



Speech by

**JO-ANN MILLER**

**MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA**

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Hansard 14 May 2002

**STATE HOUSING AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.41 p.m.): I rise in support of the State Housing and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2002. This bill aims to implement recommendations arising from the national competition policy review on the State Housing Act 1945. The review quite rightly concluded that the Housing Commission's exemption from the payment of rates to local authorities should be removed in respect of home ownership programs of the commission. Home buyers who use instalment schemes to purchase a commission dwelling will be brought into line with other buyers. They will have to pay rates to the Ipswich City Council. In the case where rates remain unpaid for the usual qualifying period of three years, the Ipswich City Council can sell the property to recover the rate arrears. The bill also contains provisions to empower the Housing Commission to offer loans to residential service industry operators for the purposes of undertaking repairs and improvements to meet the standards outlined in the Residential Services (Accreditation) Bill 2002 debated last week in this House. This is a very important provision relating to the registration and accreditation standards of that bill.

In my electorate of Bundamba we have seen a big change in public housing. Many years ago Riverview was in a shocking state, with houses vandalised, with the community living in fear and people on public housing waiting lists deliberately choosing not to live in Riverview because of its reputation. Now Riverview is a preferred listing for public housing tenants and is indeed the Cinderella of public housing in this state. The Urban Renewal Program—under which the houses are updated, where new kitchens, bathrooms and laundries are built, where carports, pergolas and decks are built, where fences are built, where the colours are spruced up with exciting colours—has made a great world of difference to the Riverview community.

**Mrs Carryn Sullivan:** And all under a Labor government.

**Mrs MILLER:** That is right; all under a Labor government. In Sean Street and other streets on the northern side of Riverview the department has sold a number of houses to young families, and I know that they are very grateful for the opportunity of home ownership—something that was simply a dream for these families only a few years ago. In fact, only yesterday I was driving around Sean Street and can assure members that it is a hub of activity, with carpenters, painters and apprentices all working hard on our houses. For those homes that have been slow in selling, following my representations the minister is considering returning them to rental stock to lower the waiting lists in the area. Maggie Hodges, who is a matriarch of Riverview, is the chief sales agent and does an excellent job on behalf of the Riverview community and on behalf of her company. In Goodna the urban renewal scheme is going full steam ahead and all the residents of Goodna are very pleased with the results. The residents of Gailles are looking forward to the program in their area as well. The Urban Renewal Program has made a big difference to our suburbs, and the minister and his department should be congratulated for their efforts.

The Community Renewal Program is an absolute godsend in my electorate. Thanks to Judy Higgins, Jane McTaggart and the officers of the community renewal team. All of these public servants do a fantastic job and one for which I am personally grateful to them. Community members on the community reference groups are very dedicated to their tasks. The newly elected chairperson in Riverview is Maggie Hodges and the secretary is Pastor Nick Bennett. The newly elected chairperson in Goodna is Debbie Bell and the secretary is Ray Luthold. They are pillars of our community and should be congratulated for taking on these important leadership roles.

There are literally hundreds of Housing Department dwellings in my electorate. The people who live in these houses are good, decent people simply trying to get on with their lives. Many are on pensions and low incomes who struggle day to day just to survive. They are the Bundamba battlers. As their local member, I am committed to helping them every step of their way in life, and so is this great Labor government. I thank the minister for this bill and his personal commitment to the people in my electorate, because only Labor governments care about them. I also thank the minister for his help on a particular issue I raised with him this morning. I hope that it can be resolved for the benefit of the community. I commend the bill to the House.