




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (12.19 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise to contribute to the Trading (Allowable Hours) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I must start by talking about the mighty Kingaroy BaconFest festival that will be on this weekend. It is so exciting. This is one of the biggest events that ever gets held in Kingaroy. Quite frankly, a couple of years ago when the first BaconFest happened so many people came that the food vendors ran out of food by about 10 o'clock in the morning. It did not matter; we got more food into town—

Ms Grace: We are talking bacon!

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection from the education minister: we are talking bacon. There is bacon everywhere. Right now, all the light posts and poles around Kingaroy have banners of bacon on them. Jason and I are so excited for this weekend. We have the aptly named Wine and Swine—we are heading out to the drinks—on Friday night.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Order, members. I know that bacon is exciting, but let's hear the member's contribution.

Ms Grace: We love bacon.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: We do love bacon. That is why this bill is so important: it allows shops to open while festivals such as BaconFest are on. That is why it is important that I tell the House—and, as some members here say, the couple of people actually watching online—about BaconFest, because people may be thinking, 'What AM I going to do this weekend?' They should come along to Kingaroy, to the mighty BaconFest! People may not realise that BaconFest also hosts the Australasian BBQ Alliance sanctioned SunPork Smoke Off competition. It is huge. It is a massive event.

On Sunday morning, Jason and I will be enjoying the long table breakfast—of course eating a bit more bacon! If that is not your idea of a 'crackling' good time, I am not sure what is! I expect to see everyone in this House head out to the South Burnett. It will be wonderful to have so many people back, and back to the shops that will be allowed to open because of the trading allowable hours bill.

It is important that we get to the nub of what we are talking about here. It is important to reflect in this House that we did talk about this bill five years ago, in 2017. At that time I spoke on the then bill in support of all of my local small independent grocers, hardware stores and motor dealers who had come to the opposition to find support when the extension of trading hours was proposed by the Labor government. It was flawed legislation. I note that it would have seriously impacted my regional traders. That has been said by many people in this House today. Ultimately, at the end of that bill—after, I think, 32 amendments—we had a five-year moratorium on trading hours which has provided relief for those small and independent retailers. It has given them breathing space and an ability to plan, invest in and grow their business.

I want to give a shout-out to the communities of Esk and Toogoolawah. Using locals, the local Esk co-op board is investing over \$2 million into building the brand new Esk IGA. I know that Tania Lukvitz, who manages that, has been very pleasantly surprised at how the community has worked together whilst this building is going ahead. It meant the loss of our local butcher—Darren Ebert and his family closed their shop—to make way for the building; however, this building is a wonderful addition to the town. It is a small, community-run IGA through the co-op and it is just so vitally important. To think that one of the big majors could come in and open whenever they wanted would be devastating to that business. I know that community-run board works extremely hard to run not only the Esk IGA but also the Toogoolawah IGA and the hardware shops in both Esk and Toogoolawah. They are fantastic shops—as all of my small, independent grocers are.

It is important that they get to compete. People will say that the big guys employ people as well. Of course they do, but in my community of Kingaroy it is wonderful to support the IGA that is able to be open on a Sunday. They employ the local kids. More than that, they support local businesses and community groups and sponsor things like BaconFest and sporting groups like the mighty Red Ants and the Murgon Mustangs. Local businesses are the ones that support those community groups and sporting clubs. It is important that we give them a break.

We have heard here about butchers and bakers—that was a nod to that ‘Butcher’ over there. It is the local bakers who actually provide the buns. I mention as an example the Burrandowan races. It poured with rain all day, but I did find some shelter by working in the bar. The Burrandowan races was a fabulous day. For events such as that, where do the buns and the meat come from? They come from our local—whether it is the little butcher in Kingaroy, the Windmill Bakery in that Kingaroy shop or the baker attached to the IGA. It is important in these regional towns that we continue to support the trading hours that are there to ensure these small traders and retailers can continue and do not get taken over by the big guys. That is something that is important.

We have heard of the issues around that mammoth hardware store that goes into regions. I have even had the small op-shops say that their trade goes down as soon as that mammoth hardware store comes into a town because people go there and just buy cheap stuff. It means that people are not shopping in those smaller, local-run shops. It is important that we consider it.

It is also important to note that my local chambers of commerce, both Murgon and Kingaroy, have at various times spoken to me about the importance of making sure that we are supporting these local businesses, because it is those local businesses that end up being the volunteers into those chambers of commerce as well. It is important that regional members—and all members in this House—support our local businesses.

I will talk about the changes in this legislation that allow P&Cs to meet online. That is fantastic. We know that COVID has changed the way that people meet. To make that amendment to enable online P&C meetings certainly goes a long way to making sure our P&Cs can continue functioning. There are way too many P&Cs in my patch for me to give a shout-out to; I have almost 50 P&Cs across my electorate. It is important that we continue to support them, because it is those P&C mums and dads who shop local, buy local and support all those local shops.

I again encourage everyone to support the South Burnett and support BaconFest. We expect that it will be bigger and better. We will eat more bacon. There is a bacon-eating contest. Kevin Bacon actually did a livestream video for BaconFest. How good is that? We have cut-out posters of Kevin Bacon around town as well. We also have a Bacon Man. Bring your kids. He is not scary, but he does look like a big, fat piece of bacon. You can buy bacon earrings, little piggy earrings and socks. Enjoy BaconFest!

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Nanango, a couple of years ago I did a training course to qualify as a judge for the Australian Barbecue Championships. It is a very short course and I would highly encourage you and other members to do it. It is fantastic. You get to eat barbecue all day!