



Speech By  
**Hon. Dale Last**

**MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN**

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Record of Proceedings, 10 December 2025

## **ENERGY ROADMAP AMENDMENT BILL**

### **GREENHOUSE GAS STORAGE AMENDMENT BILL**

#### **Second Reading**

 **Hon. DR LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, Minister for Manufacturing and Minister for Regional and Rural Development) (4.07 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the Energy Roadmap Amendment Bill 2025 and the Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Bill 2025. My contribution will focus on the Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Bill, which I introduced into the House in August this year. I thank the Primary Industries and Resources Committee for its consideration of the Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment Bill 2025. I also thank those individuals and organisations that made submissions and engaged in the consultation process during the committee's inquiry. I note that the committee tabled its report on 17 October 2025. In its report, the committee made one recommendation: that the bill be passed. The committee also concluded that the bill was compatible with the Legislative Standards Act 1992 and the Human Rights Act 2019.

Of note, the committee was satisfied that the proposed transitional regulation-making power in the bill is consistent with fundamental legislative principles. This is due to the technical nature of the water bore construction codes that converted bores will have to meet to be compliant with the amendments. The inclusion of the transitional regulation-making power provides for adaptability with regard to technical standards, including unforeseen issues that may arise during the decommissioning process. The committee also noted the support of affected individuals for the proposed amendments and that the regulations are limited in their retrospectivity and subject to a sunset provision.

This bill provides a clear, practical and safe pathway for CTSCo to decommission their six greenhouse gas wells located on former exploration permit EPQ10. Subject to passage through the Legislative Assembly, the bill requires CTSCo to either plug and abandon a GHG well under existing obligations or convert it into a water supply bore and transfer ownership to the landowner where the bore is located. This ensures that CTSCo remains responsible for decommissioning the former EPQ10 site. The bill further provides that all decommissioning activities associated with these six GHG wells occur in a way that is technically sound, environmentally responsible and beneficial to the landowners.

In developing the bill, my department received strong stakeholder support for this approach. This support was further confirmed through the committee's inquiry and public submissions. Government agencies, industry groups, all affected landholders and CTSCo welcomed the certainty and the flexibility provided and are supportive of the bill. Landholders in particular expressed clear support for the opportunity to assume ownership of a converted bore. They see real value in gaining long-term access to a secure stock and domestic water supply—at no cost to them for the conversion. Importantly, the bill provides that conversion can only occur with a landowner's written consent and that CTSCo remains

responsible for the wells unless and until the transfer of a converted water supply bore is completed. This ensures no landholder is compelled to accept infrastructure they do not want or are not prepared to manage.

In the public submissions received by the committee, industry groups representing the agriculture and resources sector also supported the objectives of the bill. They sought clarity on matters such as responsibility for costs, timeframes and safeguards for landholders. The bill addresses these issues by placing full responsibility for carrying out the decommissioning and its associated costs on CTSCo, specifying clear statutory timeframes for conversion and transfer, and ensuring water licences for stock purposes are granted to landowners within 60 business days after transfer.

Government agencies were consulted extensively in drafting the bill. Resources Safety & Health Queensland supported the development of the technical and safety requirements of both conversion and abandonment. The Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning supported provisions that streamline approvals and water-licensing processes. Other agencies, including the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Queensland Treasury, the Department of Primary Industries and the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, provided input throughout the drafting process and have no concerns with the bill. To those agencies which have supported my department in preparing this bill I offer my thanks.

We have also consulted with the agriculture sector and with the five landholders directly impacted. They all support this bill, which will deliver long-term water security for their operations. It is important to remember that the reason this bill is necessary stems from the former Labor government's lack of consultation with landholders and industry when it ended CTSCo's exploration permit. As the law currently stands, these wells would have to be plugged and abandoned, and those landholders would have missed out on a valuable water asset.

These amendments are deliberately targeted in scope. They apply only to CTSCo's greenhouse gas wells on the former EPQ10 permit area. They do not establish a broader framework for any future greenhouse gas storage wells under the act.

The bill also helps to minimise long-term state liability by ensuring CTSCo remains responsible until a well is either safely plugged and abandoned or converted and transferred to a landholder. Conversions must be undertaken by a licensed water board driller, in line with an approved conversion plan and the water bore construction codes, ensuring the integrity and safety of the bores.

In summary, this bill delivers a practical and mutually beneficial outcome. It is a win-win for all concerned. It supports the responsible decommissioning of greenhouse gas wells, strengthens rural water access, addresses future liability for the state and provides certainty to landholders and industry.