



Speech by

JACK PAFF

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

Hansard 23 November 1999

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL (No. 2)

Mr PAFF (Ipswich West—ONP) (5.01 p.m.): I rise to support the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 1999. The Bill contains several provisions to improve the operational efficiency of local government authorities. Its main objective is the introduction of four-year terms of office for local government councillors, commencing from the March 2000 elections. There are several advantages to be achieved by introducing four-year terms of office, the most significant being that the longer term provides more stability, better economic planning, longer term decision making, fewer elections thus incorporating cost savings and less inconvenience to the general public. A four-year term will give councils greater opportunities to address problems and to contend with significant issues, particularly those economic issues that require difficult decisions to be made.

One Nation has always supported referendums. We have shown that in this House by the introduction of our Bill for citizen-based referendums. We will be supporting the Opposition's call for a referendum on four-year terms. However, although the Leader of the Opposition stands in this place and espouses a referendum, he voted against the One Nation Bill. That might well tell members something about that person. Is it politics or is it just grandstanding? I might well say that it is both. He was supported by the member for Indooroopilly. Good gracious! They have egg on their faces.

I commend the Minister for the consultation taken to obtain community views on the introduction of four-year terms. It is apparent that the majority of respondents supported the change, which was endorsed by the Local Government Association of Queensland.

The latter part of the Bill provides for changes in the reporting responsibilities in local government annual reports, specifically dealing with equal opportunities in employment. The amendment will allow a greater level of information to be disclosed to the public via annual reports. This too is commendable. The remaining provisions of the Bill are considered to be minor and I am satisfied that they gained approval from the relevant departments and industry groups. One Nation is happy to support the Bill.
