



SEATH HOLSWICH MP – STATE MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT

29th November 2012

TOURISM & EVENTS QUEENSLAND BILL

I rise to provide a brief contribution to the Tourism and Events Queensland Bill. I commend the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games for presenting the bill to the House. Once again, it is a common-sense bill that will reduce red tape, provide greater operational efficiencies and help boost the capacity of Queensland's tourism and events industry. I am pleased to say that that industry is finally starting to experience significant growth. Under the Newman government it is an industry that is turning the corner and is contributing more to our state's economy than we have seen for many years.

Tourism is a key pillar of Queensland's four-pillar economy. As the policy objectives of the bill outline, the bill will help to provide a more coordinated and strategic approach to attracting visitors to Queensland. As a member of the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee, I know that the bill was a fairly straightforward one to review. I think it is pretty fair to say that the reason there was no need for public hearings and that there were no submissions on the bill is because it is a plain old common-sense bill. It makes sense to see Tourism Queensland and Events Queensland merged into one entity. That change will see operations of the two entities streamlined, meaning, as I said earlier, less red tape and greater operational efficiencies and, most importantly, it will help to empower Queensland's tourism and events sector and provide opportunities for better coordinated and organised tourism events in the year ahead.

Tourism is a large contributor to our state's economy. As the minister pointed out in her explanatory speech to the bill, the industry directly and indirectly employs more than 120,000 Queenslanders. I look forward to the minister standing in this House in years to come and quoting much greater numbers that the industry will employ in the state.

The Minister for Tourism is well aware that I am a massive supporter of Queensland's tourism industry. I am working closely with tourism operators in the Pine Rivers electorate to develop a stronger tourism economy in our local region. I am working with operators such as the Ocean View Estates Winery and Vineyard, which last week took out a coveted Queensland Tourism award for best tourism winery, distillery or boutique brewery. This is the second year in a row that Ocean View Estates has taken out that award.

I might point out to the members for Burnett and Bundaberg that Ocean View Estates took out this award ahead of the Bundaberg Rum distillery. While the honourable members might rightfully trumpet the merits of the Bundaberg region, on this occasion they have been trumped by the mighty Pine Rivers region. It is a region that in years to come will be a great drawcard for tourists in the south-east corner of this state.

It is for the ultimate benefit of tourism operators like the Ocean View Estates winery and all the other tourism operators in my electorate that our government is passing legislation like this important bill. This bill is just a small part of a suite of reforms being undertaken by our government, all designed to kick-start our tourism industry and return Queensland to its rightful place as our nation's premier tourism destination.

I again put on the record my thanks to the minister for the way that she is demonstrating our government's commitment to Queensland's tourism industry and for the leadership that she is showing in this area. I certainly look forward to hosting the minister in Dayboro at some stage in 2013 to show off the fantastic tourism opportunities in the Dayboro and the Moreton Bay hinterland region. This is a common-sense, important bill. I am pleased to commend the bill to the House.