




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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QUEENSLAND FOOD FARMERS' COMMISSIONER BILL; CROSS-BORDER COMMISSIONER BILL; NIGHT-LIFE ECONOMY COMMISSIONER BILL

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.27 pm): The member for Buderim might need to go back to parliament school because he is not aware of the fact that members cannot speak on it again. Maybe he needs to go back and read the handbook again. I rise to speak about the three cognated bills tonight. I am really excited to talk about the fact that the Miles Labor government recognises the needs of night-life businesses that are distinct from other businesses and industry. That is why we have developed this position. The proposed bill will establish the Night-Life Economy Commissioner to work with night-life businesses to create a vibrant and safe night-life environment and to support and promote key aspects of the night economy. We have a real plan to keep our night-life vibrant—

Mr Mickelberg interjected.

Mr McCallum interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Member for Buderim and member for Bundamba, cease your quarrelling across the chamber.

Ms PEASE: We have a real plan to keep our night-life vibrant, grow night-time activation in communities, attract more visitors, create more jobs and drive local economic outcomes. Locally, my bars are doing well. They are growing. We have more people coming to the area and the famous Wynnum Fringe, dare I talk about it, is coming up next month. It is bringing great economic benefits to my community.

Today we also announced that Ian Leavers is going to be the Cross-Border Commissioner. His background in law enforcement and close work with border communities means that he is well placed to understand the issues facing border communities and to advocate strongly in resolving their concerns. The commissioner has been met with overwhelming support from local councils along the Queensland borders as there are more than 750,000 people living in these 12 local government areas.

With regard to the supermarket inquiry and the Food Farmers' Commissioner, I was really proud to be part of that inquiry. I am a mother, a grandmother and a great supporter of my local community and I am out and about in the community all of the time. Members can imagine my dismay when I asked the CEO of Woolworths about the rising prices and the unconscionable behaviour of the large supermarkets in terms of the prices that customers were being charged. His response to me was that they would be happy with the shares they are getting from their superannuation fund. I do not know about the people in other members' electorates, but the people in my community are not sitting on and sweating on getting their shares from their super funds. Rather, these people are on a fixed income or they are pensioners who rely on a small amount of money to do their grocery shopping.

One of the things we heard from these big chains, which have 62 per cent of the market share, is the web and the complex arrangements in terms of how they buy food from our food producers. It is such a complex and confounding way that they go about doing their business. The frightening thing is

that the people who grow our food, take care of us and deliver the wonderful food that we eat sometimes have to wait 180 days to be paid. That is absolutely disgraceful. I do not know about anyone else, but if I went into Coles or Woolies and walked out with my shopping and said, 'I'll be back in 180 days to pay my bill,' I would be charged with shoplifting. That is the disgraceful way that these growers are being dealt with by the chains they provide produce to. I know that there are agencies, they go through the market and there is a complex system in terms of how they are dealt with, but it is not the right way to treat the people who are developing and growing our food that is so important to us.

I know that my colleagues spoke about the producers who came before the committee, but I was really moved by all of them. They do so much work and are really passionate about what they are producing. It matters to them, so imagine the dismay they feel at having to dump tonnes and tonnes of pumpkins because one of the supermarket chains decides, 'We don't really want that this time.' This food commissioner is going to provide protections and a place for these farmers and producers to go to get some advice about how to lodge a complaint, because currently the only way they can lodge a complaint is through the organisation. I am really pleased that our government stood up and made a commitment to the supermarket inquiry. We were dedicated to the farmers. That is who we were looking after. Quite sadly, those opposite made it very clear that they were not interested in that. They were along for the ride only. I commend these bills to the House.