



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

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MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs KIRKLAND** (Rockhampton—LNP) (5.32 pm): I rise to speak on the Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025. With the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games now just over six years away, this bill could not be more timely, nor more important. It represents a significant step towards ensuring Queensland's sporting events and infrastructure landscape are prepared not only for the games themselves but also for the decades of legacy that will follow.

The bill strengthens and modernises key components of the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001, the Major Events Act 2014, the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014 and, through the amendments now circulated, the Racing Act 2002 and the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021. Together, these reforms provide clarity, functionality and consistency in how provisions are applied across our major sports venues and events. There are numerous amendments throughout the bill, and today I will speak to several that are particularly important for my community and for Queensland's future.

For far too long, our major venues have been constrained by a maze of overlapping state legislation, local government regulations and cumbersome approval processes. These inconsistencies, allowed to persist under the previous Labor government, created uncertainty for operators, frustration for event organisers and lost opportunities for communities. The bill finally brings to an end that confusion.

The bill establishes a clear, streamlined and consistent framework for the lawful use of major sports facilities for special events. That clarity is not just bureaucratic improvement; it is a practical, tangible benefit for communities across Queensland. This is especially important for Central Queensland and Rockhampton, where the upgraded facility at Browne Park, rescued by the Crisafulli government with an additional \$3.5 million, bringing a total investment of \$63 million, will finally be delivered. Browne Park, a proud home of Central Queensland rugby league, will be able to host events catering for up to 15,000 patrons. This is not just a stadium upgrade; it is an investment in community identity, in regional pride and in the economic opportunities that come with hosting major events. It is a venue that will attract visitors, support local businesses and showcase the strength of regional Queensland.

Targeted consultation on the bill has been thorough and constructive. Key government agencies, including the Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation, the Office of Liquor and Gaming Regulation and the Department of Justice, have all contributed to shaping these reforms. External stakeholders such as Stadiums Queensland, the City of Gold Coast and the operators of People First Stadium have also provided valuable insights. This collaborative approach ensures that the bill is not only legal but also operationally practical. It reflects the real-world needs of those who manage, regulate and rely on our major venues.

This bill ends a decade of irregularities under Labor—irregularities that created uncertainty, delayed investment and stifled the growth of our events industry. By removing unnecessary bureaucracy and modernising outdated processes, this legislation unlocks agility and efficiency. It

ensures that taxpayers receive maximum bang for buck with returns on investment through increased event frequency, greater private sector confidence and more opportunities for communities to benefit from major events. This is critically important as we roll out the infrastructure across Queensland for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Let me be very clear: this is not just a games for Brisbane; this is a games for all of Queensland. Regional communities like Rockhampton will proudly host the Paralympic rowing and canoeing on the mighty Fitzroy River, as outlined in the 2032 Delivery Plan. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to showcase our region to the world.

Despite the opposition's attempts to foster confusion and their disdain for extending the Olympics to the regions, particularly Rockhampton, their negativity has only amplified the significance of what will be an incredible world-class event for all Queenslanders. Their resistance reveals a fundamental misunderstanding of what the games represent—unity, opportunity and legacy for the entire state.

The bill also includes important amendments to the Brisbane Olympic and Paralympic Games Arrangements Act 2021 as circulated. In February this year, the government approved that amendments made to the BOPGA in June 2025 be included in this bill. They have been approved. These amendments are essential to facilitating the delivery of designated Olympic and Paralympic venues, villages and games related transport and infrastructure. They ensure that Queensland is ready to successfully host the games and maximise their long-term legacy.

One key amendment clarifies that GIICA—the Games Independent Infrastructure and Coordination Authority—is responsible for overseeing other venues only when directed by the minister administering chapter 3 of the act. This provides flexibility, allowing certain venues to be prescribed as 'other venues' without requiring GIICA oversight. It ensures the state can effectively monitor and manage these venues while avoiding unnecessary administrative burden.

Further amendments clarify that development may be utilised prior to the commencement of games related use. This is a practical and sensible change. It ensures that infrastructure can be used, tested and refined in the lead-up to 2032 rather than sitting idle until the games officially begin. It supports efficient delivery and maximises community benefit.

This is what makes the Crisafulli government's 2032 Delivery Plan so powerful. It sets a clear, achievable path forward after Labor's chaotic attempts, which delivered 1,200 days of inaction and a complete disregard for regional involvement. Labor simply does not prioritise the regions or the people who live in them.

In contrast, our government's plan is grounded in transparency, accountability and statewide opportunity. It ensures that every Queenslanders, whether they live in Rockhampton, Keppel, Mirani, Brisbane or beyond, shares in the benefits of hosting the games.

Our region will benefit from the legacy infrastructure across our sporting precincts, increased accommodation capacity, major events leading into the games such as Beef 2027 and Beef 2030, visitation from international Olympic teams, transport upgrades, expanded tourism opportunities and strengthened economic stability. These are real, measurable outcomes that will shape the future of Central Queensland.

By far the greatest beneficiary of this bill will be the social licence for my community and for communities across Queensland. People can finally have confidence that they have a government focused on delivering for their future prosperity and wellbeing. This bill is not just about venues or events; it is about restoring trust. It is about empowering regions and ensuring Queensland is ready not just for 2032 but for the decades of opportunities that will indeed follow. I commend this bill to the House.