




Speech By  
**Lance McCallum**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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### **BUILDING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (6.02 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill amends a range of building legislation—eight acts in total—to strengthen and modernise Queensland’s building laws. These acts provide the statutory framework for building industry practitioners and important consumer protections to support Queensland’s \$47 billion building and construction industry and its 230,000 workers. These reforms aim to meet contemporary community expectations about the sustainability and efficiency of our buildings and promote a streamlined, efficient and highly transparent regulatory framework. As we prepare for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, it is vitally important that we have a fit-for-purpose and modern building practice and regulatory framework. That is exactly what this bill and the reforms that are contained in it will deliver for Queensland.

The key amendments that I propose to address relate to ensuring home owners are allowed to install solar panels or solar hot-water systems in their preferred location without regard to aesthetics, more commonly referred to as the ‘ban the banners’ provisions. If time permits I will turn to amendments and provisions that relate to allowing treated greywater to be used for a range of industrial purposes.

Throughout this bill we are reaffirming our commitment to helping more home owners install solar panels, among a suite of reforms to help both consumers and industry. Queensland now boasts 50 large-scale renewable energy projects since 2015. This represents over \$10 billion of investment, almost 8,000 construction jobs alone and 5,774 megawatts of clean energy. Combined with almost 1,500 megawatts of rooftop PV solar, we now have 7,200 megawatts of renewable energy capacity. That means now over 20 per cent of electricity use in Queensland is produced from renewable energy.

It was very interesting to listen to the contributions from LNP speakers such as the member for Surfers Paradise, who took us on a lovely little trip down memory lane in which he applied his own rose-coloured glasses, and also the member for Everton in speaking in relation to the ‘ban the banners’ provisions. Listening to their contributions, one would be forgiven for forgetting, although it is almost impossible to forget, that this is the same government that strangled investment in renewable energy here in Queensland to the point where when the Palaszczuk government was elected in 2015 there was not one new large-scale renewable energy project, they abolished the office of clean energy in Queensland and they scrapped our clean energy investment and clean energy strategy. When we talk about the extreme popularity of solar PV here in Queensland and the fact that we are now a global renewable energy superpower, this is thanks to the work of previous Labor governments and schemes like the Solar Bonus Scheme for feed-in tariffs and the solar hot-water schemes.

The Palaszczuk government has always promoted the installation of solar photovoltaic, or PV, energy systems. When a home owner installs solar panels on their roof, they reduce their energy bills and the energy generated by the panels contributes to our 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030. However, developers commonly use covenants in the contracts of sale, by-laws or community title schemes to effectively control designs in residential estates and unit complexes. These covenants and by-laws can restrict or prohibit the use of energy efficient or sustainable building features and the

initial buyers are typically required to pass on these requirements or prohibitions to later buyers. This can obviously have an extremely large impact on home owners who wish to have solar PV or solar hot-water systems on their homes.

It is important to note that the location of the solar panels on a roof is vitally important. This is because north-facing panels capture much more energy from the sun than south-facing ones. In fact, north-facing panels can capture 20 to 33 per cent more energy than south-facing panels. That is a huge difference. Putting aesthetics ahead of energy efficiency and potential solar and renewables coming into our energy mix is inconsistent with the original intent of the 'ban the banners' provisions. I for one certainly applaud the fact that the amendments in this bill restore the original intent of the 'ban the banners' provisions in the Building Act when they were introduced in 2010, because they were intended to prevent developer covenants from restricting the installation of solar hot-water systems or solar panels on roofs because the systems or panels would affect street appeal.

That is inconsistent with current community expectations, especially when you consider that one in every three houses in Queensland has solar panels installed. We are the solar PV capital of the world. We are also the large-scale solar capital of the world. Solar PV panels are now so common that most people do not even notice them. Ironically, the covenants that require panels to face south actually increase the potential for glare to affect neighbouring properties. Not only are more home owners installing panels; the systems they are installing are also getting bigger. Most systems include around 20 panels with a total capacity of around six kilowatts. That is wonderful, bringing more solar onto our grid. Restricting panels to the southern part of a roof is likely to result in smaller and less productive systems being installed.

Population growth and climate change are driving greater recognition of the need for more sustainable buildings. We need to find more responsible and innovative ways of using our precious resources, such as solar energy.

I acknowledge the work of the minister in bringing this bill before the House, the work of his department and staff and, of course, the work of the committee in preparing what is an excellent report, which I note has no statement of reservation. I offer my congratulations to the committee chair, the member for Kurwongbah, and to every committee member. I thank all of the stakeholders who took the time to participate in the committee process. They ranged from unions to industry bodies, community strata title schemes and the Property Council. Extensive consultation was done in that inquiry. That is certainly reflected in the quality of the content in the committee's report. I place on record my acknowledgement of the workers in the building and construction industry as well as the ever-growing numbers of workers in our solar PV installation industry. I commend this bill to the House.