



Speech by

Hon. D. WELLS

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Hansard 18 November 1998

UNIVERSITY OF THE SUNSHINE COAST BILL

Hon. D. M. WELLS (Murrumba—ALP) (Minister for Education) (11.31 a.m.), in reply: I thank honourable members for their very thorough coverage of the issues involved in the legislation. I particularly thank the honourable members for Greenslopes, Sunnybank, Kallangur and Sandgate for their contributions. They have often spoken to me about tertiary education matters and on all issues I have found their advice to be extremely valuable.

I thank the member for Nicklin, whose representations to me on behalf of this university have been singularly effective in further inspiring me to achieve the earliest possible resolution of this matter. I thank the member for Merrimac for his contribution and for the groundwork which he laid for the carriage of this Bill. It was a pleasure to introduce this Bill last week and to debate it tonight. Indeed, it was a great pleasure to debate the Bill tonight not only because of the benefits that it confers on the Sunshine Coast but also because it gave me the enormous pleasure of hearing the honourable member for Merrimac saying something pleasant. I also thank the members for Maroochydore, Caloundra and Mooloolah for their contributions.

The very thoughtful contribution that we just heard from the honourable member for Western Downs needs particular mention. I take on board his proposition that we must ensure that universities have a certain quality and a certain critical mass. This university will have that quality and that critical mass. Without those two things, a student's university experience will be an impoverished one. There was great wisdom in the words of the honourable member when he said that we have to be very careful about the multiplication of universities and university campuses. However, this institution was set up as a college of a university and not as a campus of a university, merely for titular reasons and reasons of convenience. It was always destined to be a university in its own right. Its population base will generate a very fine university. The energy that has been established by its first momentum will carry it through to greater and greater academic successes.

The passage of this Bill tonight will mean that graduands will be able to graduate earlier than was going to be possible and they will get their degrees as graduates of a university, rather than as graduates of a university college. That will be significant in the lives of those people. The university will be able to seek overseas students without having to put the additional tag of "college" on its name. The benefits for the university will be great. Once more, I thank all honourable members who have contributed to the debate. I commend the Bill to the House.
