




Speech By
Michael Healy

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (3.34 pm): It will be of no surprise that I rise to speak in support of the Major Sports Facilities Amendment Bill 2022. Before I launch into reading the well-articulated speech that I have before me, I want to recognise the wonderful input by some, particularly ex-referees. I had never really felt sorry for a referee until I saw one get accidentally hit between the legs with something during an event. That is the only time I have really felt sorry for a referee. It was one of the moments when you talk about the contribution that people make, and I want to acknowledge some of these contributions. It is wonderful. Everybody in this lovely chamber has a great sporting story but I certainly will not be burdening you with mine.

Mrs Gerber: Oh, come on. We want to hear it.

Mr HEALY: Tickets will be sold later for a show outside. I am just getting some videos lined up, so settle down.

In April 2018, the former minister for sport established the Stadium Taskforce, which examined the operating and pricing models for major sports events for each of the venues within the Stadiums Queensland portfolio. The bill responds to the task force's report, as we have heard from members of the committee. It seeks to amend the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001. This is to support Stadiums Queensland to be able to diversify the use of their land at their venues to provide both commercial and community benefits into the future.

Notably, clause 3 of the bill amends the functions of Stadiums Queensland under the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 to allow it to manage, operate, use and promote facilities and facility land where a compatible social or community benefit can be demonstrated. This amendment is expected to contribute to the achievement of the Queensland government's objectives for the community, specifically through the Building Queensland objective, by ensuring eligible facilities or land use for sport, recreational or entertainment purposes or events or special events across Queensland remain contemporary and are positioned to attract new or additional events that stimulate tourism opportunities and drive sustainable economic prosperity.

I think it is important to acknowledge the investment that the state has made. I take the liberty of using, as an example, the outstanding world-class stadium in the electorate of the member for Townsville. Obviously, because of the nature of the sport, the use of these facilities is dictated to by weekends and major sporting events. This endeavour highlights the need for us to be able to get a far better commercial return, not only increasing the economic viability of the organisation but also increasing the ability for that infrastructure to be of better use to the community as opposed to just being a sporting facility. There have been examples given of that. As I said, a notable example is Stadiums Queensland diversifying the use of their land and venues to provide both commercial and community benefits, for example, the Kool Beanz childcare facility at Metricon Stadium. That new state-of-the-art childcare facility is expected to open at the end of the year. The facility is located on land owned by Stadiums Queensland.

Ensuring that we are always pursuing a better financial outcome is not only the expectation of government; it is also that of the electorate. Ensuring we increase economic viability is important. In partnership with Autism Queensland, the Kool Beanz Academy will pioneer a new model for integrated child care with a state-of-the-art 13,000-square-metre development, which is absolutely fantastic. The centre is designed for over 203 enrolments and up to 30 of those spaces will be specifically for children requiring extra care. This is fundamentally what the entire review was about, that is, ensuring that our sporting facilities are better used. It covers not only, obviously, the economics but also the needy components within our community. Over several years, the Queensland government and Stadiums Queensland have been working to facilitate opportunities for stadium operators and leaseholders throughout the state to provide greater benefits to their communities. This project will certainly increase community utilisation and engagement with, in this case, Metricon Stadium.

The amendments in the bill will complement the great community services already being delivered at Stadiums Queensland venues such as the Queensland Sports and Athletics Centre. I have so much more to say but I have been given 'the look' so I will end my contribution there.