




Speech By  
**Nikki Boyd**

**MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS**

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (11.46 am): We are privileged to live in a state with a range of landscapes and environments—from tropical rainforests and arid drylands to mountain forests and coastal wetlands and dunes. This ancient environment and the lifestyle it provides is the reason that so many come to Queensland to live or to visit. Responsible stewardship of this land is the onus of those who enjoy its riches. While we know that there is a good life to be made here, we can protect that life for generations to come. The changes contained in this bill are many and often quite administratively detailed. I will refer to a few that stand out to me as noteworthy.

The Environmental Protection Act increases enforcement powers in a few obvious but important ways—notably, explicitly providing that department of environment officials are authorised persons to use drones and body worn cameras when performing their environmental protection duties in the form of exercising entry powers; requiring a corporation to nominate a person to answer questions on behalf of the corporation; and providing for criminal history checks to be obtained to aid investigations. Clarity around the use of these tools, including publication of guidelines and procedures for their use, will greatly aid environment officers to efficiently conduct their assessments, aid training and deter uncooperative behaviour.

This bill makes changes in requiring publication of amendment applications to environmental authorities that can relate to a resource activity in situations where the assessment level decision is that the amendment is a major amendment. This idea has merit and I believe will serve a purpose beyond courting objections. Seeking community input can have positive effects. It can improve environmental outcomes through ensuring that resource projects meet community standards and help the community's understanding of projects. This change attracted a few submissions. I understand objectors' concerns about increases in cost and time delays through public notification processes being expanded through these changes in the minor amendment threshold definition; however, I also understand that this change clarifies the requirements for notifications and reduces confusion about requirements to notify. In this regard, it is a clearer statement of regulatory intent which is important for an act that has the primary objective of protecting the environment.

Further, in relation to the Wet Tropics World Heritage Protection and Management Act 1993 and the Land Title Act, I join with the submissions received on this legislation in supporting the removal of exemption on mining exploration in the Wet Tropics of Queensland World Heritage Area. For Queenslanders, our Wet Tropics rank alongside the Great Barrier Reef in terms of importance for our natural heritage. People come from all around the world to visit these magnificent areas. There is no need to conduct resource exploration in the Wet Tropics because the community would never accept resource projects in the Wet Tropics. I commend the bill to the House.