




Speech By
James Lister

MEMBER FOR SOUTHERN DOWNS

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QUEENSLAND BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading

 **Mr LISTER** (Southern Downs—LNP) (8.30 pm): I rise to make my contribution on the Queensland Building and Construction Commission and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. I am very impressed by what some of the speakers before me have said, in particular the member for Mundingburra. If I could steal some of her words, this bill is as a result of listening and it is bringing the legislation into current times. That is important because if we want to have a productive, fair and transparent building and construction industry we need to have legislation that is up to date and enables it. It is another step—it is a third step—in the Building Reg Reno of the Crisafulli government. It is, quite simply, making it easier to build and construct in Queensland. I emphasise that this does not entail any reductions in safety.

As the member for Mundingburra and many before have said, there are no changes to safety obligations. In fact, penalties are going up. What has changed is that an outdated, paper-based system is being brought into the 21st century with digital licensing and the ability to conform to obligations to do with safety such as safety incident reporting on the part of licensees—to have a one-stop shop for reporting rather than having to report under two different acts to two different regulators. I have heard the Labor opposition say that the LNP is handing in their homework. That was said by the Labor Party when we pointed out that the LNP had saved the Queensland College of Wine Tourism after about a week or two of us arriving in government and finding that, contrary to prior assurances, no money had been left behind and the place was set for closure. I take it with a grain of salt anytime the Labor opposition say we are handing in their homework.

The QBCC has for a long time had a reputation of being difficult to deal with. That is not entirely its own fault. It can only work with the legislation it is provided with. I note that the composition of the board has changed. I was delighted to see that Minister O'Connor has rid the board of Jade Ingham, who is quite infamous at the moment. I wonder what purpose the former government put him on the board to serve. I think anything could appeal to our lurid imaginations in light of the revelations we have seen in the royal commission.

I would like to speak a little bit about the building and construction industry. Each of us has our experience based on our electorates. In my electorate of Southern Downs we are short of capacity in building and construction. You have to queue up to get a builder to build a house or a commercial premises. They are just so busy. Anything we can do to improve efficiency and keep the hardworking participants in the building and construction industry on the tools rather than conforming to administrivia is a great thing. The participants in the industry, the tradies and those who work hands-on, are time poor. They are trying to keep up with great demand and the last thing they want to do is be using paper-based systems. I noted that the member for Townsville said that it had taken quite some time for him to renew his paper-based licence. The member for Burnett said that as a builder he was able to renew his through the new digital licence pretty much on the spot and it also incorporated his heavy vehicle licence and his boat licence. That is great.

I have heard a lot said by the other side about safety incident reporting. All that is changing is that there is less effort required to achieve the same thing. I think it is a shame that that has been criticised. I see this as being another part of the legislative reforms of the Crisafulli government to make life easier for Queenslanders and to take government out of the lives of people to the greatest extent possible whilst achieving the aims of having a safe and efficient building and construction industry.

I thank the Crisafulli government and in particular the minister, Hon. Sam O'Connor, for this bill. I also acknowledge the committee that considered the bill. Last of all, I note that in the gallery for all of today has been Mr Garrels, the father of the late Jason Garrels. I pay my respects to him and acknowledge the loss of his son in 2012. I commend the bill to the House.