Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

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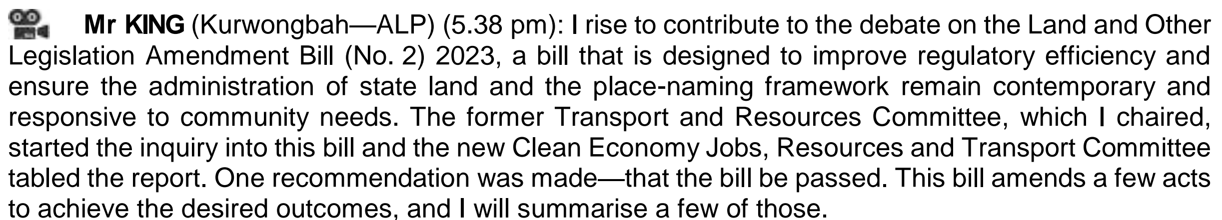
LAND AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)



Mr KING (Kurwongbah—ALP) (5.38 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2023, a bill that is designed to improve regulatory efficiency and ensure the administration of state land and the place-naming framework remain contemporary and responsive to community needs. The former Transport and Resources Committee, which I chaired, started the inquiry into this bill and the new Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee tabled the report. One recommendation was made—that the bill be passed. This bill amends a few acts to achieve the desired outcomes, and I will summarise a few of those.

The first amendment is to the Land Act 1994 and Land Regulation 2020 to reduce administrative complexity and remove regulatory duplication. These changes will improve the allocation of tenure by removing the requirement that the chief executive assess the most appropriate use of the land. The Land Act has not kept up with the current needs of the state. It currently imposes restrictive limits on how state land can be allocated and used. We need to deal with state land efficiently to deliver critical priority projects as well as provide for community needs. This bill will cut red tape by reducing duplication in existing decision-making around land use. To achieve this, these amendments will change the requirement to consider the most appropriate use and instead use the existing planning framework and other relevant laws that already govern land use.

Secondly, the Land Title Act 1994 will change to reduce administrative burden and risk to the state by reducing the creation of unapproved, unallocated state land. Current provisions in the Land Act strictly limit the circumstances under which suitable unallocated land can be granted freehold to a state agency. This has complicated a lot of large commercial development projects and created the need over the years for special purpose legislation such as the implementation of The Spit Master Plan Act 2020 and the Queen's Wharf Brisbane Act 2016 so that the state can deal with those. This bill proposes amendments that will remove these existing limitations, which will have the benefit of streamlining the land allocation process and reducing red tape, which will facilitate faster delivery of these essential projects.

More than 21,000 state land reserves are currently under management by trustees for all sorts of purposes which benefit our communities; for example, parks, public halls and sporting grounds. Under the current regulatory framework these lands have a narrowly prescribed purpose which really limits how trustees can use this land. The amendments in the bill will support these trustees, most of which are government departments, local governments or statutory bodies. They will be able to manage the trust land much better for the interests of the communities.

Thirdly, the bill seeks to make changes to the Place Names Act 1994 to clarify and broaden place-naming considerations, which will reflect contemporary technologies and help clarify the application of this legislation. Placenames are a critical component of our geography and sense of place. We use them to identify key landmarks and features in our environment. We often use names that represent cultural values and impact on a person's sense of identity and belonging. The Place Names Act is primary legislation for naming geographical features and areas in Queensland and there

have been no significant changes since it came into force almost 30 years ago. Change is needed to respond to differences that have occurred in community expectations, advances in technologies, and developments in business practice, policy and regulation. This bill refines the issues to be considered when changing or discontinuing the name of a place to include matters such as the socio-economic impacts of giving, changing or discontinuing a name and the transitional arrangements that may be required to successfully implement naming decisions that are complicated. This bill also makes changes to the Recreation Areas Management Act 2006 to enable the renaming by regulation of a recreational area declared under the act.

Lastly, the bill will change several resources acts including the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004 and the Petroleum Act 1923—these are commonly grouped together and known as the resources acts—to introduce the payment of local government rates and charges as mandatory conditions of petroleum, gas, geothermal and greenhouse gas resource authorities. The resources industry must operate responsibly in the communities in which they are based, and we expect them to meet their obligations. We know that resource projects are beneficial to the regions and local communities in which they operate; however, paying their local government rates and charges is an important way that resource companies can support both the growth of our resources sector as well as the sustainable development of our regional communities.

I will conclude there, but I have to thank all of the members of the various iterations of the Transport and Resources Committee, which has done a few of these bills, as well as the secretariat teams who have done all the hard work. I will give them credit for that. I commend the bill to the House.