



Speech by

ANITA PHILLIPS

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Hansard 5 September 2002

GAMBLING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Ms PHILLIPS (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.49 p.m.): I rise in support of the Gambling Legislation Amendment Bill 2002. This bill articulates the government's strong commitment to addressing the social and economic issues that have arisen from the recent rapid growth in gambling in Queensland while preserving the many benefits that the industry continues to provide. It is about providing two fundamental principles—that is, greater balance and better coordination. In future, the social costs generated by gambling will be weighed against the benefits, and proactive measures will be implemented to minimise social problems and provide support for those individuals who encounter problems with regard to the control of their gambling. The Beattie government acknowledges that there are adequate existing gambling opportunities within Queensland to meet the needs of most participants. Consequently, the current rapid growth of gambling in Queensland will be slowed through a strategy of non-proliferation. This does not mean that this government is a spoilsport. It means that it is responsible and takes social issues into consideration when addressing such issues.

Like many other Queenslanders, I enjoy a flutter on the pokies or at the races. I come from a family of people for whom a bit of gambling was a great social outlet. In the 1930s my mother used to run for her brothers to the local SP bookies—long before there were TABs in our communities.

A government member: Was that legal?

Mr Terry Sullivan: It might have been marginally legal.

Ms PHILLIPS: It probably was marginally legal in the country area in which she lived, yes. I enjoy visiting the clubs in my area. The Brothers Club in Thuringowa is very popular and a strong supporter of local sporting bodies and the community. The Thuringowa RSL is a new club struggling to establish itself for the numerous veterans who live in the area. The Thuringowa Bowls Club is also very popular, and on Monday we held a great bowls competition there between the parliamentary bowls team and its members and raised \$900 towards the Red Cross Accommodation Centre here in Townsville. I therefore have already experienced the very positive attributes that the clubs in my community can bring, and I commend this bill to the House.