain team, but we will host those second-tier countries to come to Townsville prior to the games to prepare and train—and why wouldn't they?

Townsville has the Queensland Country Bank Stadium. We have the sports reserve that has the tartan track. We have now invested approximately \$30 million in a brand new facility, housing three indoor basketball courts and indoor hockey—with all of those great facilities at that same reserve.

We have spent \$2.2 million in the member for Mundingburra's electorate on a new velodrome. Sitting right beside the Queensland Country Bank Stadium is the Cowboys Community Training and High Performance Centre facility. These facilities are going to bring these countries to our town, to our cities. If you are not excited by that then take your pulse, because you must be dead! This is going to be bigger than Texas.

We have an opportunity to encourage teams to come to our city. This will create flow-on benefits when their families come and stay in our accommodation places and when international guests come to our regions. We heard the member for Lockyer speak about what is in his electorate. The same dynamic exists in each and every one of our electorates. We have some of the most outstanding assets in the world. This is our greatest opportunity to showcase that, and that is what we are going to do.

Not only will we have the greatest games ever; we will also showcase our region and state. We will have people returning to visit our regions, because we will put on the party of the millennium. It is going to be bigger than Texas.

The Palaszczuk government saw the vision and grabbed it. Now, we are taking the initial steps to put this together to make sure—

An opposition member interjected.

Mr STEWART: Success has many fathers—I take the interjection by those opposite. Those opposite would like to claim everything. I am sure that those opposite would even claim that they were the first man on the moon! Success has many fathers.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr STEWART: I say to the member for Gympie that now is the time for everyone in Queensland to celebrate these Olympics. These will be our Olympics, because we will make it work. We will make sure we host the best Olympics. This is the start of investing in our future, investing in the legacy and making sure we attract international investors that keep coming back to the greatest state, not only in Australia but in the world.