




Speech By  
**Michael Hart**

**MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 April 2024

**HOUSING AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY (PLANNING AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; BUILDING INDUSTRY FAIRNESS  
(SECURITY OF PAYMENT) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.36 pm): If the member for Bancroft would like his dummy back, I think I saw it flying across this way somewhere—

**Mr WHITING:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Burleigh, I ask you to withdraw.

**Mr HART:** I withdraw. What a mess these two cognate bills are. They are in such a mess that the minister now responsible is going to have to come in here and remove a big chunk of the bill that was put forward by our incompetent Premier when he was the minister responsible for this. It is quite easy to see that we have a Premier without real-life experience except politics—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Burleigh, please get back to the long title of the bill.

**Mr HART:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I am speaking to the bill. The minister who introduced this bill has no life experience, no business experience and then tries to tell the industry how they should work. We have an issue with the performance planning scheme on the Gold Coast. It is leading to increased height levels over 50 per cent above the town plan which all of the people in local areas have agreed to. The performance outcome that the government wants to get to is affordable and available housing, as per the name of this particular bill, but it is not actually leading to that. In my suburb alone a developer just applied for an extra two storeys on a building where the starting price is \$5.5 million per unit, and they are allowed to because of the perform planning scheme. Those units are going to be worth at least \$10 million each and there will be two of them. How is that going to make for affordable and available housing for people on the Gold Coast? Those people cannot afford that.

**Dr Robinson:** Only Labor ministers.

**Mr HART:** I take the interjection from the member for Oodgeroo: probably only ministers in this government can afford those sorts of things. It has been passed on after the Premier messed up the introduction and it has been given to someone with even less life experience, the member for Gaven, to fix that problem. That member's claim to fame is that she rents a property. That is the member's only claim to fame. She has come in here today and said she is going to axe half of this bill.

The report that the committee put out—and I am on the committee, member for Logan—

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Logan.

**Mr HART:** This report is not a reflection of how all of the committee members felt about this particular bill. It is a reflection of the government members. The government members would not have a clue on how to ask a hard question. All they do is back the bills the government that gives them and they stop the LNP members from asking the hard questions. Then they come in here and selectively read from the evidence that we were given at the hearings that we held.

This bill gives the minister the power to override decisions of local government. We already saw the current minister come in here today and say that she is looking to call in a development on the Gold Coast that the Gold Coast City council unanimously decided to reject, and this minister is going to look at calling in that particular development. This legislation will give her even more power to override the councils left, right and centre. That is exactly what the government will do.

Why are they doing that? They are doing that to shift to local government the blame for their own failures.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr HART:** We have failed ministers sitting in the back interjecting but, at the end of the day they are attempting to shift—

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I find the comments from the member for Burleigh personally offensive and I ask for them to be withdrawn.

**Mr HART:** I do not remember mentioning the minister directly, but he is obviously accepting that I did so I withdraw.

**Mr BAILEY:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise on a point of order. The member for Burleigh made a direct reference to me only one minute ago. Now he is saying he cannot remember doing so. It was clearly a reference to me, which is why I took the point of order. I find it personally offensive. I ask for it to be withdrawn. If you do not want your speech interrupted then do not contravene the standing orders.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Miller, direct your comments through the chair. Member for Burleigh, have you withdrawn?

**Mr HART:** I did withdraw, Madam Deputy Speaker. The government had what I would call a housing talkfest because the outcomes were insignificant. They then established a committee to reference some of these changes. During the evidence, the committee heard that the people who attended and spoke to the government about the possibility of the changes knew nothing about some of the things that were in this bill, including the Urban Investigation Zone. That is an issue. If this had been put in place, those developments would have been locked up for five years. The committee's response was to say, 'Let's not lock them up for five years. Let's review it in two years.'

As the member for Kawana said, the reality is that it would have taken three years for these things to be put in place anyway so they just were not going to work. We had submitters telling us they were not going to work. We had the LGAQ telling us that they were not going to work, but the government were pig-headed enough to go on with that particular part of the legislation. Now they have changed their mind. Now they are coming in here and chopping a great chunk out of this bill. During the evidence we were given, we were told that some of the members on that committee were sworn to secrecy to the point where they could not talk to their own members about what was discussed at the meetings so they could not, in fact, get feedback from the councils and then pass it on to the government. That is how secretive this government is.

I have used a fair bit of my time and I also want to talk to the building industry fairness bill. I was the shadow minister for housing when the original bill was introduced in 2017. At the time of the debate, three years later in 2020, I said that this would not work. I said that the LNP wanted to see all subbies paid on time every time, and that is what the government was spruiking at the time. We said that we did not think this would work but that we would give it a chance. We thought that, more than likely, we would be back here tweaking this legislation every couple of years, and here we are. We are back now tweaking this legislation.

The member for Bancroft selectively quoted one of the defenders of this bill who spoke at our public meeting, but he did not mention the Master Builders. This is a direct quote from Mr Bidwell of the Master Builders—

We cannot stress enough the chaos that will ensue when project trust accounts are required for contracts down to \$3 million and then \$1 million next year. They are an unnecessary and complex overlay on top of the many security of payment measures already in Queensland legislation and there is no evidence that they have made a scrap of difference over the past six years. In fact, there have been recent builder insolvencies and, despite there being project trust accounts, the subcontractor had not been paid for their work. There are alternatives but the government at every turn has chosen to ignore the industry's input and continue down this path...

Why do we have these project bank accounts in place? Why do we have billions of dollars tied up in accounts if they do not work? What we are hearing, over and over again, is that they do not work. Companies are going into liquidation and the subbies are not being paid.

How many hundreds of times has the minister stood in this place and said that this legislation will lead to subbies being paid on time every time? It has been a complete abject failure. Because these ministers do not have any business experience, they do not understand that locking up someone's GST for a period without their being able to claim an input credit severely impacts their cash flow. They completely ignore that fact because they do not understand how business works.

Everything this government does leads to worse outcomes for the housing industry. We have seen it around the changes to rental reforms where the rights of property owners have been taken away and those property owners have pushed back by saying, 'I do not want to own this property anymore. I do not want to be in the rental industry anymore.' As a result, 56,000 of those people have abandoned rentals in Queensland.