



Speech by

PETER WELLINGTON

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard 11 December 2001

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL [No. 2]

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (5.58 p.m.): I rise to participate in the debate on the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2001. The part of this bill that I seek to speak about is that part which inserts into the Local Government Act a new chapter 17A which deals with the registration of restricted dogs. I understand that the Local Government Act 1993 presently confers upon local governments the power to make local laws about dogs, and I note that this bill establishes a process which imposes very significant prohibitions and restrictions upon owners and persons responsible for restricted dogs and that these dogs are mostly identified by breed, although individual dogs may also be declared to be restricted dogs.

I understand also that, while this bill will displace any dog control laws which individual local governments may have made insofar as the local law is inconsistent with this new state government bill, which is soon to be law, I understand that it does not prevent local governments imposing certain requirements in connection with the statutory scheme established by this bill which is higher than those stipulated by this bill itself. I thank the minister for allowing local governments this freedom.

I also ask the minister to clarify what is the legal position in relation to neighbouring landowners where there is already in place an adequate dividing fence of normal specifications. If one neighbour has a restricted dog and is required to provide an appropriate enclosure, I ask the minister: could that dog owner with the restricted dog require the dividing fence to be demolished and replaced by a higher specification fence which would meet the appropriate enclosure standards? And if so, could that dog owner seek a contribution from the neighbour?

I support this bill. I hope that, as a result of the passing of this bill into legislation, all irresponsible dog owners will be reminded that they have a very clear responsibility in providing the appropriate care and providing for their dog irrespective of whether their dog is identified specifically in this bill. Often we hear comments made that there are too many laws in Queensland and that we are all overgoverned or overregulated. But at the end of the day, it must be understood that this bill becoming law has happened only because of irresponsible dog owners. I commend the bill to the House.