




Speech By
Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

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REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (8.06 pm): I rise to make a short contribution to the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill. The bill, as we know, proposes to amend the Duties Act 2001 for dutiable transactions that involve first home owners purchasing a new home or vacant land on which to build a home, to provide for duty relief. The bill would also allow first home buyers to partially rent out first home purchases while receiving first home concessions. There is also a legislated exemption from payroll tax for general practitioners to address the LNP's so-called patients tax which, as we know, involved a ridiculous misinformation campaign during the Queensland state election. The Miles government had already addressed this matter through the issuing of a new interpretation of payroll tax in 2023 and a further commitment to exempt GPs from payroll tax. To be very clear on the facts here, in 2022 a New South Wales court case found—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Take your seat please, member for Jordan. There will be silence in the chamber.

Ms MULLEN: In 2022 a New South Wales court case found that medical centres should pay payroll tax for GPs. It was the Labor government here in Queensland that put in place an amnesty and a public ruling that made it clear that doctors would not have to pay payroll tax. Despite this, the LNP started their fake scare campaign, and they continue to push this misinformation in the chamber even tonight. It is disingenuous, but I must say it is very predictable.

The substantive element of the bill deals with amending the Duties Act to provide full transfer duty relief to eligible first home buyers. The bill proposes that this relief be available for eligible transactions entered into on or after 1 May 2025. The bill goes on to define a new home as one that has not been previously occupied or sold as a place of residence. A new home also includes a substantially renovated home which, as renovated, has not been previously occupied or sold as a place of residence.

One thing we can all agree on is that we want to see more homes for Queenslanders and we want to ensure, wherever possible, Queenslanders have a safe and secure place to call home. We know that incentivising first home buyers through tax concessions and grants is only one part of the puzzle, but first home buyers need actual houses to buy.

The Urban Development Institute of Australia Queensland summed it up best when they submitted in the inquiry—

... supply is the only answer. We need more houses of all types everywhere. The first homebuyer concession is not going to solve the Queensland housing crisis.

I represent a region where there continues to be significant greenfield development—in Springfield, Greenbank and Greater Flagstone. Springfield Rise, which was Lendlease's development in Spring Mountain—now Stockland—would often have land release days and honestly, it sometimes

felt like *The Hunger Games* as people scrambled to secure lots. In Kalina in Springfield, I attend 'meet your lot' days where owners get to see their land for the first time. What I have noted from those events is that many of the 'new house and land' buyers are actually not first homebuyers at all, but locals or those living in the region looking to move up in the property market. In Flagstone—an area I also represent—house and land packages, 525-square-metre lots, are on the market for approximately \$750,000. These are good, solid first homes for many young couples or families and this is where targeted measures can certainly help.

It is clear the government has decided to progress with this policy without any tangible data or Treasury modelling, as revealed through the committee process, so it is difficult to know how helpful this will actually be. As the Real Estate Institute of Queensland also pointed out in their submission, it would have been helpful to have seen modelling that could show the expected take-up of the new concessions and anticipate an increase in the rate of the new concessions as well as the increased anticipated rate of home ownership in Queensland.

It is clear that while stakeholders think this change to the Duties Act may help, it is really only one small part of a broad suite of reforms that are needed to address the housing shortages we are seeing, as the Housing Industry Association also pointed out in their submission. We know that we need to fund and build the enabling infrastructure. When we were in government, the Catalyst Infrastructure Fund was absolutely vital in providing the water, sewerage and, importantly, new road infrastructure needed to open up large tracts of developable land. In Greater Flagstone, the funding we have provided to extend New Beith Road and Teviot Road as well as construct the new Flinders Lakes Drive will see more than 40 per cent of the Greater Flagstone Priority Development Area opened up for more housing, economic centres and sporting, community and recreational amenities. This is true catalytic infrastructure.

We want to see more improved planning and zoning by updating state, regional and local strategic plans to reflect housing supply targets. The state government must work with local councils and—sorry, sometimes take a firm hand—to promote medium- and high-density housing in well-located areas close to public transport, amenities and employment. We need to see approval pathways continue to be streamlined and simplified at a local, state and federal level. We also know other measures such as encouraging older Australians to downsize, developing more student accommodation, seeing more innovation in scale in the construction industry and, of course, training more construction workers to build homes will have a more significant impact on housing supply and affordability. These are just some of the issues also highlighted in the last few days by the national Productivity Commission in its released report on housing construction productivity.

Our Homes for Queenslanders plan provided for a comprehensive suite of reforms and a clear pathway forward. Our government also understood that bringing the housing, planning and local government portfolios together made complete sense in addressing the key issues to increase housing supply and affordability and it is disappointing to see those portfolios now scattered amongst various ministers. While I hope this legislation will provide some assistance and incentives for first homebuyers in Queensland, as the REIQ pointed out, the use of the new concessions may be limited.