



Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.08 pm): I rise to talk about the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Amendment Bill 2024. The objectives of this bill are to deliver an authority that will—

- deliver venues in time for the ... Games and within budget allocations, including managing effects on users of venues during their development;
- monitor and ensure the delivery of villages in time for the games; and
- co-ordinate and integrate the planning and delivery of State, Commonwealth and local government obligations under, or related to, the host contract.

If only we thought to put in an independent review body 1,000 days ago when the LNP started to talk about the fact that we needed an independent body to control all of these venues and make sure they got built on time. We know this government is not very good at building things on time or on budget, or in fact getting anything built at all. We only have to look at a few dams for that.

Apparently, the old Palaszczuk government had decided to put the infrastructure authority into the Department of State Development. At the time we said that that was not a good idea and that they needed to have an independent authority. Now we have a new Miles government, apparently. The minister in charge of the department was part of the old Miles government, apparently. It looks like the same guy, but this is a new Miles government and apparently we are going to see things done in a new and enthusiastic way. Does that mean we will get things built on time and on budget? I doubt it, but we can hope, can't we? We can really hope for that.

The committee received 18 submissions and we held one public meeting, which one group attended. Unfortunately, there were issues that LNP members wanted to talk to the Information Commissioner about. We would have liked to have talked to the Information Commissioner to find out what her issues were with the RTI process. She put in a submission and we read about that, but unfortunately we did not get to talk to her before the report was tabled. The committee held a private meeting on Monday around the Olympic Games. Because it was a private meeting I cannot talk about it, but we did hold a private meeting. To reiterate, the report was tabled on 17 May and we held a private meeting about the Olympics on 20 May.

I listened to the minister's speech, which was very interesting because the majority of the minister's contribution was about the LNP statement written by the member for Lockyer and I in which we raised several issues. I am glad that the minister was able to explain a couple of those issues. I take on board what the minister said about the qualified person being in another act. Obviously, the committee is briefed by a committee that looks at fundamental legislative processes. We do that every time we investigate a bill. We were briefed on these things. I am glad the minister was able to qualify that. Fundamental legislative principles are about the oversight of the parliament and whether they are

being negated by legislation within the bills we are looking at; whether the government is negating those fundamental legislative principles. We receive briefs pretty well all the time that say one thing or another, but the committee report always says, 'We are satisfied with that.'

As I have said many times in this House, committee reports—that come out of my committee, anyway—are reports of the chair and not necessarily reflective of everything that all members on the committee might say. The member for Lockyer and I had some concerns around the delegated power. The minister said that the delegation will include conditions that the minister puts on that. However, that is not the parliament; it is the minister. The whole reason we look at the fundamental legislative principles is to see if they are being breached in any way.

I want to go back to the Information Commissioner. The Information Commissioner was quite worried that transparency and accountability would be affected by exemptions in the RTI rules that are granted to documents that will be put together by the new authority. The minister is completely right: there has not been a great change here as they were always exempt under the government department. However, that does not make it right. At the end of the day, documents created by the authority will be exempt from the RTI process, and that travels with that document. It is not limited to the authority itself. If the authority creates a document that is exempt from the RTI process because of this bill, and because of previous bills, and that then travels to, say, a local government or another authority, or something like that, then it will still be exempt. That authority could not respond to an RTI application and just say, 'These are exempt documents.' At the end of the day that would create quite a grey patch in that, once the authority creates a document, it will get its stamp that says it is exempt from the RTI process.

I would imagine, as with cabinet documents, that pretty much everything that goes through this authority will get an RTI stamp: 'We created this, therefore it is exempt.' If it is sent to any other institution, it will still be exempt. Is that transparent and accountable? I do not think it is. I think that is a big glaring hole. Basically, what the Information Commissioner is saying in her submission to the committee is: 'There is a hole here on accountability and transparency.' She has a genuine concern about that. It would have been advantageous for the committee to have been able to clarify that with the Information Commissioner, but unfortunately she was not at the public meeting that we held, so there is no public record of what the Information Commissioner told the committee—

Mr Smith: Go out in a blaze of glory.

Mr HART: I am being very careful here, member for Bundaberg, as you might notice. You might notice I am being very careful with what I say and—

Mr Smith: Go all in.

Mr McDonald: If it was public, there would be a transcript.

Mr HART: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. If the Information Commissioner had attended a public meeting, there would be a transcript of that. Private meetings do not have transcripts. Unfortunately, the concerns that the Information Commissioner has around transparency and accountability have not been ventilated in a public forum, apart from the submission that she made.

Again, I was quite chuffed that the minister answered all of the questions that the member for Lockyer and I put forward in our statement of reservation and really skimmed over the committee report, which obviously is written by the chair of the committee. Transparency and accountability—

Ms Boyd: Oh!

Mr HART: I know the member for Pine Rivers does not agree that the general public should have access to any information that her government puts forward, but—

Ms BOYD: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask him to withdraw. He is verballing me.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member, the member has taken personal offence. Will you withdraw?

Mr HART: I withdraw. I am quite surprised that I managed to get through nearly 10 minutes without somebody over there objecting. They do not like transparency and accountability. We have to show Labor the door in October '24.