




Speech By  
**Hon. Nikki Boyd**

**MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS**

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Record of Proceedings, 12 June 2024

**RESOURCES SAFETY AND HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL;  
MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. N BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (Minister for Fire and Disaster Recovery and Minister for Corrective Services) (3.01 pm): It is wonderful to follow the shallow—sorry, that was a slip—shadow the LNP environment spokesperson who—

**Mr Mellish** interjected.

**Ms BOYD:** I take the interjection. It is wonderful to follow the shadow environment spokesperson who also signs on to ensuring that large-scale tree clearing continues to be banned in order to meet those emissions targets. These resource bills will support Queensland's resources industry and the renewable energy industry to forge positive relationships with regional communities, landholders and the agricultural industry. These bills will strengthen the resources acts to ensure that Queensland's regulatory framework continues to be fit for purpose, which is a key commitment under the Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan.

The committee process showed there was general support for a regulatory framework that would manage the impact from CSG induced subsidence, which poses a complex challenge. Modernised operational practices such as the remote operating centres allow operations to be more efficient. However, that should not come at a cost to safety. Changes in this bill will ensure that safety remains paramount. It is important that industry feedback was taken into consideration when assessing remote operating centres and how they apply to offsite office areas.

These bills also include amendments to give effect to the government's decision to ban greenhouse gas storage activities in Queensland's component of the Great Artesian Basin. The ban will prohibit greenhouse gas storage and enhance petroleum recovery activities using greenhouse gas streams in the plan area of the Great Artesian Basin in Queensland. This does not rule out carbon capture and storage from areas outside the Great Artesian Basin, acknowledging that carbon capture and storage has a potentially important role in helping to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

I turn my remarks now to the amendments in this bill that relate to validating Parole Board appointments. The Queensland government, of course, is committed to the effective and efficient administration of parole throughout the state. The Parole Board Queensland has a significant role to play in supporting community safety and improving the safety and rehabilitation of prisoners. Since the establishment of the board in 2017 our government has continued to support its operation by continuing to invest in the board to ensure that it has appropriate resources to process parole applications. The establishment and functions of the board are prescribed in the Corrective Services Act. This includes board membership and that board members are to be appointed by the Governor in Council.

On various dates since 2021 this government has provided additional temporary funding to the board and temporary full-time-equivalent positions. Last week I received advice that there were some administrative errors in some appointments of temporary and acting board positions made by the Parole Board Queensland. The Corrective Services Act, until recent amendments which commenced on 6 June 2024, specified that an acting professional board member could only be appointed where there was a vacancy in office, due to resignation or term expiry, or where the appointed member was absent or unable to perform the role.

While all persons who have purported to act on the board were approved as suitable by the Governor in Council in a cascading order of merit, it has been identified that over time in some cases errors have been made in the subsequent engagement of those approved individuals by the board to act in temporary positions. The errors include where the engagement of an individual to act was not done in accordance with the vacancy requirements or the cascading appointments arrangements in place.

There are no concerns regarding the selection process, suitability, competency or appropriateness of anyone who has been acting in positions on the board. This was a technical error regarding the process for establishing and filling acting positions. As I have said publicly, this has not and will not result in the automatic release of anyone who has been denied parole. However, out of an abundance of caution the government has brought forward these urgent amendments to rectify the situation.

I am pleased to advise the House that amendments that commenced on 6 June 2024 provide a new process for more flexible temporary appointments of presidents, deputy presidents and professional board members. This was an administrative error that is being dealt with swiftly and appropriately. No prisoners will be released in response to this issue. The amendments will not change the outcome of any impacted decisions.

Work is underway to seek the valid appointment of suitable individuals to additional temporary positions in accordance with all necessary requirements. This includes the new legislative framework and Governor in Council approval. The board continues to make decisions in relation to the suitability of the release of people from custody to parole and the need to return people on parole to custody with community safety as its highest priority. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Parole Board Queensland members and staff and Corrective Services staff who worked over the weekend to address some of these issues.

When granting parole to a prisoner, the Parole Board frequently sets out a date in the future for commencement of the order or decision. This practice is done in good faith and enables victims and eligible victims to be notified in advance of a prisoner being released. A period between the decision to grant parole orders and the prisoner's release into the community is also important to enable community corrections officers to have custodial release arrangements such as electronic monitoring, if applicable, organised in advance and in place at the time of release. This amendment provides the board with a clear, express power to set a future parole release date of up to 14 days from the date of the decision or the prisoner's parole eligibility date, whichever is the later.

The granting of parole orders with future parole release dates is critical to the safety of the community as is ensuring compliance with parole orders, arranging necessary community supports and engaging community-based intervention services. This amendment is for the benefit of community safety and it is in the offenders' best interests. I commend the bills and the amendments to the House.