




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.59 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. On 17 August 2022 the Minister for Tourism, Innovation and Sport and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympics and Paralympics Sport and Engagement introduced this legislation into the Queensland parliament to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. Specifically, the amendments in this legislation pertain to the implementation of the remaining recommendations that are contained within the 2018 Stadium Taskforce interim and final reports, which I will expand upon further shortly.

Through the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, Stadiums Queensland is the established authority that is responsible for the management, operation, use, development and promotion of major sports facilities in Queensland. These facilities are regularly utilised for the hosting and delivery of a range of state, national and international sporting, recreational, entertainment and special events. Many if not all of these major sports facilities, as declared under the Major Sports Facilities Regulation 2014, would be well known and greatly enjoyed by Queenslanders across our state.

As we have heard from many speakers, these facilities include the Brisbane Cricket Ground, otherwise known as the Gabba, where we have all enjoyed attending T20 matches and test matches. There is also the Brisbane Entertainment Centre, where I have been to see AC/DC concerts over many years. I know the former member for Rockhampton, Bill Byrne, was a great fan of AC/DC, as is the member for Chatsworth, Steve Minnikin. The member for Bundamba mentioned Guns N' Roses, and I have seen Guns N' Roses at the Brisbane Entertainment Centre. When they come to Suncorp in November, I might see them at that concert as well. They are two iconic and great bands.

The facilities also include Carrara Stadium, or Metricon Stadium as it is also known. I was fortunate to go to the closing ceremony of the Commonwealth Games there, along with the member for Surfers Paradise. Those 2018 Commonwealth Games were terrific for the Gold Coast and Queensland. Other facilities include: the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre; the Queensland Tennis Centre, which hosted the Brisbane International over many years but obviously there has been some disruption over the last few years because of COVID; the Robina Stadium, known as Cbus Super Stadium; the Sleeman Sports Complex in Chandler, which as was mentioned before has been used as an evacuation hub during times of flooding and disaster; and the Townsville stadium, otherwise known as the Queensland Country Bank Stadium.

By way of background, it was in April 2018 when the then Labor minister for sport established the Stadium Taskforce to review the pricing and practices of Stadiums Queensland. Such a review was required given the concerns that were raised in relation to the general operation of major sporting venues, including associated venue and government services costs and also venue infrastructure needs. By the conclusion of 2018, the Stadium Taskforce delivered two reports with a combined total of 53 recommendations in order to improve the commercial agility and governance of Stadiums Queensland. As stated in report No. 33 of the Queensland parliament's Economics and Governance Committee, which was tabled on 7 October 2022—

Of the 53 recommendations, 16 of 17 recommendations from the Interim Report have been completed, with 29 recommendations completed and seven in progress from the Final Report.

If passed, the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022 ... will implement all outstanding Taskforce recommendations requiring legislative amendments to the Act.

Whilst these amendments are welcome—particularly if, as is intended, they enable Stadiums Queensland to become a more contemporary, agile and responsive agency—the significant length of time it has taken this Labor government to deliver these reforms is deeply concerning. This concern is further exacerbated when we consider the implications of the Labor state government’s lethargic approach to improving our state’s major sports facilities in view of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The eyes of the world are already on Queensland and specifically how Queensland intends to deliver the greatest international sporting event that Queensland will have seen. It is not that far away when we think of the length of time it takes to plan this; 2032 is not that far into the future.

The state Labor government’s approach to the planning and delivery of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and associated major sporting venues at this point is deeply concerning. Just last month, it was revealed in the *Courier-Mail*—

The Palaszczuk government is nearly a year behind schedule on its Olympics infrastructure plan, and frustrated senior bureaucrats are warning venues, athletes’ villages, road and rail networks risk not being built on time unless it starts to accelerate quickly.

Government members interjected.

Dr ROWAN: I hear government members interjecting, but it is senior bureaucrats who are identifying this to their government. The last thing we want here in Queensland—when the eyes of the world will be on Queensland—is for the proper planning to have not taken place, and they are already flagging that at this early stage.

As the LNP shadow minister for education, I also share the many concerns expressed in relation to the failed transparency and communication by the state Labor government regarding any proposed construction and redevelopment of the Gabba and any associated land resumptions which may impact on students, teachers and families of the East Brisbane primary school. That has been identified, and I know the member for South Brisbane has also raised those concerns. They have also been raised in estimates and in the House.

Whilst our state’s major sports facilities are often considered as the gold standard of great sporting and entertainment infrastructure, we must not forget how vitally important it is that fit-for-purpose sporting infrastructure is also supported and delivered at a local level. Across our electorates in Queensland, there are many students and others who are aspiring to be athletes in the 2032 Olympics. In my own electorate of Moggill, we have the Moggill District Sports Park. There needs to be enhanced pedestrian and cyclist access to the Moggill District Sports Park, and that requires the cooperation of the state government and Brisbane City Council to work collaboratively to get the job done. There cannot be any ongoing and constant ambiguity and shifting of jurisdictional responsibility. This needs to be delivered to that important sports facility. I also take this opportunity to say to the Minister for Education that this provides a unique opportunity for some of our schools to get additional sporting facilities within them. I mention Kenmore State High School.

In concluding my contribution today, I wish to say that the purpose, intent and objectives of this legislation are worthwhile and stand to deliver for Queenslanders a more modern and responsive Stadiums Queensland authority. That being said, the time it has taken for Labor to finally deliver such reforms has been inadequate. The Labor state government must fundamentally and comprehensively shift its attitude and commitment to the organisation, planning and prompt delivery of infrastructure and services to support the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. This is vitally important for the delivery of a successful 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games here in Queensland. We all want those games to be a success, but fundamentally it is about ensuring that we have a comprehensive investment, that the infrastructure is planned, that it is delivered on time and that the time frames are met and, in an ideal world, exceeded because 2032 will be a very important milestone for Queensland. We need to have successful games, particularly when the eyes of the world will be upon us.