

~~judgment on anyone involved in this decision. I think there was some flawed advice that was given. It was around the time of the Fitzgerald inquiry when there was a real fervour to cast someone out from that role. Unfortunately judge Anglo Vasta was on the receiving end. That was the only time since Federation that a parliament has removed a Supreme Court judge. One would have expected that he had committed grand larceny or murdered someone or something really severe, not to have some tax issues that subsequently were mostly found to be invalid. That was a strong pillar for the removal of Mr Vasta. I ask that the parliament consider this bill and do the right thing by someone who I think was unfairly removed.~~

~~First Reading~~

~~Mr KATTER (Mount Isa—KAP) (11.41 am): 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.~~

~~Referral to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee~~

~~Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.~~

<SUGAR INDUSTRY (APPLICATION OF TRANSITIONAL PROVISION) AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction



Mr DICKSON (Buderim—PHON) (11.41 am): <I seek to present a bill for an act to amend the >Sugar Industry Act 1999 to extend the period within which particular supply contracts are not required to include particular terms. I table the bill and explanatory notes.

Tabled paper: Sugar Industry (Application of Transitional Provision) Amendment Bill 2017.

Tabled paper: Sugar Industry (Application of Transitional Provision) Amendment Bill 2017, explanatory notes.

This is a pretty straightforward bill. It is looking to buy a year in time so that the two parties who have been doing battle for some time can work through their agreement without being coerced in any particular way. This amendment is necessary to overcome the issue facing the sugar industry currently being experienced in the Burdekin basin. Currently Wilmar Sugar has not finalised its agreement between it and QSL due to ongoing negotiations resulting in the delay in reaching suitable terms of contract to growers with Wilmar pursuant to their cane sale agreement. As a result, the canegrowers cannot lock in the forward pricing contracts.

This amendment to the act allows the current agreement to be extended for one year to allow the existing contract to be carried over by those growers supplying cane to Wilmar Sugar and hence enabling forward pricing contracts to be finalised. Equally, this amendment allows QSL and Wilmar Sugar to continue negotiations without the deadline pressure to complete. This amendment does not affect other refineries or other growers with different mills who have already settled their individual contracts. I have two letters that I would like to table. The first is an open letter to the Prime Minister from a Mr Geoff Cox and also a newsletter from Mr Paul Schembri.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 12 January 2017, from Mr Geoff Cox to the Prime Minister, Hon. Malcolm Turnbull, regarding the sugar industry.

Tabled paper: Article, dated 16 January 2017, from the Australian Canegrower titled 'FIRB Chairman comments 'grossly misinformed'.

I will not take up a lot of time. There was much discussion about this. This is not about politics, this is about putting the canefarmers first. I think we have all lost sight of this issue. It has become a political football, with the Labor Party trying to condemn the LNP. I think we all need to pull together to get the desired outcome so that canefarmers are not the ones left carrying the can. We as politicians need to do better. We need to stand up. That is what One Nation is about: putting people before politics. The two major parties have lost their way.

First Reading

Mr DICKSON (Buderim—PHON) (11.45 am): 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.

Referral to the Agriculture and Environment Committee

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee. >

<Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date



~~Mr DICKSON~~ (Buderim PHON) (11.45 am), by leave, without notice: I move →

~~That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Agriculture and Environment Committee report to the House on the Sugar Industry (Application of Transitional Provision) Amendment Bill by 20 March 2017. →~~



~~Mr SEENEY~~ (Callide LNP) (11.45 am): If there is a motion before the House then we have
→ an opportunity to speak to it.

~~Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER~~ (Ms Farmer): Yes, member for Callide.

~~Mr SEENEY~~: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, and I do want to speak to it so it is very clear to people who may be reading or listening to this debate why the House is going to take a decision that I would advocate. We had an extensive debate last night about these issues that are very important to our side of the House at least. Anyone who looks at the debate on the bill last night will clearly understand the passion and the emotion that was involved in that debate not only passion and emotion but detail. It is a very detailed area. For any member to come in the morning after a debate such as that and present another private member's bill and request the House to treat it urgently is a little difficult to support because we struggle to understand what is in the bill.

~~The House considered the bill last night, but that bill had been in the public domain for some days, it had been discussed at length, the concepts in the bill had been considered during the committee hearing. I struggle to even understand what the concepts are in this bill. I have just had a hurried conversation with my colleagues who represent the sugar growing areas and they too are struggling to get their heads around it. As I look at my colleague, the member for Hinchinbrook, he is struggling to get his head around it as well.~~

~~I would say to the honourable member that I agree 100 per cent with him when he says we all have to work together on this important issue. We do. We have to work together on a strategy that will get legislation through this House to achieve the outcomes that I think all of us on this side of the House want to achieve. We saw that fail last night because a particular member of the House had an issue with the fact that the previous bill had been declared urgent. The bill failed because of that. It failed because that member felt that it was inappropriate to debate that bill in an urgent manner.~~

~~The provisions for a bill to be declared urgent are part of the standing orders of this place and arguments can be advanced for particular bills to be declared urgent so that they do proceed quickly through this House. That strategy failed last night on a bill that was designed to address the same problem that this bill is supposedly aimed at addressing. I only say that because I have no idea what is in the bill, I have not had an opportunity to look at it.~~

~~For us to support an urgency motion again this morning would be almost dooming this bill to failure based on the debate and the proceedings that we saw in this House last night. While I agree with the honourable member for Buderim that we do need to work together, we need to do it in a way that has some likelihood of success in terms of the procedures of this place. That is not saying anything about the content of the bill because I have no idea whether the content of the bill has a likelihood of success or not.~~

~~We need time to look at the bill to work out whether or not it has some likelihood of success in addressing a very real problem that we all recognise. Nobody can doubt that if they look at the debate that was had in this House last night. I say to the honourable member for Buderim that nobody should go out and misrepresent that. However, it is impossible for us to support an urgency motion that will doom the bill to failure before we even have a chance to consider what is in the bill. On that basis, the opposition will be opposing the urgency motion moved by the member for Buderim. →~~