



Speech by

**BARBARA STONE**

**MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD**

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Hansard 30 May 2001

**TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION PROVIDERS [LIABILITY] BILL**

**Ms STONE** (Springwood—ALP) (10.34 p.m.): I rise to speak briefly to the Traveller Accommodation Providers (Liability) Bill. This bill will bring balance to the law relating to the rights and duties of traveller accommodation providers and their guests. Currently, under the innkeepers doctrine accommodation providers are liable for the property of guests, regardless of whether the accommodation provider is at fault. This bill will provide protection for both the accommodation provider and the traveller.

A collaborative approach was used to form the policy contained in this bill. Major industry bodies, government departments, insurance companies and the Queensland Law Society were all consulted. As I stated earlier, currently the accommodation provider is liable for the loss of guests' property, even if the fault did not lay with them. This relies heavily on the honesty of guests not to lodge fraudulent claims; I cannot think of too many businesses that rely solely on the client's honesty.

This bill provides limited liability for the loss and damage of property. It will limit liability to \$250 per room, or \$50,000 if an accommodation provider has provided safe custody facilities. It is important to note that this limit will not apply when the loss or damage results from the fault or negligence of the accommodation provider or an employee. This will be the highest limited liability in Australia, and to ensure that the level remains appropriate a review will take place in two years. I repeat: this gives protection to both traveller and accommodation provider.

Another worthy part of this bill is the requirement for the accommodation providers to notify guests of this act. A notice of the act will be required to be displayed in the main entrance of the facility. It is also necessary that the provider bring the attention of the guest to this act. This can easily be done by means of a notice in the room or some other method. I know that when I have travelled I have never been told of the responsibilities of the accommodation providers. I believe that the requirement to inform travellers is a very important part of the bill.

Tourism plays such an important role in contributing to this state, and I believe that this bill sets a framework for a cooperative approach to what can be a very stressful time for both the accommodation provider and the guest. The bill recognises the need for responsible industry practices that generate safer and more supportive environments. It provides information to guests so that they can plan according to their needs.

Another reason I am pleased to speak on this bill is that it includes all types of accommodation provider. This is important to the electorate of Springwood. Although we are not a large tourism destination such as the Gold or Sunshine Coasts, we are certainly becoming known as a great place to stay close to Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast and, of course, the Darling Downs tourist spots.

Springwood has the Springwood Motel, Springers Motel and the new Springwood Towers. There are only two high-rise buildings in the Pacific Motorway corridor, and one of them is the new, privately-funded towers. It is a five-star facility and certainly represents a vote of confidence in Springwood, servicing the business and tourist visitors to the Pacific Motorway corridor. I am pleased that these facility operators will be better protected by the introduction of this bill, and I commend the bill to the House.