




Speech By  
**Lachlan Millar**

**MEMBER FOR GREGORY**

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**BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr MILLAR** (Gregory—LNP) (4.56 pm): I rise to make a small contribution on the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Amendment Bill 2024. I am glad I have just followed the member for Cairns. Being the sports minister as well, he will probably understand what I am about to say. I remember the announcement a little over 1,000 days ago. I was actually here in Brisbane on some committee work and I saw the fireworks at South Bank. Everybody was excited. The majority of people in regional Queensland were excited as well. They were saying, ‘Okay, we got the Olympics; that is good.’ There was a small minority that were totally against the Olympics because they thought money would be sucked down into South-East Queensland, but the majority of Queenslanders were excited about the Olympics. Given Labor’s failure over the last 1,000 days and more, their going backward and forward and their mixed messages: ‘We are going to tear down the Gabba. We are going to rebuild the Gabba. No. We will get Graham Quirk to do a review,’—and even before Graham Quirk finished the review, Mike Kaiser said we are going to use QEII Stadium—we now have a majority of regional Queenslanders questioning whether we should have the Olympics. We have a crime crisis, a housing crisis, a health crisis and a cost-of-living crisis. We also have roads out my way such as the Capricorn Highway which is in a very bad state and the Dawson Highway and Peak Downs Highway that are deteriorating. People are asking, ‘Why are we spending money on the Olympics?’

Here is the issue: I support the Olympics and think they will be a fantastic event for Queensland. I am so proud that our capital city, Brisbane, is holding those Olympics and that South-East Queensland has the infrastructure to hold the Olympics, but we have lost a majority of regional Queenslanders because of the 1,000 days of inaction and doing nothing. Former Queensland premier Annastacia Palaszczuk’s title included ‘Minister for Olympics and Paralympics’ and the new Premier does not want that title anywhere near him. Has the Labor Party done some polls to suggest that the Olympics is on the nose: ‘Let’s not go near it. Let’s not mention the Olympics?’

**Mr Skelton:** What are we doing then?

**Mr MILLAR:** That is a good interjection: what have you done? You have done nothing.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): Direct your comments through the chair, member.

**Mr MILLAR:** The government has been given this long timeframe to start planning for the Olympics and has wasted over 1,000 days. How much money has been wasted with nothing to show for it? It is typical of this government—doing absolutely nothing but spending money at the same time. They have spent money on the Olympics, but not a hole has been dug and not a plan has been put in place. When Steven Miles became Premier he wanted a review. Before the review was finished he already had his director-general, Mike Kaiser, say that we were going to use QEII. I participated in sport at QEII—not very well. I think I came last in the 400 metres. I was better at playing Rugby than I was at running. Back in around 1988, QEII was a reasonably good stadium. I remember when the Broncos had the falling-out with the Lang Park Trust, Super League came in and they moved to QEII. I remember

going to Broncos games there. It was incredibly hard to get out there. Some buses went out there. I remember that it took about an hour and a half to get out of the car park. The government says that we will have an Olympics stadium at QEII. How will people get there? Cross River Rail will run from the Gabba into the city and out towards the Ekka. There is a great link there, but the stadium is going to be at QEII. No wonder people are so frustrated at what is going on here.

I would like the government to take note of the amendment proposed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that at least one director must live in a regional area. This will give some faith back to people who have lost faith in this government delivering the Olympics. We need someone who has legacy for regional Queensland in mind.

**Mr Stevens:** Lachie Millar.

**Mr MILLAR:** No, I do not think it should be me. We could have the clay shooting out at Blackall. We could even introduce a new sport, because at an Olympic Games you can always introduce a new sport. They had BMX come in. I think we should give bull riding a crack out at Longreach. Someone also mentioned fencing. I have a different angle on fencing: let's do wild dog fencing out in Western Queensland. That is a legacy we can all get behind!

I listened to the member for Traeger's contribution to this debate. I understand his frustration. I think even government members from regional Queensland—the member for Mackay and those from North Queensland—have seen an increase in the number of people asking, 'Why are we having the Olympics? What's in it for us?' I am sure the member for Mundingburra has heard that. People are getting frustrated. We want things fixed up in our backyard first.

The Olympics will be a generational triumph for all of Queensland. I will support it. I will always support the Olympics. I think it presents a great opportunity to support not only South-East Queensland but also regional Queensland. We need to have a plan now for regional Queensland to try to build up for the games. In tourism, especially outback tourism, the spotlight will be on Queensland. Every country in the world will be focused on the Olympics—behind their country's team in their sport of choice. The Olympics provides an opportunity to boost tourism. People from all over the world will be coming to Queensland. The payback for us to support Brisbane as an Olympic venue is a bit of that tourism dollar into Outback Queensland—out to Longreach and Winton and into other areas around Western Queensland and up to Mount Isa and other places.

I support the Olympics, but what is frustrating for me is that not a day goes by that people do not stop me to ask, 'What's going on with the Olympics? Is it worthwhile?' Then I have to convince them that this will be a good thing for all of us—that it is not about South-East Queensland but about all of us and we will have some benefit from this.

The Labor Party let it all go. They have had a thousand days to convince people that this is a worthwhile process, but they are losing people left, right and centre. They have to get back on track. The best way to do that is to support the amendment proposed by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that at least one director must live in a regional area. That way we can give a voice to regional Queensland. It is a good idea. Government members should not just knock it out because it has come from the opposition. Why don't those opposite try to do something to connect the Olympics back to regional Queensland and support this amendment? That would show that they are serious, that they want to do this. Yes, they have made a mistake—they are a thousand days behind—but they can correct this. This would give some confidence to the people of regional Queensland. I am more than happy for the member for Mundingburra to be the representative, as long as we have a regional representative.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr MILLAR:** I am more than happy for the member for Townsville to be the representative. At least have a representative from regional Queensland. Get this back on track. Stop mucking around and do it right.