




Speech By
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**BRISBANE OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES ARRANGEMENTS AND
OTHER LEGISLATION BILL**

 **Mr KATTER** (Traeger—KAP) (11.20 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Inspired by the member for Hinchinbrook, I also offer my congratulations to the many newcomers here to the parliament. It is nice to see a fresh start and here's to some optimism in the new parliament.

I rise to firstly speak about the truth-telling and Path to Treaty portion of the bill. I do not really need to change much from what we said in the regional sitting of parliament in Cairns because our position still stands exactly as it was then. I would like to characterise the KAP as being geared to trying to see problems and fix them. I know we may not have the mortgage on that, but that is a really strong characterisation of what we do here.

I have a lot of interaction in the Aboriginal communities in my electorate—Doomadgee, Mornington Island and the towns of Dajarra and Normanton. There is a vast array of issues up there; they are swimming in problems. I am always trying to solve the problems such as getting renal services, trying to address the high grocery prices and communities being cut off for three months of the year two years in a row. I remember a good mate of mine from school, Glen Campbell, said to me, 'Brother, how does this work? How can we just be left up here where for three months you cannot drive out of here?' I come down here to ask for \$10 million, \$15 million for crossings to get into Doomadgee. 'We cannot do that, we cannot help people like that, but we can give you \$300 million to tell your stories.'

Perhaps there is some value in it. It is hard to say that there is not value in it. I have Irish-Lebanese heritage. The Irish were horribly oppressed by the English. I do not think it serves me well to dwell on that and think about how terrible that was. I have read a lot of the history books of North Queensland. *Queensland Frontier* is a great history book. I think of Frank Jardine who, as I understand, had an islander wife. He was protecting one of the tribes from being massacred to extinction by another tribe. That is an interesting story. I read it. It is good history. There are stories of the Kalkadoon people wiping out a lot of the police force and other people and winning a lot of the battles through the Kalkadoon country. These are proud stories told still today around the dinner table in North Queensland and North-West Queensland. There are a lot of stories.

Do I see that as one of the primary things we should be doing to help Aboriginal people in those communities to lower the mortality rate and to lift their aspirations in life? I see young people up there but I do not see them craving to hear stories on their past; I see them wanting a job and something to do, something to give them meaning and purpose in life. That is what I want to focus on.

I cannot see this as anything but a distraction. Let's face it: there is a lot of politics played where you throw these smoke bombs in the air and say, 'Look at this. This is the big thing we have to concentrate on,' yet you have all the mess down on the ground that is not being dealt with.

As we mentioned before, the KAP has brought a blue card bill into this parliament three times. Go and find me an Aboriginal community that will say anything bad about the blue card bill we introduced. They all want it; they are all crying out for it. No-one in here can support it other than us. We can't do that, but we have to push for this stuff.

We are not sold on this; it is not for us. You can say, 'Oh, you can find a friend here. You can still get the \$300 million; it's not just a matter of spending it somewhere else,' but you might say it is a figure of speech. That money can be better spent. We cannot deliver cheap grocery prices; you pay \$13 for a loaf of bread in Doomadgee. They are still getting cut off for three months of the year. Surely that must be the priority. Surely getting these kids into jobs should be the priority, but it does not seem to be. That is not for us. We will not be supporting that.

In regards to the Olympics, when you consider the inequities in rural and remote Queensland, how on earth can you support the Olympics? It does not make sense. It is really insulting to someone to say, 'Oh, you could have the torch come through Mount Isa,' or, 'You might get some swimmers visit you.' Mate, we want bridges and roads. We want the crippled Bruce Highway fixed. We want to help you guys help the economy by building dams and building roads that helps us all to create some wealth so that we can have parties in the future. But you do not hold the party first and then get to the critical infrastructure that will help build the wealth of the state. That is not how you do it. That is not the responsible, mature way to do it.

Let's be reminded that there is a good reason no-one else bid for this Olympics. No-one else bid for it. We did not win it; no-one else went for it. We grasped it. Again, it is a great distraction from all the other things that are going wrong.

Whatever the Excel spreadsheet for the business case on the Olympics was, I would love to apply that for some dams and some roads into the heavy industry areas in North Queensland because I think we would see a lot more of them built if we applied the same metrics, but we are never afforded that opportunity.

The Olympics is a 17-day party. Look at the cost of the last one. In 2022, the costs, even before inflation, were \$16 billion, \$23 billion, and \$13 billion and \$14 billion for the last ones. These Olympics will not be a tick under \$20 billion. One of the economists from North Queensland is saying that with indexation we could be looking at spending over \$50 billion here. Anything other than \$10 billion or \$20 billion—it is not bottomless. This budget is not a magic pudding; it has to come from somewhere.

We are not going to get renal dialysis units. We are not going to get the Bruce Highway upgrade. You cannot have both. If you put all the infrastructure down here, you will not have the resources, even if it is not a matter of money, to build things in the regional and remote areas, so how can we possibly support that in this House? It does not make sense.

I understand everyone in Brisbane loves it and wants it; I get it. You are entitled to that opinion. However, outside of the south-east, especially the further we get away from Brisbane, people really do not like the idea. We are so heavily opposed to it. These are two very important pieces of this large omnibus bill that have come into this very first sitting of the new parliament and will be strongly opposed by the KAP.