



Speech By  
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**MEMBER FOR ALBERT**

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### **UNIVERSITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (3.08 pm): I too rise to make a short contribution to the debate of the University Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. As always, I like to thank my fellow committee members, the committee staff and all those who participated in the hearings—those who turned up on the day to speak and to give their opinions on the matters.

Queensland has a reputation of being second to none when it comes to higher education. Our universities are certainly internationally renowned. As a former Griffith University student all those years ago, I like many other former Griffith University students in this chamber have fond memories of my days in the higher education sector. I certainly enjoyed those days. Over the years I have been performing this role I have seen some major changes, especially for Griffith University on the Gold Coast. There has been a massive amount of development around the campus there. I notice they have received a lot of focus down there compared to the Nathan campus in the Mount Gravatt area.

Obviously, Griffith University is not the only university in this wonderful state of ours. There are six others: the University of Queensland, the Queensland University of Technology, James Cook University, CQUniversity, University of the Sunshine Coast and the University of Southern Queensland. This bill amends how universities deal with the funds they receive through donations or special grants through the removal of restrictions that limit the ability of university governing bodies to delegate decisions about the expenditure of these funds. The bill also allows the vice-chancellor to subdelegate powers to an appropriately qualified member of the university's staff. This change was welcomed by the universities themselves. Having said that, this change did cause some concern to the National Tertiary Education Union, as they believe that subdelegation should be controlled by the governing body for transparency; however, the department stated that it is a matter for the university's governing body to decide how these delegation powers should be monitored and reported. The NTEU also expressed concern about proposed reforms to the JCU council. They felt that empowering the governing body to determine its own size and composition would reduce accountability and concentrate power in the executive.

This bill also makes changes to ensure that members of the governing body disclose convictions whilst holding a position on the governing body, not just before their appointment to the governing body. There are also amendments to ensure that the disclosure of information about disqualification is destroyed as soon as possible after it is no longer needed. This brings the university acts in line with other standard requirements when it comes to education and training et cetera. There are other minor and technical amendments in the bill which enable the chancellor to continue in the role whilst absent from duty if they are interstate, for example, which is pretty easy to do with modern technology these days. There are proposed changes to the UQ academic board to extend the appointment of the president from one to three years. The bill clarifies that a person is ineligible to be elected or appointed to the governing body for more than 12 years. As I said, I have kept my contribution very brief.