




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNELL

Record of Proceedings, 14 February 2024

MOTION

Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Infrastructure, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.35 pm): I rise to oppose the motion. The government will not be supporting this motion and will vote it down. In fact, I am proud to be part of a government which is committed to delivering this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The economic benefit to Queensland has been estimated at way over \$8 billion, largely driven by estimated increases in the value of tourism, trade, health and volunteering—the exact thing the member is saying is so required in his part of this great state.

The Olympics are the world's greatest sporting event. We will host them right here in Queensland in 2032—not tomorrow but in 2032. Sports-mad Queensland has so many amazing Olympians and Paralympians—Cathy Freeman, Susie O'Neill, Kieren Perkins, Sally Pearson, Libby Trickett and Simon Patmore, just to mention a few. I cannot wait to see who our future stars will be in 2032. Proudly, right here in Queensland, on the world stage, we will deliver the best games.

It is very short-sighted to be looking at this from the prism of, 'What's in it for me up in North Queensland?' because \$7 billion over the years up to 2032 pales into insignificance at the \$90 billion Big Build that we have over the next four years—\$7 billion compared to \$90 billion. I remind the House that the majority of that is being spent in regional Queensland, in the area represented by the member for Hinchinbrook. Let me remind him: it is \$90 billion over four years; however, it is still not enough. What do we do? Let's cancel everything. Let's walk away from the world stage. Let's damage Queensland's reputation on a whim. Let me say: this government has a very balanced and considered view. We won the games and we will deliver them—the best yet to come.

I remind the member also that the federal government is co-funding these games. It is a fifty-fifty split of the \$7 billion. That is \$3.5 billion from the government. This motion is somehow suggesting that we take the whole \$7 billion. If 50 per cent is funded by the Commonwealth government, they may have something to say if it is not delivering the greatest sporting event this Earth has seen.

The games will leave a lasting legacy and benefits for Queensland, in both the cities and the regions. In terms of infrastructure, we already have a \$90 billion investment, and this will make sure we can continue the legacy of fantastic facilities, transport networks and all of the other tourism and visitation advantages that we will gain from hosting the games in 2032.

While not pre-empting the outcome of Graham Quirk's review of the venues, I can safely say that many regional venues will receive upgrades to host the Olympic Games. These are regional areas like Toowoomba, Townsville, Cairns, as well as the Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Ipswich, Moreton Bay and the Scenic Rim. These are fantastic areas.

Mr Millar: What about Longreach?

Ms GRACE: Yes, I know members would love to see it in all their areas, but at the same time you have to be realistic. They may not be coming out to some of those areas that are being yelled out to me from across the chamber.

I had the pleasure of meeting Graham and his co-reviewers, Michelle Morris and Ken Kanofski, yesterday. They are diligently working hard on this. I am not going to pre-empt the outcome, but they have years of experience amongst them. Michelle has a very good background with the Tokyo Olympics. I asked, 'Are we the only city where venues have been looked at?' She looked at me and laughed and said, 'Minister, there is not anywhere where the Olympic Games have been held that these issues have not been debated. The process that this government is going through is second to none.' I am very proud to stand here as the minister responsible for delivering these games. We will not be supporting the motion. This is an exciting road ahead. I support the Olympic and Paralympic Games.