




Speech By  
**Dr Christian Rowan**

**MEMBER FOR MOGGILL**

---

Record of Proceedings, 13 May 2026

**RESOURCES SAFETY AND HEALTH QUEENSLAND AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (4.53 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Resources Safety and Health Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026. This legislation delivers important and necessary reforms to Queensland's resources safety framework while also ensuring greater accountability, stronger governance, reduced duplication and a more efficient regulatory system that works in the interests of workers, industry, landholders and taxpayers alike. Importantly, this legislation reflects the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government's commitment to making Queensland safer, rebuilding confidence in government administration and ensuring public institutions are modern, accountable and effective.

Queensland's resources sector is critically important to our state. It supports tens of thousands of jobs, underpins regional communities, drives exports and contributes billions of dollars to the Queensland economy. But alongside that economic importance comes a clear responsibility to ensure every worker in the resources sector returns home safely to their family at the end of every shift. That responsibility must always come first.

An important foundation underpinning this legislation is the independent Johnston review into Queensland's resources safety and health regulatory framework. The Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government commissioned this review because it became increasingly clear that serious concerns existed regarding the governance, oversight, accountability and effectiveness of the existing system established under the former Labor state government. The review followed significant instability surrounding the office of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health, including the fact that the former Labor government left the role vacant for almost a year before ultimately overseeing the resignation of their nominee within weeks of appointment. That alone demonstrated a system lacking stability, clarity and proper leadership.

Importantly, the Johnston review was comprehensive and independent and led by Professor Susan Johnston AM, an internationally respected expert in mine safety and regulatory systems. The review consulted extensively across industry, unions, government and Resources Safety & Health Queensland itself. It examined whether Queensland's resources safety framework was genuinely delivering effective oversight, proper accountability and the strongest possible safety outcomes for workers. What the review ultimately found was deeply concerning. Professor Johnston identified significant weaknesses in governance arrangements, confusion surrounding roles and responsibilities, limited accountability and a lack of effective oversight within the existing model. The review specifically found that the role of the commissioner lacked clarity and that the overall framework created what were described as 'serious in principle concerns about accountability'.

Importantly, the review found that the governance model established by the former Labor state government differed substantially from the structures originally recommended through earlier reviews and parliamentary inquiries. That is why the Johnston review is so important and why this legislation matters. The review provided a clear, independent, evidence-based road map for reform. That is why

this LNP state government is acting. Unlike those opposite, who were content to allow dysfunction and confusion to continue, the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government is implementing practical reform to strengthen the system and improve outcomes for workers and industry.

This legislation establishes a skills-based governing board for Resources Safety & Health Queensland with clear oversight responsibilities and direct reporting relationships. The CEO of RSHQ will report directly to the governing board and the board itself will report to the minister. This is a sensible and contemporary governance model. It delivers clear accountability, it strengthens strategic oversight, it ensures decisions are properly scrutinised and, importantly, it restores confidence in the operation of Queensland's resources safety regulator. The bill also abolishes the role of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health, transferring those functions to the new governing board.

We have heard a criticism from those opposite regarding these reforms, including as part of this debate. However, what matters most is what the independent Johnston review actually found. The review identified widespread confusion surrounding the role, purpose and effectiveness of the Commissioner for Resources Safety and Health. Industry representatives, and even Resources Safety & Health Queensland staff, described the role as a figurehead position, while others openly stated they did not understand its function. Even more concerning—and it is again a point that must be stressed—the former Labor state government left the position vacant for nearly a year after November 2023. That says everything about Labor's priorities.

Those opposite now seek to present themselves as defenders of workers and workplace safety, yet, when they had the responsibility for this system, they failed to provide proper governance, left key positions vacant and ignored mounting concerns regarding accountability and oversight. The reality is that Labor created a framework lacking clarity and effective governance. This legislation fixes that. Importantly, the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee and Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee will continue operating under a tripartite structure with representation from unions and industries and their functions are being strengthened as well.

In closing my contribution, I want to say that the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government is acting. I commend the minister for the diligent work that he undertook in preparing this legislation, as well as the parliamentary committee for all of the work that they undertook in scrutinising this legislation. This legislation certainly delivers stronger governance, improved oversight and accountability, restores proper advisory functions and reduces duplication and red tape. More importantly, it reinforces the protections of Queensland's resource workers while ensuring Queensland remains competitive and economically strong. As such, I commend the bill to the House.