




Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**

**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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**ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (8.21 pm): I rise to speak on the Electrical Safety and Other Legislation Amendment Bill in two parts, if I may. First, as a person born in Townsville and an alumnus of James Cook University, I would like to speak to one of the parts of the bill. The education minister has done a wonderful job in bringing this legislation forward. This very important issue has arisen, as many members have mentioned, in relation to the renaming of James Cook University. As an alumnus, I find this absolutely abhorrent. We have one of the most respected navigational experts in the history of the world in James Cook, and to think that anyone would—

**Mr O'Connor:** Did you study together?

**Mr STEVENS:** He was a bit before my time. That anyone would even think of renaming the James Cook University is a stain on the people who even considered that, even if it was not a fait accompli. They say they were looking at studies and whatever, but the education minister has done a wonderful job in putting forward this council which, consistent with other universities, will look at the matter in a fair and reasonable manner. I have some history in relation to renaming universities because many years ago there was a new university being proposed on the Gold Coast and I happened to be the mayor at the time.

**Mr Head:** You were the mayor of the Gold Coast?

**Mr STEVENS:** I was the mayor of the Gold Coast and Tom Burns ran a south-east planning matter. I was adamant that the new university on the Gold Coast should be called the Gold Coast University, obviously for reasons of promoting the fabulous Gold Coast as an education facility. We already had Bond University. I was there for the opening of that. I have been everywhere. The bottom line is, as I said at the opening of Bond University, it is a jewel in the crown of the Albert shire. Did I tell you I was the mayor of Albert shire as well? I have been everywhere, man. Lucky star—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Members! Member for Bonney, direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr STEVENS:** In other words, it was critically important that the university remain at the Gold Coast. However, the vice-chancellor of Griffith University, Professor Roy Webb, insisted that it be called the Griffith University on the Gold Coast because of its international reputation. He had a member for Logan at the time called Wayne Goss, who insisted that that was going to be the name, and Griffith University is the name today. It is the biggest campus of all for Griffith University. He has proven to be correct and I have run second again in terms of promoting the Gold Coast university. Naming of universities is critically important, and I am very pleased that the Minister for Education has understood the importance of this issue and put in place a council that has its feet on the ground and will be delivering forward progress for James Cook University. May it always live strongly as the James Cook University in Townsville, a wonderful institution. Professor Ian Saunders started me on my life in economics and accounting, and what a wonderful job he did. I had to move on later, but that is another story.

I would like to move on to electrical safety. There is nothing more important in my life than electrical safety, because as a 19-year-old kid I gave my 55-year-old father mouth-to-mouth and he died. He was alive after my efforts, but when we got to the hospital he had died as a result of an electrical accident, so electrical safety to me is paramount. This bill is about correcting some issues that were put forward by the Labor Party previously, not in terms of electrical safety but in terms of the people who were overseeing other issues. If there is anything involving electrical safety I am 100 per cent for it, I can assure you. Those memories are still vivid in my mind.

This bill is about correcting matters that are not about electrical safety; they are about people from the CFMEU plying their trade in terms of the people who were operating on these building sites in the electrical industry, exposing their personal and business details. This bill corrects those matters, and rightly so. We do not need the CFMEU and their tactics, which have been well exposed in Victoria. Now they are being more exposed in Queensland. We do not need those tactics, and this bill rightly corrects all of those matters, hopefully including matters that were impacted in my electorate like light rail—a wonderful addition to the Mermaid Beach electorate that the member for Bonney has been a big supporter of.

The bottom line is that, in terms of productivity, as a result of the previous legislation CFMEU workers added \$500 million to the cost of the light rail running through my electorate. I was there when John Holland Construction said, 'We're not paying it.' They won the original light rail 3 construction contract. They said, 'We're not going to pay the BPIC' that was added by the then treasurer, Jackie Trad, in terms of covering electrical trade workers as part of all of the members on that particular build in Queensland. The productivity on light rail 3 was 2½ days per week, which is absolutely disgusting. Really, it doubled the cost of the project in total.

The fact that we are taking this opportunity to remove the CFMEU from the equation in future infrastructure builds is a wonderful thing. I congratulate all involved, including the Deputy Premier, for taking this bill forward. It will put in place reasonable and accountable actions to ensure that all people working on these projects are not subject to matters that would impact on their daily progression in terms of putting this infrastructure in place, particularly electrical practices.

This bill is a wonderful step forward. I congratulate the Deputy Premier. I congratulate the Minister for Education for his important addition to this bill. I am sure we will all be better off when this legislation is passed.