



Speech by

KEN TURNER

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

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NATURE CONSERVATION AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr TURNER (Thuringowa—IND) (4.37 p.m.): I have some reservations about this Bill, the Nature Conservation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2000. The theory sounds all right—let us set aside another 425,000 hectares of State forest for the ultimate nature reserve.

But there are questions that need answering. For example, will the setting aside of this land be beneficial, or will it prove to be worse for conservation than that which already exists? I believe that to date insufficient funds have been made available to maintain our existing national parks, let alone declaring more that in the long term will not be able to be maintained at all. When land is under lease, it is the responsibility of the lessee to maintain fire, weed and feral animal controls. If this is not carried out consistently, we will have more problems than currently exist.

The Minister's second-reading speech clearly states—

"Unfortunately the Federal Government has consistently refused to accept the historic outcomes contained in this South-east Queensland Forest Agreement and has not contributed one cent towards its implementation."

I ask: why would the Minister expect to see an attitude change by the Federal Government? I ask the Minister: can he guarantee that funding will be made available to maintain these nature reserves indefinitely?

I am all for conservation, but a realistic approach must be taken that will continue to ensure that all user groups are able to be catered for. There is no point in locking up vast areas that will not be accessible to the community for recreational or some commercial uses. With proper planning and management the environment can be preserved in pristine condition in conjunction with human use.

By tradition, Australians are an outdoor people and we should encourage these recreational pursuits. Sun, surf, bush, barbeques and camping are all family activities and should be preserved along with our environment.
