



Speech by

**Mr T. MALONE**

**MEMBER FOR MIRANI**

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Hansard 8 November 2001

### **PROSTITUTION AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr MALONE** (Mirani—NPA) (12.38 a.m.): I rise to speak on the Prostitution Amendment Bill. I concur with the comments of the opposition spokesman and also congratulate the Opposition Leader on enunciating our opposition to this bill.

I want to raise an issue that has not been raised tonight. Mackay has a population in excess of 25,000 people and an application for a brothel has been made. Because of the previous legislation, the council did not have a say in approving the application. I have spoken to every individual councillor on the Mackay City Council and every single one of them is opposed to the brothel. They are disappointed that they did not have a say as to whether or not the brothel was approved. The brothel was to be located in an industrial area, and there is no problem with that at all. It is in a cul-de-sac in an industrial area amongst sheds. Because the sheds service the mine, workers in the area work a 24-hour shift, so shiftworkers work around the clock in the area.

I attended a meeting in Mackay held by the No Brothels Committee. I understand that the minister and the Premier were good enough to meet with the No Brothels Committee's Nicole Hams, Allan Millington and a few others who put their case very strongly.

**Mr McGrady** interjected.

**Mr MALONE:** That is right, Minister, and I believe they put a sensible and good case. However, I have tabled in the House a petition signed by 2,400 people who believe that councils with a population over 25,000 should have a say regarding brothels. Eloquent speakers on our side of the House have indicated that the fact that communities with over 25,000 do not have a say and communities with under 25,000 have a say is a problem. That discriminates between communities. The No Brothels Committee in Mackay is keen to ensure that its city has a say in whether or not there should be a brothel.

There is another aspect to this issue. As I said, this particular application was in an industrial area and we need to take into account the number of businesspeople who have invested considerable amounts of money in those areas. Quite often, they have invested their life savings as superannuation and look forward to the investment returns over a long time. There have been threats that the businesses leasing those sheds next to where the application for the brothel has been made will relocate, and that certainly has investment implications all the way down the line. This is as a consequence of the legislation. Even though under the legislation there has to be no outward sign saying that the building contains a brothel, the fact is that in this case it is located in a cul-de-sac. It is not difficult to work out that sooner or later there will be indications that there is a brothel in the area, even though businesspeople work there and shiftworkers come and go day and night. The whole implication is very difficult to comprehend.

**Mr McGrady:** In reality, that doesn't happen.

**Mr MALONE:** I would like to believe that, Minister, but I have to take on board the comments of the businesspeople in the area. Threats have been made that they will relocate. That obviously has implications in terms of investment.

The local government is very disappointed with the situation regarding the population limits. Other councils in my electorate are under 25,000 and are very pleased with the fact that they are not in

a situation where they will be forced to have a brothel. Unfortunately, this legislation before the House tonight does not guarantee that that is the case. With this enforcer-type legislation and despite the fact that the government will appoint a person to work with these councils to help them overcome their fears, there is a possibility that a brothel will be opened in Sarina, Mirani or Livingstone shire.

When this legislation was first introduced the Premier said that we would have the toughest laws in Australia in relation to brothel legislation. It is personally disappointing to me to find that tonight we are downgrading those laws. This again is another backflip by the Premier. It is a continuation of a number of backflips, and that is unfortunate. The community at large is disappointed about this legislation. The people I talk to, including the 2,400 petitioners in the Mackay City Council area, are also disappointed. I would appreciate it if the minister would take on board those comments, particularly the degrading of investment opportunities in areas where brothels are located.

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