




Speech By
Sandy Bolton

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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ADJOURNMENT

Disaster Mapping

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (10.04 pm): A pressing issue has emerged that impacts Queenslanders as a result of local government changes in disaster mapping, including flooding, inundation, sea level rise and storm surge modelling. Future risk management due to climate change forecasts has had severe unintended consequences: sharp increases in insurance premiums make them unaffordable, especially during a cost-of-living crisis; changes in town planning that adversely affect the values and rights of owners; and conflicts in definitions of what constitutes disasters in local government areas across the state. We are already in a housing crisis, and seeing residents' homes and financial security put at risk as a result of these forecasts needs to be assessed.

There are reports that local councils, taking conservative interpretations of climate predictions out to 2100, are seeing erosion lines mapped 100 metres—I will say it again like I did today: 100 metres—behind current beachfronts. This will potentially block current home owners from being able to do any renovations or rebuilds for some 86 years as a result of modelling that does not take into account conflicting analysis—and there is conflicting analysis. In addition, the disparity in disaster mapping between neighbouring councils has created a confusing, inconsistent landscape. For instance, a minor flood event in one council may be classified as a major event in an adjacent council, with sea level rise modelling also differing. This lack of standardisation contributes to a fragmented and unreliable approach to disaster risk management across the state.

As confirmed during this year's estimates hearings, the State Disaster Management Plan utilises information from local governments, and if this information is inconsistent it would impact the efficiency of the state plan. To address this, I urge government to implement a state level definition and criteria for all types of disasters as part of a clear and reliable framework for local governments. For councils that wish to deviate from the state mandated criteria there should be an avenue for local exceptions that is supported by accepted scientifically proven evidence and demonstrated unique local, geographical, physical or other factors. In conjunction with the standardisation of disaster mapping, government must explore options to mitigate the impact of insurance premium hikes that have resulted from this forecast mapping.

The re-establishment of the state insurance office should be given consideration, as responses that insurance is the responsibility of the federal government have led to no tangible relief. Currently there are a couple of inquiries at the Commonwealth level. Hopefully, this will provide further courses of action. Ultimately, disaster risk management is the responsibility of all; however, it needs to be fair, consistent and provide a scientifically sound basis for disaster mapping across Queensland. It should not devastate home owners financially through no fault of their own.