




Speech By  
**Mark Boothman**

**MEMBER FOR THEODORE**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 May 2018

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (COUNCILLOR COMPLAINTS) AND OTHER  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL  
(IMPLEMENTING STAGE 1 OF BELCARRA) AND OTHER LEGISLATION  
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (3.03 pm): I too rise to make a reasonably short contribution to the cognate debate on the Local Government (Councillor Complaints) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill and the Local Government Electoral (Implementing Stage 1 of Belcarra) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill. Firstly, I would like to thank committee members and committee staff for all the work they have done in putting this bill together. I also thank all those individuals who participated.

When I was the member for Albert for close to six years my electorate covered two local council areas: Logan City and the Gold Coast. Whilst my new boundaries are solely confined to the Gold Coast region, I must say that it is as beautiful as the Logan region and a lovely place to live. Being an elected representative is a great honour; our constituents place a lot of trust in us. Of the councillors that I have had to deal with over the years, I must say that the vast majority do the right thing. They look out for the interests of their local communities and they look out for what is best for their local areas.

I have always been a strong believer in the natural course of justice, which is served by our courts. I understand the community's expectation that those who have been charged with an offence while in office would step aside. There are a lot of individuals in our community who are very passionate about this. I suppose this has all come about as a result of what happened in Logan City and Ipswich. I was with one of my local councillors—against whom there are no allegations of any wrongdoing—while attending a community event recently when a resident came up to him and said, 'Why aren't you in jail?'

The problem is that what has happened in Logan and Ipswich has marred local councillors throughout Queensland, including all of the decent ones. I would like to reiterate the comments of the member for Clayfield. Unfortunately, certain individuals in our society ruin it for everyone else. If we lived in a perfect society we would not need laws like this. I also agree with the comments of my colleague the member for Scenic Rim. I have deep concerns about the powers in this bill that could be used to potentially dismiss a council or councillors due to a political disagreement with the government of the day. I understand that a councillor could be very passionate about an issue, but the minister may feel he or she is acting unreasonably and therefore they could possibly face the sack in the public interest. My main concerns lie with the part of the bill which deals with matters of public interest because they can be very, very broad. Is community confidence in a council or a councillor classed as public interest? This bill gives an enormous amount of power to one individual who may disagree with a councillor and their point of view.

Sometimes I disagree with what the local councillors in my area are doing, but when it comes down to it we are all pulling in the same direction for a better outcome for our local communities. We all want to see jobs in our local areas, we all want to see better roads and bridges et cetera, and we all want to see safer communities where we can live, but how we do this will differ because of different personalities.

I have some great councillors in my local area being tarred with the same brush. I do feel for them. They are trying to do the right thing for their communities. There was recently an issue in my local area to do with solar panels at exit 57. I know that my local councillor copped a bit of grief over it, but it had nothing to do with him. A lot of people complaining about councils do not understand the different tiers of government and do not understand that other tiers of government may affect the role of council, for example through state planning laws. Councils may cop an enormous amount of anger because of state legislation and people simply do not understand what is going on.

I thank my local councillors. They do a great job. Most of the councillors I have worked with over the years are still elected. They do a great job in their local areas. They are key community leaders. They are cornerstones of our local community. I ask the general public to understand that the vast majority of councillors do the right thing. As in every sector of society, there are only a few people who ruin it for everybody else.