



Speech By **Michael Berkman**

MEMBER FOR MAIWAR

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ADJOURNMENT

Olympic and Paralympic Games

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (9.23 pm): Seven billion bucks—it is a very big number. That is what the LNP and Labor have already committed to spending on the 2032 Olympics and Paralympics. I want to be clear: I love watching the Olympics as much as the next person. The pole vault and the high jump are what I really love. I was never the sportiest kid, but I have a pretty mean Fosbury flop—enough at least to get me a ribbon at my senior athletics carnival at Toowoomba State High School. When you see the real athletes performing, it is extraordinary. It is genuinely unbelievable what these people can do and we should be able to celebrate this. However, we have to be real too. For those folks who are not such big fans of the Olympics, the question is: when the government is going to spend \$7 billion on it, when developers are going to make billions of dollars out of this event, what is it that we as everyday, regular residents of Brisbane can expect to get out of it?

Mr Stevens: You get to watch it.

Mr BERKMAN: We get to watch it? Okay.

Mr Stevens: It's a good thing.

Mr BERKMAN: Sure, but we have better examples. The member for Mermaid Beach might get enough out of watching it, but look to Montreal; they built 20 kilometres of Metro—real Metro, light rail—before they hosted in 1976. Just last year the Paris Olympics left them with 50 kilometres of new cycle lanes in Paris. They called them the 'Olympilanes'. I could take or leave that name, but what an incredible legacy for Parisian cyclists to have that infrastructure forever more. Barcelona is another great example; they cleaned up some industrial sites. They decontaminated sea water. They left the city with a new marina and created new beaches.

What about Brisbane? What have we had committed so far? For the \$7 billion investment that has been committed so far we have a commitment to an extraordinary program of privatisation and fear of skyrocketing rents. Quite frankly, it is time for us all to demand a better deal. That can look like a whole bunch of different outcomes. It can look like cheap tickets so that locals can actually go and take their family to see some of the Olympic events. It can look like better public transport, new busways or bringing the Airtrain back into public hands and making it 50 cents no less. It could look like environmental regeneration. Can we clean up the Brisbane River? Can it be swimmable again? What about public housing or affordable housing? All we have seen from the LNP on this front is cannibalising affordable housing requirements in the Gabba. What about community facilities such as parks and pools? Arianne Titmus grew up on the inner west side. It boggles the mind that we do not even have a public pool anywhere in the inner west. Instead, we are seeing the benefits flowing to developers, not residents; bulldozing Victoria Park for a new stadium; and selling off the Visy site that was supposed to

be public parkland. The Olympics is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for us. It is time for us to make Brisbane better and fairer, and the major parties risk wasting that opportunity.

(Time expired)