




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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NATURAL RESOURCES AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.10 pm): I too rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Natural Resources and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019. Firstly, I thank the committee and the secretariat staff for all their work. This bill amends 29 separate acts and is 234 pages long. I was commenting to some of my colleagues after looking through the explanatory notes that this is certainly a very broad bill. It covers an enormous number of areas. One certainly understands the concerns of the Queensland Law Society when it stated that it makes it very hard for the committee and lawmakers to properly scrutinise this legislation.

One aspect of the bill I will cover is the issue around foreign ownership. This is a topic that quite a lot of my residents bring up with me while I am out and about in my electorate, whether it be on the roadside, whilst doorknocking or at functions. A lot of my residents express concerns about foreign ownership and knowing what is transpiring in that regard.

One of my fears with regard to removing this provision from state legislation is the potential for misinformation and Chinese whispers around foreign ownership. This could be the case if the detail around who owns properties, especially agricultural properties, is not available to people. A lot of people are concerned about agricultural properties being sold to foreign interests. Whilst it is still important to have foreign interests investing in Australia, knowledge around what is transpiring with regard to these properties is crucial to a lot of people's mindset.

When I spoke with one of my constituents recently I brought this topic up with him. This constituent's name is David Chan. He was horrified that that provision is being taken out of legislation. Whilst it is still partly covered in Commonwealth legislation, the state legislation does have additional detail about properties in terms of their location and uses. I am sure even the constituents of members opposite would be very concerned about the removal of this from legislation.

Another issue the opposition has highlighted is the concern around accessing private property to get to state controlled land. The member for Maroochydore mentioned—and I certainly agree with her—the potential for biohazards. We have to ensure that there is no transfer of seeds from weeds onto people's properties.

I have had a little bit to do with farming over the years and there is nothing more concerning than having a species of weed introduced onto your property. It has the potential to cause an enormous amount of grief. For example, if silver leaf weed were introduced onto a person's property by another entity and it affected one's avocado trees it would be very concerning. It can grow over and cover those trees and can kill them. It is very hard to get rid of.

That brings me back to my constituent David Chan. He was horrified by this part of the bill. He said that if anybody else in South-East Queensland had vehicles travelling across their property to get to state controlled land they would certainly be very upset. They would demand some type of compensation for the restoration of their property. An issue that the member for Condamine brought up was the lack of detailed compensation for these individuals. A biohazard such as a weed infestation could cause an enormous amount of grief for landowners.

I will keep my comments brief because there are other members of the LNP who are very keen to speak on this bill. Unfortunately, we only have a very short time left because, as normal, the time for debate of this bill in this chamber has been axed. I will leave my comments at that.