



Speech by

**LINDA LAVARCH**

**STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH**

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Hansard 16 March 2000

### **BILLBOARD ADVERTISING STANDARDS**

**Mrs LAVARCH** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (7.15 p.m.): It was most pleasing to hear this morning that Australia's advertising watchdog, the Advertising Standards Board, has upheld complaints to have Windsor Smith remove its latest billboard advertisements for men's shoes. Members would be aware that over the past few weeks billboard ads for Windsor Smith shoes have sprung up all over Brisbane and surrounds. I could not enter the electorate of Kurwongbah from the north or leave the electorate through the south without encountering this billboard.

I am also sure that most members in the House know the ad I am talking about. If one is looking face-on to the billboard, the right-hand side displays various styles of Windsor Smith men's shoes, and the left-hand side depicts a blatant sexual scene. A blonde-haired woman wearing a gaping thigh-length coat exposing sexy black underwear is seated with a man standing in front of her. His hand furthest from view is holding her cheek; the other hand is on his hip. The way she is seated has her focusing in front of her, which just happens to be his crotch area. There is no question the pose of the man and the woman suggests oral sex is about to take place.

It is an offensive ad, and in the few weeks it has been displayed it has caused many complaints to be lodged with the ASB. I was one of the many who lodged a complaint with the ASB. My complaint was on the basis, firstly, that sex has nothing to do with a man's choice of shoes and, secondly, and more importantly in my view, this company deliberately set out to attract controversy and therefore more publicity. Windsor Smith knew that its ad gratuitously used sex. It knew that its ad was offensive. It knew that it was out of step with community standards, and it knew that many would complain, and the community would react and media attention would be gained.

This is not the first time that this company has purposefully set out to provoke the community. This leads to the question of whether we need an advertising watchdog with stronger teeth than that which we presently have. Whilst the ASB can request that the billboard be taken down, it has now no power to order Windsor Smith to do so. Neither does it have the power to impose fines by way of a deterrent.

Time expired.

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