




Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**

**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

**LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (4.57 pm): It gives me pleasure to rise to contribute to the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. The bill covers some ground. The two main areas I would like to speak to are in relation to the management of Queensland's stock routes and amendments the bill was going to make to the Vegetation Management Regulation. This bill continues the work of the best ever natural resources minister that we have had in Queensland—that is, Andrew Cripps, the former member for Hinchinbrook.

**Mr Minnikin:** A great man!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** He was a great man. Even Minister Furner would acknowledge that the work that former minister Cripps did in this House in 2014 to enable landholders to convert their leasehold into freehold is still talked about each and every day everywhere around regional Queensland. It does not matter where I go, which pub I go to, which sale yards I go to, whoever I am speaking to always says, 'When is Andrew Cripps coming back? He was sensible. He brought in the legislation that enabled rural and regional Queensland to thrive.' What the former minister did was so important that even now, eight years later, it is being copied and extended by this government.

You would think that they would have done it a bit quicker—you really would—but we know what they think of rural and regional Queensland. While it took them a bit of time to work it out, it is very pleasing to see that in this bill there is an ability to streamline that process even further. That is very important for the many people who do not know how or do not have the ability to do that paperwork. It is really important. If you do not want to transfer your leasehold to freehold then you do not have to, which is a really important point. If you want to continue on that leasehold journey then that is up to you. I congratulate the member for Condamine, the member for Toowoomba North, the member for Callide and, of course, the mighty member for Gregory for working so hard in relation to this extremely important bill.

Even more so than the Labor members in the House, I was blown away by the rot the member for Maiwar was speaking. I am quite pleased that I was in the House to hear the misunderstanding that the Greens are peddling in relation to this very important bill and stock routes. Stock routes are not there to encourage—what did he call them—the big beef barons. The stock routes have been around for a very long time. In fact, the member for Maiwar might like to know that stock routes are called the long paddock. Why are they called that? They are called that because when you cannot graze your stock on your own land because drought has you in the grip of its hands and you have nowhere else to go, instead of turning out your stock—and there have been some horrible cases; I do not want to think about the time when sheep were put down and so on—you use the long paddock, the stock routes, to feed your cattle. Not many people call it 'droving', but you drive the cattle very slowly along the route. They were most recently used in my electorate in 2019 when a large mob of cattle moved north through the region with a team of drovers and dogs in an effort to feed them and keep them alive during a really tough time.

The stock routes run through my electorate along our major highways such as the western parts of the Burnett Highway—a highway that I would really like to see a lot more work done on—the Murgon-Gayndah road through Cloyna, and Mondure, Melrose, Ballogie, Ironpot and parts of the Brisbane Valley Highway. When you see on the side of the road cattle grazing and moving slowly along the stock routes, slow down because we know there is a \$6 billion maintenance backlog for our rural and regional roads, which means that—

**Ms Boyd:** Relevance?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Relevance? I take that interjection. I want to explain to the member where a stock route is. A lot of them run beside rural and regional roads. It is on the public record, and I thank the shadow minister for transport for continually reminding this House, that there is a \$6 billion maintenance backlog on our rural and regional roads. It is important that we keep the roads maintained for when cattle are being driven through an area. Obviously it is fenced off but stock can get out and so on and we have to be careful. That is why we need to maintain our rural and regional roads. When I say that the Burnett Highway needs upgrading, it absolutely does, just as all of the other roads do. Today I issued a press release about the Brisbane Valley Highway, but that may be veering a little offcourse so I will get back to the issues that I want to talk about in relation to this bill.

I acknowledge the advocacy of the LGAQ. They note that it has been costing councils some \$4.8 million a year to manage the stock route network. We know that 48 local government areas contain parts of the stock route network. These changes have been long-awaited by the councils because they play a major role in the day-to-day management, funding and compliance of the very important stock route network. That burden ends up on the ratepayers. Queensland councils with large areas have, more likely than not, an extremely small rate base. They only recoup some of the costs involved in that \$4.8 million and they have been required to return to the state government 50 per cent of the fees that they receive. In 2017-18, the total revenue retained by councils was just \$324,000, which is only 4.5 per cent of their overall costs. I note that the LGAQ have been seeking this reform for several decades. I congratulate them on their unwavering advocacy on the issue.

It has also been a key priority for my LNP colleagues who represent Western Queensland. They have been advocating for a very long time on this issue. I know that we will get an opportunity to talk about the late great member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, but in this first instance I pass on my condolences to Vaughan's family and loved ones. We will remember his legacy in Western Queensland and his advocacy in this House on the issues contained in the bill that we are talking about today, amongst many other issues.

**Mr Weir:** He drove cattle into Longreach with Bill Liddle.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection from the member for Condamine: the late great member for Gregory, Vaughan Johnson, drove cattle into Longreach with Bill Liddle. That is just one of the wonderful memories we have of him.

In the last minute and a half that I have, I want to refer to the amendment that was going to be moved in relation to our very important native vegetation laws in this state. That amendment was going to be snuck in under the cover of darkness. I thank those on this side of the House who stopped that amendment coming through. What an unacceptable piece of legislation it would have been. There was no consultation. It was just slipped on in there. That shows the importance of the committee process.

I note that all committee members, including the Labor Party members, moved that that was not a decent way of doing business in Queensland. Thankfully—and I know it has taken a fair bit of fancy footwork—that amendment was pulled out of this legislation. I note that we had to set aside standing orders. When we say that we are doing more governing from opposition that is what we are talking about. We are talking about the shadow minister doing the work of the minister. When we say that the LNP is doing more governing from opposition that is exactly what we are talking about.