




Speech By
Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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EXHIBITED ANIMALS BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.45 pm): I rise to address the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015. Unlike the previous speaker, the member for Logan, I intend to make a serious and respectful contribution to this important bill. Clearly this legislation has been well considered over a number of years, with a substantial amount of work progressed under the previous Liberal National Party government. I acknowledge the great work done by the member for Toowoomba South and former agriculture minister, the Hon. John McVeigh, who sits in this place.

In Queensland, the exhibited animals industry is a valuable industry and represents over \$100 million to the Queensland economy, including tourist attractions such as Australia Zoo, Sea World, the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary in the electorate of the member for Currumbin, and, close to my own electorate of Moggill, the Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary located in Fig Tree Pocket. The social benefits are significant: many of us will have experienced a family outing to Sea World or spent time watching films and TV related to wildlife. During my own childhood, I enjoyed visiting Sea World and I have taken some of my own children there for their birthdays and other events, which has been fantastic. We in this House should acknowledge the contribution of the late Keith Williams in the establishment of Sea World on the Gold Coast, as well as all the great work he has done for tourist destinations across the state.

The industry not only exhibits animals, but also plays a vital role in education, conservation, research activities and, in some cases, it provides rescue and rehabilitation facilities as well as captive breeding of endangered native and exotic animals to ensure their survival. However, none of this can be provided without ensuring that biosecurity is not compromised. It is critically important that any activity manages risks to Queensland's primary industries associated with potentially harmful pests and diseases, and that control strategies are robust when exhibiting animals to prevent pest establishment or harm to people and animals, and disease spread. Pest animals and weeds have a significant environmental and social impact on Queensland, with an estimated cost impact of approximately \$500 million annually. Disease spread poses a threat not only to primary industries, as over recent years animal linked viruses such as avian flu and swine flu epidemics have had a demonstrated impact on human health and wellbeing. Biosecurity is also an important international security issue. The continuing development and evolution of biotechnology increases the real risks of it being used for malevolent purposes, the further evolution of infectious diseases and the greater risk of more problematic epidemics.

A single regulatory structure for the licensing and monitoring of exhibited animals will streamline the required governance process and strengthen protections within Queensland. To this end, the Exhibited Animals Bill 2015, amending the Land Protection (Pest and Stock Route Management) Act 2002, the Fisheries Act 1994, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the Animal Care and Protection Act 2001, is very important. I support the intent of this bill and the practical outcomes it will potentially deliver for Queensland.