




Speech By  
**Samuel O'Connor**

**MEMBER FOR BONNEY**

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### **LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr O'CONNOR** (Bonney—LNP) (5.13 pm): This is legislation that will improve efficiency and streamline processes within the resources department. It removes outdated processes, simplifies administration and regulation of stock routes and makes other minor changes. I will make a short contribution on two areas that I think relate to my environment shadow portfolio. The Queensland stock route network makes up some 2.6 million hectares of our state—that is, 72,000 kilometres of roads, reserves and corridors on pastoral leases and unallocated state land alongside other dedicated reserves for travelling stock.

It is worth considering if there is any way forward to forever enshrine these as stock routes but have some of them fall under a system of multiuse protected area. This could better protect and recognise their environmental values while still allowing them to be used for what they have been set aside for. We should be thinking about how we can better encourage and enhance this great example of cattle working alongside conservation. It could be an opportunity as well to provide environmental management funding to combat feral weeds and animals in these stock routes.

The other matter I want to touch on is the changes to vegetation management. Of course, I note that the minister has backed down on this and tabled amendments. I would like to read from the excellent joint submission to the committee from the Environmental Defenders Office and the Wilderness Society. It said—

We believe this change will unnecessarily reduce transparency and rigour. Under the current process, changes to the regulations are tabled in Parliament which will allow for the provision of a disallowance motion in the event that grasslands were inappropriately changed from regulated to exempt. However, under the new proposed process, such a change would not pass through Parliament and would, therefore, not be subject to the rigorous checks and balances currently in place.

Additionally, since the change would pass through silently without an annual data release, it would be possible for the public to not be aware of the change for several years until a technical expert stumbled across it.

We believe this is an unacceptable scaling back of transparency and accountability around an important regulatory matter of listing the conservation status of regional ecosystems, which flows through to how the regulations impact clearing of those ecosystems.

When the EDO and AgForce are united in their opposition to something, it shows how bad an idea it is. This should never have been considered, let alone included in legislation before this House. The opposition committee members rightly described it as a 'sneaky, underhanded attempt to disguise this section', and it was the right decision to remove it from the bill.