




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Record of Proceedings, 16 November 2023

EMBLEMS OF QUEENSLAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (5.55 pm): Following the member for Gregory, who has so many of these fossils and attractions in his electorate, particularly—

Mr McDonald: The member for dinosaurs.

Ms LEAHY: He is very much the member for dinosaurs, I have to say. I was very pleased to visit the Winton dinosaur and meet David Elliott when we were up there for the Western Queensland Alliance of Councils. I also had the opportunity to go to Richmond, where—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Ms LEAHY: I take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach because Kronosaurus Korner is something very special to the state. It would be remiss of me not to mention the dinosaurs at Hughenden. I am sure Jane McNamara would deal with me in a manner appropriately if I did not mention the Flinders Shire as well.

We are debating the legislation. The state government has made the decision to have a state fossil emblem. I think that is a very good thing. The interesting thing is that I have the Eromanga Natural History Museum in my electorate. Sid, Zac, George and Monty did not campaign for the muttaburrasaurus. In fact, they were campaigning for Cooper. Cooper is Australia's largest dinosaur and he is housed at the Eromanga Natural History Museum. I acknowledge the member for Cooper, who is in the chair at the moment. I will give a couple of stats about Cooper. Cooper is 90 to 95 million years old. He is nine metres high to the top of his backbone and 30 metres long. I measured up the chamber to see if we could fit Cooper in the chamber, and we cannot. He is actually bigger than the parliamentary chamber. That is one of the issues that we have out there, because we do not have a shed big enough to fit Cooper in.

Mr Hinchliffe: I think Cooper would have been a stranger in the gallery.

Ms LEAHY: I take that interjection from the minister. Cooper probably would smash this place, because he is quite a big dinosaur. His bones are on display in the Eromanga Natural History Museum.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Ms LEAHY: It is not a big enough museum. I take the interjection from the member for Gympie. It is really difficult when you find dinosaurs that are so big; we do not have a big enough shed to house them. The Eromanga Natural History Museum is looking at a stage 3. I encourage all governments to have a look at what is needed out at Eromanga, because we house Cooper—he will have his bones there as well. We have Sid, Zac, George and Monty; they are all housed from the collections from the Murray-Darling Basin and the Lake Eyre and Cooper basins which are part of the overlying Eromanga Basin. It is a fossil collection that continues to grow exponentially every year, and that gives us an incredible opportunity to grow the tourism that comes with that whole palaeo experience.

We have over 70-odd palaeontology sites registered and working in South-West Queensland, so I am pleased to see that we do have a fossil emblem because that takes fossils and the fossils of Outback Queensland to the world.

I note that the Economics and Governance Committee is doing an inquiry into prehistoric dinosaur and palaeo tourism in Queensland. I encourage them to come out to the Eromanga Natural History Museum. We have four-star accommodation out there as well. I suggest they book in early, because it is exceptionally popular out there in Eromanga. They will see what they have done with palaeo tourism. They can probably have the full palaeo experience.

I hope that having a fossil emblem that is recognised by Queensland will encourage people to go out to places like Kronosaurus Korner in Richmond or to Winton and Eromanga. You can follow the entire trail, which is quite unique. It is a really important part of our history in Queensland and a very important part of how we have become Australians.

The interesting thing about Cooper is that the landscape out there is red outback sand and a lot of mulga trees. He used to eat about a tonne of vegetable matter a day. How he would do that now I have absolutely no idea, because mulga would be a pretty dry diet, I must say.