




Speech By  
**Brittany Lauga**

**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 August 2022

**TRADING (ALLOWABLE HOURS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT  
BILL**

 **Ms LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, specifically to the amendments to the Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 and the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006. This bill contains minor amendments to those acts to make permanent particular reforms that were temporarily in place through an extraordinary regulation made under the COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020 during the COVID-19 health emergency. The amendments allowed meetings conducted as part of investigations by the Queensland College of Teachers under the QCT act and Parents and Citizens' association meetings required under the education regulation to be conducted through communication technology, like Zoom or Teams, in addition to being held in person. The amendments allow for production of documents as part of a QCT investigation to be provided electronically or by post, in addition to providing these through in-person attendance.

The amendments are being made permanent after consultation with stakeholders, including the Queensland College of Teachers and P&Cs Qld. In consultation on the bill, QCT advised that the ability to conduct meetings as part of investigations via communication technology has enabled efficient and effective investigations and would have continued value given general changes in use of communication technology, Queensland's dispersed geography and the various reasons that may otherwise prevent someone from attending a meeting. The QCT has an important role in ensuring the integrity of the teaching profession in Queensland, and being able to conduct meetings as part of an investigation is essential. The ability to use communication technology to facilitate such meetings will support the QCT in its integrity role.

Further, P&Cs Qld has advised that a continued ability to conduct meetings via communication technology would be helpful, given physical attendance can be hampered by distance, on-farm commitments, poor roads and natural disasters. P&C associations provide a valuable support network to schools across the state, and they are required to hold meetings annually under the legislation. The increased flexibility these provisions will provide will reduce the burden for P&C associations and their members, particularly those in remote areas. While it is expected that meetings will often continue to be attended in person, the flexibility to utilise communication technology, particularly when there are natural disasters, health issues or significant distance to travel, will ensure these entities can comply with their regulatory obligations in an efficient and effective manner.

The consultation identified that these amendments would have value if permanently in place due to Queensland's dispersed geography and the various reasons that may otherwise prevent someone from attending a meeting. With technological advances and changes in society due in part to the pandemic, people are increasingly using communication platforms for meetings, so these amendments ensure the legislation reflects contemporary practice. The integrity of QCT investigations and meetings conducted by P&Cs will not be impacted.

I thank the stakeholders who were consulted as part of this bill including the QCT, P&Cs Qld, Isolated Children's Parents' Association and principal associations including Queensland Association of Outdoor and Environmental Education Centre Leaders, Queensland Association of Special Education Leaders, Queensland Association of State School Principals, Queensland Secondary Principals' Association and Queensland Association of Combined Sector Leaders. I note that there is overall support for the amendments to the E(GP)A and QCT act. I commend the bill to the House.