




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.25 pm): The Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 is a necessary bill to enhance the economic growth of our state. It is a bill that I am proud to be able to support. The bill modernises and introduces flexibility, safeguards and a clear intent into legislation needed by government, the departments, local governments and landholders. The bill makes minor administrative amendments to nine acts and two regulations across the resources portfolio. These contemporary amendments will assist the state government to proactively manage the state land portfolio and support local governments to better manage public lands.

One of the major changes will support the conversion of leasehold land to freehold. Land that is neither essential to government business nor delivers a public benefit will be targeted. I know that the member for Maiwar spoke at length about this and opposed this. He needs to get out and talk to people on the land who are working on leasehold land. Land that has underlying tenure will not be offered for freehold—for example, community purpose reserves, national parks or state forests. There are some boundaries that should comfort the member for Maiwar. All land offered for conversion must also be consistent with the Commonwealth Native Title Act 1993 and the Queensland Native Title Act 1993.

The key change to conversion is the removal of a landholder having to make an application for conversion before the department can offer freehold tenure. I know from my time travelling with the former agriculture and environment committee and talking to people living and making a living on the land that they are always talking about the reduction in red tape. This should be good news for people on the land.

This proactive conservation process will support business development and economic growth by granting increased tenure security. Landholders are not compelled to convert to freehold if the department makes an offer; they can continue to use their leasehold land under the terms of the lease for the remainder of their tenure. It is important for landholders to know their options so they can develop and manage their businesses. They are big businesses that are supporting our communities by producing food.

Our local governments manage as trustees a range of public purpose reserves such as parks, sporting grounds and recreation areas. I am sure that all of us with sporting clubs in our electorates know what a huge job managing leasehold lands for local councils can be. It is quite a cumbersome task. The bill improves the day-to-day management of reserves by providing trustees with greater flexibility and discretion to allow short-term secondary uses that are otherwise inconsistent with the original purpose of the land use once they have approved a management plan.

This bill also contributes to the delivery of the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative by supporting more efficient development outcomes for training sites at Shoalwater Bay and Greenvale. These include subleasing and creating easements. Covenants to the changes will mirror similar arrangements to leasehold transport land. When armies come to these areas to train they are fairly self-sufficient units with specialised equipment, but these training bases will need to be furnished with

fresh produce. That will be good news for our local suppliers. They will also need local services to maintain these training areas when they are not being used. There is always an overflow of income into local communities because when service people are on leave they look for tourism opportunities, entertainment, shopping, going out for meals and enjoying the local community, so the cash flow from these training camps is going to flow into our local communities, which will support the economy of Queensland. This cash flow could be quite significant for those local areas for the life of the contracts.

A lot has been said tonight about stock routes, and they certainly are legendary in the history of Queensland, especially for droving stock. Stock routes are a key piece of infrastructure, supporting Queensland's over \$18 billion agricultural sector. Last night Minister Stewart said that the bill will whip our stock routes into shape. I thought, 'Yes, I'm sure it will.' I look forward to hearing the stockwhips cracking as livestock is droved on these routes now that the long drought has broken in many of our council areas.

Our local governments manage and undertake maintenance on these stock routes, keeping them clear and usable for the movement of stock. The amendments in this bill will support council to manage cost recovery for managing the stock route network, and better recovery will take pressure off ratepayers and the state in terms of subsidies and maintaining these unique and precious routes. Cost recovery will also deliver better maintained systems and the provision of feed, pasture and water for stock moving through. We know the perils of the agricultural industry, which is at the whim of severe weather systems that cause hardship to local governments. Local governments therefore have the power to waive fees during times of hardships and when droughts do bite.

The Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement Act 1968 is proposed to be amended to provide for a variation of the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement. This variation will facilitate the transfer of a special coalmining lease to a third party that would not become a party to the agreement. As others have said previously, this is something that these companies have asked for. Various BHP Mitsubishi Alliance entities, together with the state of Queensland, are parties to the Central Queensland Coal Associates Agreement. This is very important for the continuation of the mining industry in Central Queensland and they are very sensible amendments. This bill is certainly packed with common sense and necessary amendments, and I support the bill.