



Speech By
Sean Dillon

MEMBER FOR GREGORY

Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2025

HEALTH LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2)

Second Reading

 **Mr DILLON** (Gregory—LNP) (7.42 pm): I had a quite lengthy presentation prepared for this debate, but given the hour and the number of government speakers still to speak on this critical piece of legislation I will limit my contribution to a couple of key areas. The Health Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) is an omnibus bill that will amend the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act 2024, the Public Health Act 2005, the Queensland Mental Health Commission Act 2013 and the Radiation Safety Act 1999. There will also be amendments to the Public Health Regulation 2018.

At the outset I need to place on record the thanks of the people of Gregory to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services for methodically going through very important legislation not only to modernise it to reflect contemporary and new government approaches but also to ensure the safety of Queenslanders. Along with the Minister for Health, though, it would be remiss of me not to thank the Health, Environment and Innovation Committee, led very ably by the chair, the member for Southport, and assisted by my good colleagues the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Redcliffe. This legislation is important. They reviewed the submissions that were received to ensure the legislation that came before this House tonight was fit for purpose and understood by members on this side, and the explanation they placed in that report was well done and is critically important.

I would like to focus a little bit of my remaining time on the Pharmacy Business Ownership Act. I have many pharmacists in my patch, like Elizabeth Beattie from the pharmacy in Longreach, Jess Burrey from the Direct Chemist Outlet in Emerald and my local chemist, Brodie, from Alpha. The ability for them to treat relatively acute symptoms such as ear infections, school sores, eczema, mild psoriasis and nausea alleviates pressure on our emergency departments, and in some of our small communities we do not even have an emergency department. The ability for a pharmacist to diagnose and provide treatment options definitely improves the lot of people in regional Queensland, certainly right throughout my electorate of Gregory.

We need to ensure these changes are enshrined in the act. We confirmed the funding would have run out because—surprise, surprise!—Labor did not correctly budget for every program that we inherited, but we ensured the funding for traineeships in this space continued past 31 March this year. That all fits with ensuring pharmacists and their trainees are adequately provided with the skill set to care for people in our communities either to alleviate the pressure on our emergency rooms or to provide a treatment option where a doctor may not currently be in residence. I thank the minister for inclusion and I give a big shout-out to my pharmacies and those people who will be able to deliver better health care in our communities as a result of this legislation.

The member for Lockyer discussed the reforms around Japanese encephalitis. Can I say that not only will the pork industry substantially benefit from this bill but also there will be health implications for humans. Whilst this disease cannot spread from host animal to host animal, it affects a number of

animals. Equines, which are a critical component of the workforce in Western Queensland, can suffer substantially and die, as happens in a lot of instances, from Japanese encephalitis. There are horses in the racing industry, pleasure horses in backyards, those for pony club students and horses in the grazing industry which are used for mustering and animal husbandry.

We are ensuring the laws of this state allow for the correct taking and analysing of samples, and we are protecting the data so it can be put to the best available use. This shows a government that is getting on with delivering a fresh start for Queenslanders. It is delivering legislation that is fit for purpose. It is delivering legislation that will ensure not only the safety of humans in this state but also the protection of our animals and our industries as well.

The changes to notifiable occupational respiratory diseases probably has not captured a lot of attention, but the work of the Commonwealth in this space to establish a national register will ensure there is better and harmonised reporting across jurisdictional areas. Therefore, the provisions within this omnibus bill will mean that we can sign up to the national register and remove the requirement for a Queensland-based registry. Those respiratory diseases cause significant distress, but the earlier they can be detected and tracked back will mean people right across Australia will hopefully have good, sound and positive treatment outcomes.

In order that all government MPs have the opportunity to speak to this omnibus bill, my final contribution relates to the provisions around the Queensland Mental Health Commissioner. Once again, as a good government we are ensuring an acting commissioner can be appointed. This is tidying up some important things. Mental health is such an evolving treatment space, and now the commission will have certainty and stability around its leadership. Whilst it might seem like a dry piece of legislation, having certainty around the appointment of the commissioner is excellent for the work of the commission.

Once again, I would like to thank the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services for continuing his diligent approach to ensuring legislation in this state is fit for purpose and reflects the fresh start that Queenslanders voted for. I totally support this bill on behalf of the residents of Gregory.