



Speech By
Glen Kelly

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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CORONERS (MINING AND RESOURCES CORONER) AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

 **Mr GKELLY** (Mirani—LNP) (7.53 pm): I am proud to rise tonight to speak on the Coroners (Mining and Resources Coroner) Amendment Bill. Mirani is built on mining. The goldmine at Mount Morgan once made it one of the richest towns in the world, let alone Queensland. Today, coal and other resources play a huge role in our local economy.

Thousands of people from my electorate head out to the mines each week—do their shifts, put food on the table and provide for their families. They put money back into our towns and build a better life for their kids. We often forget when we talk about employment numbers that these are not just statistics. They are real people—each with their own families, friends, hobbies and own little pocket of the world.

Mining can be dangerous work. Even with the best safety systems in place, sometimes things go wrong. When tragedy strikes, it does not just affect one site or one company; it sends shock waves through a community—a family loses a loved one, kids lose a parent and a mate can be gone forever. When that happens, families deserve answers. They deserve to know what went wrong, how it happened and what will be done to stop it happening again.

Mining is one of the biggest employers in Mirani. This bill means a lot to our communities. It ensures that when something tragic happens there is a proper investigation and that the loved ones left behind get answers. We all want our workers to be safe. We want them to go home at the end of their shift. By investigating every death properly we can help prevent future tragedies. We owe that to every man and woman who steps out onto a mine site.

This bill strengthens our commitment to safety and accountability in the mining industry. We already have very capable coroners in Queensland, but mining deaths often involve highly technical evidence and industry specific detail. A dedicated coroner for the mining and resources sector will make sure that person has the right experience and understanding of how the industry works. That means investigations that are faster, more thorough and more accurate. It means findings that make sense to both the families and the industry.

This bill will also ensure accountability. Findings from inquests will be made public so the community and the families can see where things went wrong and companies can be held responsible when they should be. The LNP has listened to the families who have lost loved ones in the industry. They have asked for better support, more transparency and fairer access to justice. This bill delivers that.

One death on a mine site is one too many. By having a dedicated mining coroner—with mandatory inquests when tragedy strikes—we will get investigations done faster and more effectively. That coroner will have real-world experience in mining safety and operations. They will look not just at

compliance but at culture, systems and pressures that can lead to mistakes. The recommendations that come from those inquests will be grounded in genuine understanding and they will help prevent future losses.

This matters deeply to families and to the people who still go to work in mines every day. A coronial process can be complex and intimidating, especially with all the technical evidence involved. A coroner who understands the industry can speak to families with more empathy and explain clearly what happened, why it happened and what will change because of it. That reassurance matters. It brings closure and builds confidence that our system truly cares for them. It shows workers that their safety is being taken seriously at the highest level. This bill is a step forward for worker safety and accountability.

Any loss of life by suicide is tragic—devastating for the family, friends and colleagues left behind. Those opposite might say that this bill should go further and that we should make it mandatory to hold an inquest into every suicide involving a mine worker. While I do understand their intent, doing that would put an unnecessary burden on the coroner. It would mean investigating every suicide, even when there is no connection to the person's work. Under current law, every suicide is already investigated because it is considered a reportable death under the Coroners Act. This bill does not change that. What it does is ensure the Mining and Resources Coroner focuses on cases that are actually linked to mining operations.

The coroner can still hold an inquest into a mine worker's suicide if they believe it is connected to their work, and that is the right balance. The same principle applies to road deaths involving mine workers travelling to or from a site. Making these inquests mandatory might sound good in theory, but many of these deaths have nothing to do with fatigue or the job itself. If the coroner believes there is a genuine connection to work, they already have the power to investigate, but if we made every case mandatory we would end up with countless unnecessary inquests. Anyone who has driven from Sarina to Moranbah, or Mount Morgan to Moranbah, knows the real risks on those roads—wandering livestock, bad weather, poor visibility and drivers not driving to the conditions. That is why we need to let the coroner decide when it is appropriate. Making it mandatory would create more problems than it solves.

Finally, members opposite have tried to twist questions during my inquiry. They claim that because I have asked questions I do not support the bill. That is completely wrong. The whole point of an inquiry is to listen, to test the evidence and to weight it up properly. I went in with an open mind, as every member should. For electorates like Mirani, this means safer mine sites, quicker answers and stronger trust in our system.

This bill stands for accountability, for workers' safety and for justice for our mining communities. It ensures that no life lost is forgotten and that every lesson is learned. I am proud to support the bill, and I am proud to stand as a member of the government that is bringing it forward. I commend the bill to the House.