



Speech by

CARRYN SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE



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EDUCATION [GENERAL PROVISIONS] AMENDMENT BILL

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.43 p.m.): I rise to support the Education (General Provisions) Amendment Bill 2003. In doing so I would like to thank the schools in my electorate, the principals, the teaching staff and the parent groups for their cooperation in forming a good working relationship with me—not just in my role as the state member but also over the many years that I have been the honorary president of the drug prevention program, the Caboolture Drug Awareness Team, in which I provide a drug prevention program to the children of primary schools in the area.

Ms Nelson-Carr: That's fantastic.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: Thank you. They all support it as well. They think that it is great.

Regular invitations to the schools have allowed me to keep in touch with education issues. I congratulate the schools for their assistance. I have spoken to a number of staff who are happy with the proposed changes that the bill introduces, particularly the fact that the powers of the school principals will be greater in carrying out their day-to-day management of the schools and ensuring that they are the safest, most secure learning environments and workplaces that our community warrants and deserves.

This bill refers to all schools, both state and non-state, and acknowledges that schools hold a special place in our communities and that disruptive, violent or threatening incursions into them will not be accepted. The media have reported a few nasty incidents in some schools throughout the state, but as the member for Cunningham has just said, schools are easily accessible and they are very open. That is a good thing. We cannot put razor wire up and we cannot lock the children in while they are learning.

Ms Nelson-Carr: Nor should we.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: That is right. Therefore, we have to look at other ways of managing any difficult situations that may arise. This bill sends a clear and concise message that violent and threatening behaviour will not be tolerated and that intruders will be subject to harsh penalties if they enter a school to threaten or assault staff or students.

Whilst on the topic of schools, I want to draw to the attention of the House an issue that has arisen in relation to a parcel of land in the Pebble Beach estate that was earmarked as a school site. It was earmarked not by the state government or Catholic Education, but simply by the developer. Initially, as shown in a previous Refidex, there were two sites for schools, one showing a state and one showing a Catholic site, but they were never zoned.

Last year, after several complaints from residents, I contacted the developer and suggested that we might meet to discuss a flyer that had been circulated by one of his on-site real estate agents which read, 'Schools would be open in 2003.' I pointed out that this was totally false and misleading and that it should be withdrawn, any future reference to schools in the Pebble Beach estate area should be withdrawn and that he should place an apology in the local newspaper as soon as possible, putting out the correct information.

Ms Nelson-Carr: Did he do that?

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: To his credit, he did just that. However, what I do not know is how long the withdrawal to the reference to schools lasted. Evidence of the continued use of the state

school site is mounting. In past Refidexes, school sites are clearly marked but never authorised by the state education department or Catholic Education, and now I am in possession of many statutory declarations signed by Pebble Beach estate residents saying that the reason that they moved to the estate was that they were told a school would be built on that marked site. I have photos that actually show a sign that says 'school site'.

This week I tabled a petition with 516 signatures requesting consideration be given to acquiring the site for a future school. Unfortunately for the existing residents, there is now a development application on this site to place a retirement village there. I put on record my strong support for a school to be built on this site at the Pebble Beach estate at Sandstone Point. Of course, so do the many residents who live there. Whilst current student numbers in this area and the availability of capacity in the Bribie Island schools may not justify a new school, it is a fast growing area of homes with little in the way of services and facilities. Land is also in high demand and, at Sandstone Point, land is being sold off the plan and the council recently gave interim approval to a 580 residential lot development at Ningi, which is only a couple of minutes west of the Pebble Beach estate.

Apart from the rapid pace of development, the population demographics appear to be changing, with more young families moving into the area. This combination will place pressure on existing school facilities. The use of the school site for a retirement village or other style of development will most likely proceed unless the state government can somehow persuade the developer to reserve the site for a school. I would be happy to represent the residents and help mediate a meeting between the developer and the government.

The rapid development currently taking place will consume other land that may be suitable for a school site. The fact that the developer nominated and advertised a school site as a selling point provides an opportunity to hold him to his commitment to facilitate the development of adequate services for Pebble Beach estate residents. The residents would like to see the developer be accountable and they have sought my help and the help of the state government, either through the Department of Education and/or Fair Trading, for that to happen.