

~~I will now outline the cost recovery provisions and other amendments to the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 that are contained in this bill. Among other things, the Water Supply Act regulates drinking water service providers and recycled water entities primarily to protect public health. These provisions will enable the regulator to recover reasonable costs of an investigation from a drinking water service provider or recycled water entity if there has been noncompliance with the Water Supply Act. The retrospective provisions of this bill enable the recovery of the cost of the fluoride investigation at the North Pine water treatment facility.~~

~~These amendments will also enhance the ability of the regulator to respond to drinking or recycled water quality issues. This will be done by increasing the regulator's powers for obtaining and sharing information and dealing with potential real emergency and non urgent water quality issues which may have an adverse effect on public health. These amendments will enable the regulator to recover reasonable costs when direct action is taken in dealing with an adverse health matter for an emergency or non urgent water quality issue. These amendments will also allow more comprehensive reporting by the regulator and make minor refinements to the Water Supply Act.~~

~~This bill will also amend the Valuation of Land Act 1944 to give the Department of Environment and Resource Management an additional year to 31 August 2010 to continue to issue valuations based on pre amalgamation local government boundaries. As members are aware, the department's State Valuation Service provides statutory valuations as a basis from which local governments can set rateable values, for the Office of State Revenue to calculate land tax and for the department to determine state land rentals. The whole state is not valued each year, and valuations are based on what the property market reflects at a particular point in time.~~

~~When local governments were amalgamated in Queensland, many of the new local government areas were made up of existing areas on different levels of value. This was to have been corrected over the next two annual valuation cycles. However, the second annual valuation was postponed this year because increases in property valuations would have been an unreasonable burden on landowners already affected by the global financial situation and extreme weather conditions in Queensland.~~

~~Of the 17 local governments identified for annual valuations this year, four were amalgamated entities: the Western Downs, Southern Downs, Moreton Bay and Rockhampton regional councils. The earliest these local governments can now be valued is next year, but present legislation only authorises the department to operate on the old boundaries until the end of August 2009. This retrospective amendment will allow the department to value the remaining old local government areas that have been amalgamated in 2010, with no gap in the coverage provided by section 75M of the Valuation of Land Act.~~

~~Finally, this bill will amend the Land Act 1994 to enable the establishment of renewable energy projects such as wind farms on state leasehold land. In the present climate, more and more electricity companies are turning to wind power as a clean energy source that does not involve burning fossil fuels. Although wind farms can consist of several hundred individual turbines and cover large areas of land, many land uses such as agriculture and grazing are compatible with their use. These amendments will enable the broadening of the lease conditions on large rural leasehold properties, such as pastoral leases, to allow wind farms to co-exist with grazing and agricultural uses of state leasehold land.~~

~~I commend the bill to the House.~~

~~Debate, on motion of Mr Seeney, adjourned.~~

~~Sitting suspended from 12.52 pm to 2.30 pm.~~

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HEALTH PRACTITIONER REGULATION NATIONAL LAW BILL

First Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act providing for the adoption of a national law to establish a national registration and accreditation scheme for health practitioners. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Tabled paper: Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Bill.

Tabled paper: Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Bill, explanatory notes.

Second Reading

Hon. PT LUCAS (Lytton—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for Health) (2.30 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to introduce the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law Bill 2009. Since 2005, Queensland has undergone an exhaustive process of significantly strengthening health practitioner registration in this state. The Bligh government is committed to patient safety and promoting a more flexible, sustainable health workforce. The health and wellbeing of the public is extremely important to this government. We can now boast the most rigorous registration standards in the country. That is why Queensland is pleased to be hosting the legislation that will create the scheme. The strongest elements of all jurisdictions will come together, for the first time ever, in a consistent set of national standards and processes for registering individual health professionals.

This bill represents a quantum leap forward in improving Australia's health care system for the better. The most significant amendments seek to boost public safety protection by ensuring health practitioners are suitably trained and qualified to practise in a competent and ethical manner; cut red tape to allow health professionals to work anywhere in Australia without requiring additional registration; establish a single national register for each profession that will be publicly available; simplify registration processes which currently requires a person to be registered in each jurisdiction in which they wish to practise; establish nationally consistent standards for registration applying to each profession; require all registrants to have suitable professional indemnity insurance during the period of their registration—the national boards will determine minimum standards of indemnity insurance required and the insurance industry will provide the products it considers commercially necessary; require mandatory reporting of professional misconduct across all professions; and require criminal history checking of all new applicants for registration in all professions and auditing of criminal histories of existing registrants.

The national scheme proposed in this bill will commence on 1 July 2010 for ten health professions, including: medicine, nursing and midwifery, pharmacy, physiotherapy, dentistry consisting of dentists, dental prosthetists, dental therapists and dental hygienists, psychology, optometry, osteopathy, chiropractic and podiatry. In addition, the inclusion of a further four professions will commence on 1 July 2012, including: medical radiation practitioners, occupational therapists, Chinese medicine practitioners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners. Dental technicians and speech pathologists are currently registered in Queensland and have not yet been included in the national scheme but will continue to be registered on a state basis in Queensland. Queensland has strongly advocated for their inclusion. Further consideration of their inclusion is being given by all jurisdictions. I strongly believe in the significant benefits to practitioners and the public alike from national registration and will continue to advocate for the inclusion of dental technicians and speech pathologists in the national scheme.

It is proposed that the Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008 will be repealed from 1 July 2010 and replaced with the national law scheduled to this bill. Subject to consideration by this parliament, other Australian states and territories will introduce adopting or corresponding legislation into their respective parliaments for passage in time for the national scheme to start on 1 July 2010. The third stage of legislation will be a bill that I intend to introduce into parliament early next year, which will repeal existing registration legislation and provide for all necessary consequential legislation needed to implement the national scheme on 1 July 2010.

The development of a bill such as this involves extensive consultation with stakeholders. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those stakeholders who were involved in the development of this bill. The national consistency in registration and accreditation arrangements in this bill will help to improve the availability and flexibility of the provision of health services and also will protect the public, by using the highest possible registration and accreditation standards nationwide, from potentially harmful health outcomes. Before commending the bill to the house, therefore, I wish to reassure all members that I intend to move a motion during the consideration in detail stage of the debate seeking to suspend standing orders to allow for each of the clauses contained within the schedule to the bill to be comprehensively examined and debated. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate, on motion of Dr Flegg, adjourned.

~~EDUCATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~EDUCATION AND TRAINING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL~~

~~Second Reading (Cognate Debate)~~

~~Education Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 16 September 2009 (see p. 2325) and Education and Training Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 4 August 2009 (see p. 1337), on motion of Mr Wilson~~

~~That the bills be now read a second time.~~