



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**

**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

---

Record of Proceedings, 12 February 2026

### **MAJOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (5.09 pm): The Major Sports Facilities and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 is legislation that this House can support. We on this side of the chamber are very happy to support it. Its objectives are sensible, its mechanisms are proportionate and its outcomes align with the realities of modern major event delivery. It strengthens Queensland's capability to attract world-class concerts and sporting events, protects consumers from ticket scalping and modernises governance arrangements at Stadiums Queensland. These are all worthwhile reforms. However, it is also important to place this bill in its proper context.

The intent, architecture and policy direction underpinning these reforms did not emerge spontaneously under the current government. The nucleus of this legislation was clearly formed under the previous Labor government which in early 2024 undertook extensive community consultation on extending stadium special event finishing times to 10.30 pm. We went across the state to all of the areas that are involved and there was some fierce feedback, but the majority of people were very keen to see these changes. That is why I make the comment that we are all very happy to see support for the bill from throughout the chamber. The consultation was measured, it was evidence-based and it was overwhelmingly supported by the community. It recognised that Queensland's major events must remain competitive in a national and international events market where rigid curfews increasingly act as a deterrent to promoters, performers and, just as importantly, broadcasters.

We are now seeing the continuation and implementation of a Labor-led vision. Once again, the LNP government has arrived in office and found itself legislating reforms that were already well developed, well consulted and well supported under the previous Labor government. That is not a criticism of the bill. I acknowledge that good ideas should endure beyond political cycles. However, it is important to be honest about where the work began and whose strategic thinking shaped it.

The amendments to the Major Sports Facilities Act 2001 appropriately align finishing times at Carrara and Robina with those that have long applied at Suncorp Stadium. They remove outdated liquor licensing constraints that artificially capped concerts at 10 pm and constrained venue utilisation. This had a big impact on Queensland's ability to bring big names to our state and was certainly identified as a restriction. The bill strikes a careful balance by ensuring environmental obligations are met through prescribed regulatory conditions rather than blunt prohibitions that serve neither residents nor industry events well.

The strengthening of ticket scalping provisions is another area of clear merit. Increasing penalties for individuals and corporations whilst removing offences that inadvertently punish unwitting consumers reflects a more sophisticated and fair regulatory approach. Certainly the process of analysis identified that the technology that criminals have available to them these days is extensive and impressive. The ability to inadvertently punish unwitting consumers needs to be assessed, which is what is happening here. Aligning Queensland with other jurisdictions sends a clear message that large-scale profiteering at the expense of fans will not be tolerated. Rather, we will be encouraging reporting rather than the silence that has been the case in the past.

Governance reforms to the Stadiums Queensland board are also welcome. Ending the ability for directors to be terminated at will by the minister enhances institutional independence and stability. That is particularly notable given the contrast with recent moves elsewhere that have constrained ministerial control rather than restrained it.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Marr): Excuse me, member for Cairns. There is too much chatter from both sides. We can barely hear.

**Mr HEALY:** I am trying to make it as exciting as I can, Deputy Speaker. If I did a cartwheel I would hurt myself. Amendments to the Major Events Act 2014 and the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014 are technical, sensible and supported by stakeholders. The fact that all submissions to the committee inquiry were supportive and that Labor members raised no statement of reservation speaks to the fundamentally sound nature of the reforms so we are supportive.

However, while this bill improves the operation of major venues in South-East Queensland it also throws into sharp relief a broader and more deeply concerning pattern under the Crisafulli government, which is a failure to meaningfully support sport, major events and high-profile infrastructure in regional Queensland, particularly in Cairns and the Far North. Whilst we are looking forward to seeing Barlow Park upgraded—when it starts—and we are very much looking forward to seeing the Cairns Western Arterial Road developed, we are also looking forward to seeing the budget and the timelines, as that is what the government is telling us will happen.

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr HEALY:** We have been having discussions with other people. I take that interjection from the minister. I appreciate that, but the failure to progress a high-performance sports centre in Cairns is emblematic of that neglect. Such a facility would be transformative. The North Queensland Cowboys' willingness to contribute \$10 million and underwrite the asset's long-term viability is unprecedented. Given that would be in addition to the money that has been spent and that we would have an Olympic-class stadium, it is remarkable that we are not seeing any other investment. The Cairns Regional Council is 100 per cent behind this and the Cowboys are 100 per cent behind it. We have secured \$15 million from the federal government as part of building a high-performance sports centre.

The demand is undeniable. The North Queensland Cowboys women's team, the Northern Pride rugby league team, CQU, James Cook University, TAFE's Academy of Sport, the Cairns Taipans, athletics and multiple sporting codes stand ready to use it if we had the support of the Crisafulli government. We are looking for that and we need it. It would also develop a new stream of sports tourism. As we head towards the Olympics, we know that Olympic teams from around the world will come to Queensland to train. They are going to be staying here in big numbers. We need to make sure we have that infrastructure. Cairns needs this piece of infrastructure. It is vitally important. We look forward to hearing some positive news in the near future.