



Speech by

**JULIE ATTWOOD**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**

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Hansard 19 July 2000

**DRUGS MISUSE AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mrs ATTWOOD** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (2.48 p.m.): The Drugs Misuse Amendment Bill 2000 amends the current Drugs Misuse Act 1986 to include unlawful activity relating to performance and image enhancing drugs. These are principally anabolic androgenic steroids, ephedrine and flunitrazepam, which is marketed as Rohypnol and is commonly known as the date rape drug. Currently, these drugs are classified as Schedule 2A drugs under the Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996. This regulation limits the punishment that can be imposed on a person unlawfully in possession of a Schedule 2A drug to 60 penalty units or \$4,500 with no term of imprisonment.

Concern has been expressed over the leniency of these penalties by the Australian Olympic Committee, the Model Criminal Code Officers Committee and the Director of Public Prosecutions. I share their concern and am appalled by the increase in the use of these drugs within our community. The Drugs Misuse Amendment Bill will provide maximum penalties of five years' imprisonment for the manufacture and trafficking of these drugs. For possession of these drugs, the user will face up to two years' imprisonment. These are not light penalties. Hopefully they will deter some people from entering the illegal drugs industry and convince others to leave this despicable industry.

A number of other jurisdictions are taking similar legislative steps to strengthen laws against the possession of and trafficking in performance and image enhancing drugs. This is largely as a result of the increased awareness of such performance enhancing substances in the lead-up to the Sydney Olympics.

Ephedrine is included in this legislation in response to concerns about its misuse in the transport industry. The legislation allows for a scheme to confiscate profits from the illegal sale of this drug. There are enough accidents occurring on our highways as it is without a small minority of irresponsible truckies exacerbating the problem by taking drugs to stay awake. The real criminal in this type of situation is the trafficker who sells and therefore condones the possible slaughter of other responsible road users.

Rohypnol is included in this legislation in response to several instances in recent years of this drug, the date rape drug, being used to drug people who then become victims of sexual assault. Only a few weeks ago there was an article in the newspaper about this date rape drug and the appalling consequences it can have for victims. I thank the Minister for introducing this Bill to the House.

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