



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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CORONERS (MINING AND RESOURCES CORONER) AMENDMENT BILL 2025

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.13 pm): I rise today to make a contribution to the Coroners (Mining and Resources Coroner) Amendment Bill, a piece of legislation that restores accountability within this crucial industry. The mining and resources industry is clearly represented on the Queensland Coat of Arms, highlighting the importance of this sector to Queensland's development. The hallmarks of the wealth of our state, our local towns and our cities and even in this place directly come from this important industry. The workers of this industry need to be treated with the highest respect, for it is their blood, sweat and toil that has helped to create wealth of all in this state. This bill is, therefore, a testament to the respect we owe to these workers for what they have done.

The proposed amendment establishes the role of a dedicated Mining and Resources Coroner, specifically designed to conduct coronial investigations and inquests for mining related reportable deaths. This legislation is a significant shift in how we address these tragic incidents. It removes the previous discretion that individual coroners had regarding whether to investigate a mining related death. It ensures every such incident is treated with the seriousness it warrants.

This bill encompasses a broad range of accidental deaths that result from mining related injuries on mines, coalmines, quarries and certain petroleum and gas sites. By mandating these inquests, we establish a framework in which every reportable death is subject to thorough examination. This not only serves to uncover the truth behind each tragedy but also plays a crucial role in preventing similar occurrences in the future. However, it is essential to clarify that the scope of the Mining and Resources Coroner's duties extends beyond just mine related deaths. The coroner may also choose to conduct inquests into reportable deaths that fall outside this immediate scope. For example, deaths through self-harm, such as suicide, or those occurring in commutes to and from sites can be investigated if deemed to be in the public interest.

It is important to note that while a mine related reportable death does not include deaths that are intentionally self-inflicted, there can be circumstances that warrant further investigation. For example, if a worker tragically takes their own life while residing in accommodation on a mine site, the Mining and Resources Coroner can delve into the case to determine whether any conditions or failings related to the mine's operations contributed to that death. This allows examination in the broader context and to hold operators to account for their responsibility towards the mental health and safety of their miners. Moreover, deaths occurring on public roads such as those involving workers commuting to and from these mine sites that fall outside the mandatory scope can also be investigated. Therefore, this bill creates a broad range of areas of investigation for the coroner.

As we navigate the complexities of this legislation, it is important to acknowledge that the primary role of the Mining and Resources Coroner will not only be to ascertain the cause of death but also to ensure mining companies are held to account for their operations. The insight gained from these investigations can lead to critical changes in practice, ultimately safeguarding the lives of workers in the industry.

In keeping with the existing coronial framework, it is also critical to emphasise that the Mining and Resources Coroner will not conduct inquests until any related criminal proceedings are finalised. This measure is essential to uphold the integrity of the legal process and ensure justice is served appropriately. In addition, to focus on mining related cases, the mining resources coroner will also engage in general coronial work when they are not occupied in mining-specific investigations. This dual role is vital in addressing the existing backlog of cases within our coronial system. By alleviating the pressure on our current resources, we can ensure all reportable deaths are investigated in a timely and efficient manner and provide families with the closure they need and seek. This bill is about more than a legal obligation; it is a promise to protect and honour the lives of those who work tirelessly in our mining sector.

The Coroners (Mining and Resources Coroner) Amendment Bill represents a significant step forward in our approach to addressing mining related deaths. It establishes a dedicated framework for investigations that prioritise accountability and safety. It fosters a mining industry that respects the lives of the workers—workers who bring an enormous amount of wealth into our state. This is something that we certainly do owe those workers. Even in the electorate of Theodore on the northern Gold Coast we have fly-in fly-out workers who work tirelessly for our state and who make our state a richer place. It is critically important that those people return home safe and well to their families. It is something that we as a state owe those individuals.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Theodore, please resume your seat. In accordance with the order agreed to by the House and the time limit for this part of the debate having expired, I call on the Attorney-General to reply to the second reading debate.