



Speech By
Glen Kelly

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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QUEENSLAND INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL RESEARCH BILL 2025

 **Mr G KELLY** (Mirani—LNP) (3.25 pm): I rise to speak on the Queensland Institute of Medical Research Bill 2025. The Queensland Institute of Medical Research has been doing important work for over 80 years. It is a proud Queensland organisation that has helped drive health breakthroughs for decades. The way it is governed is now outdated. The current set-up is holding it back from working effectively in a modern world. We need a research institute that is world-class, that can compete globally and that attracts the best people and funding so it can keep doing great work. That is what this bill does: it replaces the old act with a modern, fit-for-purpose structure that strengthens governance, integrity and accountability.

The institute leads the way on some of the biggest health challenges of our time—things like cancer, dementia, heart disease, asthma and mental health. Living in Central Queensland, I know how serious melanoma is. It is something that I have had to deal with myself. The institute has done fantastic work on the melanoma risk calculator, built from over 40,000 participants. It is a simple online tool that helps people understand their risk and get checked sooner. That is life-saving research. We must make sure the institute can keep doing this kind of work not just now but for the next generation.

The inquiry heard that restrictions on commercial opportunities have made it hard for the institute to earn extra income. Relying on only traditional grants is not sustainable anymore, with success rates as low as 15 per cent. That is why the institute supports these changes. Allowing them to partner with business, license research and create spin-off companies will bring in extra income that can be reinvested into new research, better facilities and attracting top talent.

Attracting and keeping talented people is what keeps the institute strong. Without them it cannot keep producing the world-leading research Queensland is known for. Right now, the institute only allows bonuses for people officially classed as 'discoverers' or 'inventors'. That leaves out others who play a big role in the research. This bill fixes that by letting the institute recognise and reward all contributors through fair incentive payments. These payments will come only from income generated by research, not public funding, so the institute stays accountable and sustainable.

We are also streamlining how the institute's council is appointed. Instead of going through Governor in Council, the minister will make appointments directly. That will mean quicker decisions and less red tape so the council can stay competitive and attract strong members.

New integrity measures will also be added. The minister can request criminal history checks and remove any member who is disqualified from managing corporations. That is good governance and common sense. This bill matters because Queensland is facing big health challenges—an aging population, more cancer cases and more chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

In Mirani, medical care is not always easy to access. We have about 30 hospital beds across the electorate and people must often travel to Rockhampton, Mackay or even Brisbane for treatment. For those facing serious illness, the institute's research gives hope that one day better treatment options might be closer to home. A lot of people in my electorate work in the mining industry. We know that

miners are at higher risk of chronic lung disease, dust exposure and mental health pressures as a result of long stretches away from home. The institute's work on respiratory and mental health research is incredibly valuable for them and future generations. What drives me is making sure we build a better future for the next generation.

The Queensland Institute of Medical Research plays a key role in tackling these challenges. Its scientists are at the forefront of health research, helping develop better treatments, stronger prevention and better outcomes for Queenslanders. We need the institute to stay globally competitive. We are not working in isolation. We are competing for talent with research centres across Australia and around the world. Attracting the best researchers here in Queensland means we can lead the way and ensure Queenslanders benefit from homegrown discoveries. This bill honours the proud 80-year history of Queensland's Institute of Medical Research and gives it the tools it needs to keep operating successfully for decades to come. I commend the bill to the House.