




Speech By  
**Michael Crandon**

**MEMBER FOR COOMERA**

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**QUEENSLAND PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION BILL**

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (6.05 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Queensland Productivity Commission Bill 2024. In report No. 1 of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee, the committee recommended that the bill be passed. The Queensland Productivity Commission was originally introduced by Labor in 2015 in the first term of the Palaszczuk government before being abolished by the member for Woodridge in 2021. When introduced by then treasurer Curtis Pitt, it was said that the commission would be an 'independent economic advisory body with the broad objective of lifting productivity'. The now Leader of the Opposition said the Queensland Productivity Commission 'will provide a vital service for the government and the state'.

The former commission reviewed important matters such as electricity prices and service delivery in remote Indigenous communities and improved regulation. While four matters were referred to the commission in 2015 alone, eventually Labor stripped the commission of its relevance. It only referred seven matters between 2016 and 2021 when it was cut by Labor. Despite the valuable insights provided to the government by the former commission, the member for Woodridge shut it down. The former treasurer said that the former commission was being abolished so that their work, once independent and rigorous, would continue inside government agencies.

What was the catalyst? In 2020 the Queensland Productivity Commission released a report demonstrating that productivity had declined under Labor since 2015. That did not go over well with those opposite. Clearly, the Queensland Productivity Commission and Queenslanders had lost trust in the former Labor government's ability to productively deliver more and better services with precious taxpayer dollars. They were in government at a time when revenue increased significantly—rivers of gold come to mind—but where did the money go?

Productivity is not an academic concept. Weak productivity growth has significant consequences for Queensland householders. The real world effects of lower productivity are lower economic growth, lower wages, higher unemployment and higher inflation. Had productivity growth remained at its pre-2018 average growth over the subsequent period, it is estimated that Queensland's real per capita income could have been \$11,000 higher in 2023-24. The estimated population of Queensland as at June 2024 was 5,586,322. That equates to an additional income for Queensland of \$61,449,542,000 in that year alone.

The northern Gold Coast electorate of Coomera is the fastest growing region in Queensland by number of residents. We have around 105,000 residents in the Coomera electorate. Our share of that lost per capita income amounts to \$1,155,000,000. That lost productivity is massive and it is lost forever, and that loss is for just one year alone.

That brings us to today. This lack of productivity is costing Queenslanders. In 2022, the LNP announced our commitment to restore the Queensland Productivity Commission and it was the second bill introduced by the Crisafulli government, delivering on the pledge from our first-100-day plan. Restoring the Queensland Productivity Commission is not the end, though. Delivering productivity

growth will be critical in driving the delivery of our commitments to ease cost-of-living pressures to deliver high-quality public services with better outcomes and to build the housing and infrastructure our state needs and deserves. Restoring the Productivity Commission will help secure our future prosperity. The re-formed Queensland Productivity Commission also delivers on the government's drive to identify opportunities to slash red tape and reduce unnecessary regulation. Cutting unnecessary red tape and regulation will reduce costs for Queensland businesses and consumers.

The Crisafulli government has announced the commission's first order of business will be to conduct an inquiry into opportunities to enhance productivity in the building and construction industry, which has been hampered by declining productivity growth. The commission will also be tasked with preparing an intergenerational equity report. Increasing the productivity of this industry is critical to improving housing affordability, reducing costs to business using construction inputs and delivering the government's capital program on time and with respect for Queenslanders' money.

The bill outlines the objectives and functions of the Queensland Productivity Commission, which will operate as an independent statutory body to tackle the challenges of a growing state and manage cost-of-living pressures. A re-established commission will help lift Queensland productivity growth by identifying areas for improvement to policy and regulatory settings to support business activity and income growth, provide improved government services and deliver on government's housing and infrastructure priorities. The core function of the commission will be to undertake reviews of complex economic, social and regulatory issues and provide advice and recommendations to the government.

Guiding the commission will be the values of independence, rigour, responsiveness, openness and effectiveness. The commission will be headed by a full-time Queensland Productivity Commissioner appointed by the Governor in Council. Depending on the commission's work program, up to three other full-time or part-time commissioners may be appointed. The commission will conduct inquiries through an open and transparent process, informed by public consultation. The resulting findings and recommendations provided to government will be independent and contribute to the policy development process. The government of the day will be able to refer matters for inquiry, but, crucially, control over report content will be retained by the independent statutorily appointed commissioner.

The functions of the Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction in Queensland's Treasury, which currently undertakes some productivity and regulatory functions, will be transferred to the commission. Under the current arrangement put in place by Labor, these functions were not independent of government and were not open to scrutiny. Despite the spin and mistruths being peddled by the opposition, this bill formalises the commission's operational independence from government, confirms the commission's functions and mandate, and puts in place its corporate governance framework.

Business Chamber Queensland welcomed the re-establishment of the Queensland Productivity Commission. They argued that 'the Queensland Productivity Commission re-establishment is central to economic reform in Queensland'. The Property Council stated—

As drafted, the legislation provides sufficient powers and structures for the QPC to undertake robust and independent analysis of the economic and related issues impacting Queensland.

In closing, I would like to thank the committee members and the GEFC secretariat for their hard work on the report on this bill. I commend the bill to the House.