




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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EDUCATION (OVERSEAS STUDENTS) BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.21 pm): I rise to address the debate on the Education (Overseas Students) Bill 2018. The Liberal National Party will not oppose the passage of this legislation as it will create a new regime for the regulation of providers of courses to overseas students and those on international student exchange programs. Importantly, this legislation also provides the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority with functions to administer new senior assessment and tertiary entrance systems commencing for students entering year 11 in 2019. These important reforms were originally commenced by the former Queensland education minister and current member for Surfers Paradise, the honourable John-Paul Langbroek MP, and I certainly acknowledge the member for Surfers Paradise's contribution to where we are today with respect to certain elements of this legislation.

This bill also makes minor and technical amendments to the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000. This legislation also amends the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 to provide that larger retailers, non-exempt shops, in regional areas without Sunday or public holiday trading be allowed to open on the public holiday of Easter Saturday.

The provisions and objectives of the bill are largely consistent with the Education (Overseas Students) Bill 2017, which was examined and reported on by the current committee's predecessor, the Education, Tourism, Innovation and Small Business Committee. That bill, the Education (Overseas Students) Bill 2017, was yet to be debated when the previous parliament was dissolved and therefore lapsed on dissolution. The current minister has advised of two key differences to the lapsed bill which are incorporated as additional amendments. They are in response to a recommendation of the ETISBC and are amendments to ensure that information or documents obtained by the regulator or authorised compliance officers under a 'help requirement' cannot be used in proceedings other than for offences created by the bill or about the false or misleading nature of the information or document and are intended to better safeguard rights against self-incrimination. The bill's amendments to the Trading (Allowable Hours) Act 1990 are intended to address an inadvertent admission made when the act was amended in 2017.

As the Leader of the Opposition alluded to, this legislation is largely focused on changes to education but it will also amend trading hours in regional areas. One may well ask why. Because, as we heard from the Leader of the Opposition, Labor failed to take into account business owners in regional areas when it amended the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill in 2017. What cannot be understated is the impact that the hot cross bungle could have had on regional towns from Mt Isa to Mission Beach and Childers to Charters Towers. Whilst the Labor government says that it was never its intention to stop trading in these regional areas, it demonstrates how incompetent this government is with respect to drafting legislation. The omission of the provision was in fact brought to the attention of the Labor government by the National Retail Association and, again, no-one in the Palaszczuk government even noticed. It was brought to their attention via a third-party provider.

Therefore, apart from rectifying an earlier mistake by the Labor government, the legislation makes significant changes to Queensland's education system. This legislation will align Queensland more closely with the national framework. In particular, the bill removes the duplicated requirement for separate Queensland registration and better reflects the matters the director-general needs to consider under the national framework when considering whether to approve a school for the Commonwealth register of institutions and courses for overseas students, and enhances the director-general's powers for monitoring and compliance.

In relation to international student exchange programs, the bill transitions the current administrative regime to a legislative regime. The legislative regime established by the bill will continue to reflect the consistent and national approach to regulation of student exchange organisations. In addition, the guidelines that the director-general is required to make under the bill will be based on the national guidelines, with modifications to reflect Queensland's specific laws such as blue card requirements. The most recent data published by the Commonwealth Department of Education, which oversees the regime, indicates that in November last year there were 5,678 students under that full-fee-paying scheme. Under the student exchange side, there are 144 inbound and 158 outbound students in that reciprocal exchange arrangement. From 2020, Queensland will move from the current overall position tertiary entrance rank to the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank system, which all other states and territories use to rank eligible year 12 students for university entrance. The calculation of the tertiary entrance score will transfer from the QCAA to the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre. The bill gives effect to the transfer of this responsibility.

Finally, I take this opportunity to mention that the electorate of Moggill has 10 primary schools but just one local high school, Kenmore State High School. As many in this House would know, over the last three years I have been pushing the Palaszczuk Labor government not only to commit to build an additional new high school to serve residents of Mount Crosby and Karana Downs but also to invest urgently in Kenmore State High School's infrastructure master plan. This is an acute infrastructure need for local residents, yet we continue to be ignored by the Palaszczuk Labor government, with the government's only focus being on pork barrelling in inner Brisbane seats.

There are also urgent infrastructure needs for a number of local primary schools including at Moggill, Upper Brookfield, Chapel Hill, Pullenvale, Kenmore, Kenmore South, Brookfield and Mount Crosby. Whilst the re-elected Palaszczuk Labor government remains out of touch with the educational infrastructure requirements of the Moggill electorate—and despite the passage of this legislation and many of its positive elements—it is clear that the inclusion of trading hour amendments in this bill are as a result of Labor's ongoing legislative drafting incompetence. In conclusion, I take this opportunity to wish all students and school leaders in 2018 in the electorate of Moggill all the best for the year ahead.