



Speech by

Miss FIONA SIMPSON

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard 12 November 1998

HEALTH PRACTITIONERS (SPECIAL EVENTS EXEMPTION) BILL

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (4.27 p.m.): The Opposition will be supporting this Health Practitioners (Special Events Exemption) Bill. It is a non-controversial Bill and was under way under the previous coalition Government. In essence, the Bill will provide exemptions for health practitioners from registration requirements under strict protocols when they are travelling to Queensland for events as such as the Olympics and other major sport and cultural events. These practitioners will not be able to practise on anybody other than the group for which they receive their exemption.

One of the important parts of this Bill is the role the Chief Health Officer in ensuring that those high standards are maintained before exemptions are granted. However, in another Bill before the House the powers of the Chief Health Officer are gutted. It is rather interesting to note that this Bill that we are considering currently was introduced into the House by the Minister on 18 September. A month later, on 20 October, she brought in another Bill which has rewritten totally the role of the Chief Health Officer. Obviously, the Minister's decision to gut the role of the Chief Health Officer was a quick and hasty move and poorly considered. It does not do a lot for the confidence of the health community and the Queensland public in this Minister.

However, as I have said, the Health Practitioners (Special Events Exemption) Bill is non-controversial. The Opposition supports it. Obviously, we want to support people coming to Australia and, in particular, bringing teams to Queensland to train. I know that people in many parts of Queensland are trying to attract high-quality athletes to go there to train. We hope that there will be many other events in the future and the provisions such as those contained in this Bill will certainly make it easier to attract them.
