




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS BILL

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (12.35 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Bill 2021. I have been fortunate enough to live in this city my whole life as I am a born and bred Brisbanite. Over the last 60 years, believe it or not—I know it is hard to believe—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr MANDER: It is quite amazing, isn't it? Over that period of time I have seen not only the great sporting events but also the cultural events that have been held in this city. I include the 1975 and 1976 grand finals where Wests beat Easts and Redcliffe two years running. I know others would not, but I regard those as very significant. More importantly, I speak of the 1982 Commonwealth Games and the 1988 World Expo. I have great memories of those events; they were great experiences. I remember sitting in the stands at ANZ stadium for the athletics and I was not to know that not long after that I would be refereeing out in the middle of that field when the Broncos switched their headquarters to ANZ stadium. Who can forget Expo? That was six months of fantastic exposure to the world and it brought the Chicken Dance to prominence across the city as well—not that I ever did that sort of thing. It was a great experience and it was great for our city.

Of course, since then we have had the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast which, other than a few little hiccups, was regarded as being successful as well. In this country and in this state we run events well, particularly sporting events. The 2032 Olympic Games being awarded to Brisbane, to bring the greatest show on earth to our city and my home city, is something that excites me greatly. I am looking forward to the day that that occurs.

I want to thank the Leader of the Opposition for giving me the opportunity to be the shadow minister for Olympic and Paralympic sports and regional engagement. I think that is very important. It would be wrong to not admit there is a degree of cynicism in regional Queensland about these games and it is important that those issues are addressed. It is important that regional Queensland feels that they are involved. It is my understanding that there are events in only Cairns, Townsville and Toowoomba during the games. I have heard already some of the comments about preparation events being held in some of the regional cities, and I think that is appropriate. I think that would be a good way of making sure that regional Queensland was involved. There will also be training camps and other experiences prior to the games. That is where we really need to get the regions involved because it is important that everybody in this state gets behind this. Regional Queensland also needs to understand that if the capital city grows, that is good for the whole state as well. Sometimes I think that is forgotten.

Securing the Olympic Games is an important contribution or addition to the history of our state. I am happy to be the shadow minister for an aspect of that contribution. It is appropriate to recognise those who had the original vision. Members might remember that when Sallyanne Atkinson was the lord mayor of Brisbane in the 1990s, she and others had a vision for the Olympics.

Mr Hinchliffe: I think Roy Harding started it.

Mr MANDER: Is that true? There you go. I did not know that. I will take your word for that.

Those people who went before us had vision. Brisbane was probably not quite ready in those days. I pay credit to those people who 'have a go', signal that this is something that we aspire to do and have vision. I hope that those who are still alive will see their dream come to fruition.

I want to recognise the Council of Mayors South East Queensland. To be honest, this group drove the project from the beginning. Their motivation was to have a catalyst to bring about the infrastructure that this city so desperately needs, particularly connectivity between our major centres—Toowoomba, the Gold Coast, Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast. I know from my electorate in the north-west suburbs of Brisbane that the traffic congestion is a nightmare along Old Northern Road and South Pine Road in the mornings. We need solutions, because we do not want to become a city bogged down in congestion. I hope that the Olympic Games will be a catalyst for infrastructure change, particularly in transport, where it is so desperately needed.

I thank the Council of Mayors South East Queensland. In particular, I mention the mayors of the big three areas: Graham Quirk with Brisbane City Council at the time; Tom Tate down on the Gold Coast; and Mark Jamieson on the Sunshine Coast. I know that they were key drivers in this area. Their submission was great, because it was very practical and showed that it could be possible.

What is important—and I think it was already mentioned by the opposition leader—is that these games have bipartisan support. In fact, without bipartisan support it would have been difficult for us to secure the games. Both at the federal and the state level, we are wholeheartedly behind the games, and we will do everything that we can to help them be a success.

As previously mentioned, the object of this bill is to establish the organising committee for the games and to undertake the organisation, conduct, promotion and commercial and financial management of the games. This committee will make that happen, so it is important that we get the right people, who are suitably skilled and rightly motivated. I am confident that the bill outlines how that can be done best, which is important.

There is no doubt that these Olympics will bring great things to our city. We have already talked about how it will motivate younger people to be involved with sport—not just to win or to succeed but to be healthy and active. Not only will that benefit those individuals, it will benefit us as a society if we can prevent many of the health issues that beset people later in life through inactivity.

There is the promotion and tourism aspect of being on the world stage. We will be mentioned in the same breath as London, Moscow, Los Angeles, Paris, Rio and Beijing. Brisbane will now be mentioned with those names leading up to the games and long after it as well. Of course there will be economic benefits in hosting these games. I note what the minister said about the 'new norm' for the games; that is a very relevant point to reassure people that the financial risk of being a host city is minimised. We still have to do things well, but the fact that we are responsible for the infrastructure provision and not the operational cost of the games is important.

There are a couple of items of concern, which I will not repeat, about right to information and conflicts of interest—the opposition leader outlined those very well. We did seek some reassurance and clarification from the IOC to ensure that those aspects were appropriate, but it is important that we are seen to be transparent and that we follow due process. With those few words, the opposition wholly supports this bill, as we do the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.