




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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QUEENSLAND PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (7.40 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker Kempton, welcome back to the chair in here after a 10-year drought. It is certainly wonderful to see you back in the chamber. Tonight I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2024. At the outset I want to thank the committee members—the committee chair, the member for Coomera, and all other committee members—for their work on this quite important legislation. Understanding the fundamentals of economic drivers and the ever changing landscapes of market forces should play a significant role in government decision-making. Understanding these economic drivers has the potential for opening productivity and economic stability through better management, but to do this the government needs independent information that acts as a guide to improve policy and regulatory development which in turn supports business activities, income growth and ensuring infrastructure is built where it is required.

Following on from some of the comments other members have made, especially those on the opposite side of the chamber, I find it quite interesting that these individuals carry on about how this new commission has been formed when only about three years ago they got rid of it. It really does breed hypocrisy, because we need to ensure that productivity in this state continues to grow. In his speech the member for Coomera made a very valid point that, had productivity growth remained at pre-2018 averages, in the subsequent period it was estimated that Queensland real per capita income could have been \$11,000 higher in 2023-24. That shows real outcomes when we listen to—

Mr Crandon: Over \$60 billion in one year alone.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection: over \$60 billion in one year alone. That shows that if we listen to the experts these commissions can find out how we can have better productivity in this state. There is a housing crisis in this state. In every single one of our electorates we have homeless people and we need to find ways to get construction well and truly underway to build houses for these residents. My electorate on the northern Gold Coast is no different and it is a blight on the previous Labor government in this state that in 2021 it got rid of the Productivity Commission all because in 2020 it gave an adverse report saying that construction had not gone anywhere in this state. That should be something about which the former treasurer should hang his head in shame. At least the new Treasurer who is running the state's finances now has the foresight and fortitude to act on this matter and seek opinions and not just throw it away when the government gets an adverse finding. The simple notion of what those individuals opposite did is naive. Getting rid of a productivity commission was naive for them to do.

Understanding these economic drivers and the potential to unlock these roadblocks is what Queensland needs to succeed, as is identifying unnecessary red tape where all regulations will only serve to benefit Queensland businesses and the general community. We have to build infrastructure that has economic value to build Queensland, and removing productivity choke points is exactly what

we need. We have a booming population yet, as I said before, we lack the necessary housing to house this growing population. If we add to this the declining productivity in the construction industry, the commission will need to desperately look into this as a matter of priority.

The bill outlines the objectives and the functions of the Queensland Productivity Commission and how it will operate as an independent statutory body. The commission will be headed by a full-time Queensland Productivity Commissioner and, depending on the work program, up to three other full-time or part-time commissioners will be appointed. Whilst it is important that the government be allowed to refer matters for inquiry, it is crucial, as outlined in the legislation, that the commission remains independent in its reporting as the legislation outlines, opening up transparency.

If, as those opposite have said, they were so transparent, why did they sit on CCC reports for so long, keeping Queenslanders in the dark? At least the Crisafulli government is working on transparency and is working on opening up this information and allowing people—businesses and Queenslanders—to participate in these processes. We are acting on government commitments, driving change on how we do business and building strong foundations, because Queensland's best days are certainly ahead of us. We have to keep the momentum going and we need to ensure that we have a strong economy and a focus that will build a better Queensland.