



Speech by

**CARRYN SULLIVAN**

**MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE**

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Hansard 14 May 2003

**COMMERCIAL AND CONSUMER TRIBUNAL BILL**

**Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN** (Pumicestone—ALP) (8.30 p.m.): I rise to support this bill, which was introduced into the House in April this year by the Minister for Tourism and Racing and Minister for Fair Trading, the Hon. Merri Rose. This bill implements the third stage of a review which was completed in 2001. This review identified certain reforms which recommended a three-phase reform process, which has been accepted by the government and which I will come back to shortly. The object of the bill is to establish a tribunal, namely, the Commercial and Consumer Tribunal, the CCT, which deals with the matters it is empowered to deal with under an empowering act, and also to have the CCT deal with matters in a way that will be fair, just, informal, cost-effective, swift and transparent, with an emphasis on an early resolution process such as mediation.

Mediation is a very useful tool. It can reduce the time and cost involved in conducting a formal hearing and can be a much more pleasant atmosphere for all parties involved. The CCT will combine the Queensland Building Tribunal, the QBT, the Retirement Villages Tribunal, the RVT, the Property Agents and Motor Dealers Tribunal, the PAMDT, and the Liquor Appeals Tribunal, the LAT, within the minister's portfolio, as well as hearing matters from other ministerial portfolios.

For the first time the new CCT will deal with issues from other jurisdictions, for example, architects, engineers, plumbers and drainers, building certifiers and residential services accreditation. The three-phase reform which I mentioned earlier will achieve cost savings, efficiency gains and service delivery improvements for clients of the Department of Tourism, Racing and Fair Trading. This is good news for Queenslanders.

Phase 1, which has been finalised, will centralise the registry services and rationalise the accommodation for the tribunals within that portfolio. Phase 2 combines the positions of chairperson of three of its tribunals and establishes a role for a judicial registrar. Phase 3 is the establishment of a legal framework for a combined tribunal.

Part of this reform will make the process more simplified and more accessible, will review administrative decision making, resolve disputes, and conduct disciplinary cases involving breaches of legislation by licensees under several acts. I am pleased to read in the explanatory notes that broad consultation was undertaken.

**Ms Keech:** It is very important.

**Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN:** It is very important, and I am grateful that the staff have done that.

I noted that general support was received from consumer stakeholders, government and commercial, including LAT stakeholders. There was also legal advice given at a number of face-to-face scheduled meetings where a number of specified issues were dealt with.

In conclusion, as the minister has outlined, a number of miscellaneous amendments are included that have the effect of giving power to the CCT to hear the various issues from each jurisdiction. The bill also repeals the Queensland Building Tribunal Act 2000. I congratulate the minister and her staff on seeing their way clear to provide Queenslanders with an accessible, informal tribunal that will conduct itself equitably and ensure consumers and industry have access to efficient and effective redress in a sensitive and non-intimidating environment. I commend the bill to the House.