




Speech By
Peter Russo

MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

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

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (6.28 pm): I rise to speak to the cognate bills and support their passing—the Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill and the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. The former State Development and Regional Industries Committee, in its report No. 51 of the 57th parliament, tabled in this assembly on 24 November 2023, and the Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee, in its report No. 3, tabled in this assembly on 12 April, both recommended to the assembly that these bills be passed.

The primary objective of the Housing Availability and Affordability (Planning and Other Legislation Amendment) Bill is to amend the Planning Act 2016 to optimise the planning framework's response to current housing challenges. The bill does this by introducing a suite of new planning tools and making operational and process improvements to the existing planning framework.

The objectives of the Building Industry Fairness (Security of Payment) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill seek to build on reforms implemented under the Queensland Building Plan 2017 and its update in 2021 to create a safer, fairer and more sustainable building and construction industry. The amendments to the regulation are expected to simplify and clarify trust record keeping requirements, the types of subcontractors that are covered by the trust protections and the trust account review engagement and report requirements.

We here in this esteemed House all know that Queensland is a great place to live, which is evidenced by the fact that we all live here. I have lived in Queensland all my life, and while I am very happy to share the amazing weather and the fantastic lifestyle, more and more people now want to call Queensland home. With the population increasing by more than 125,000 people each year, in South-East Queensland alone the population will grow by a further 2.2 million to six million by 2046, meaning almost 900,000 extra homes are needed. We know these extra homes cannot be built overnight, so we need to start planning for these extra homes now.

Hand in hand with addressing the current housing challenge is ensuring that we support the building and construction industry by strengthening the security of payments to subcontractors in Queensland's building and construction industry. We want to make it easier for small businesses in the construction industry to understand their rights and responsibilities and reduce the administrative effort for trustees in assessing whether a subcontractor payment must be held in trust or not. As a means to simplify the payment provisions, the Building Industry Fairness Bill provides a regulation-making power to prescribe simplified record keeping requirements for industry. It also introduces a head of power to make guidelines about these matters. Based on the evidence presented to the HBBMC, the committee found that the Project Trust Account framework is an important mechanism to strengthen the security of payments to subcontractors. I commend these bills to the House.