



Speech by

Mr D. BRISKEY

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

Hansard 30 October 2003

TAB QUEENSLAND LIMITED PRIVATISATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr BRISKEY (Cleveland—ALP) (3.41 p.m.): Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to speak in support of this bill, but before I do I would like to seek your indulgence to say a few words about a wonderful man whom I had the great honour to know for a short time.

Darryl Bell passed away last Sunday. His funeral was held this morning. Darryl was the principal at Birkdale State School until about three years ago. He was a bloke who loved his footy, loved his cricket and loved his fishing. Most of all, he loved teaching. He was a teacher and principal at many schools around Queensland. He loved it not for the job but for the children. It was for that reason that he kept on teaching even after he became ill quite a few years ago. It was not just a job for him.

Darryl touched the lives of thousands of children around the state. He delighted in their achievements. Every time I went to the school I would hear him talk about the children, whether they had achieved academically, culturally or in a sporting event. He talked with real love for them. His real skill was working with the children who could only be described as recalcitrants. He would often turn these children around and create better lives for them. I have the fondest memories of Darryl at the school fetes. He would delight in spending hours building haunted houses and then stand there and watch the children go through them and have such fun.

As I said at the outset, I was honoured to know Darryl. He cared about his students. He cared about his friends and, most importantly, he cared about and loved his family dearly. My sympathies and that of my family go to his wife Lyn and his children Brad, Drew and Kelsie. Darryl, you will not be forgotten.

As the Premier has already said, this is a short bill, but I trust it is a sweet bill for Queensland! The merger between UNiTAB Limited, the former Queensland TAB, and TAB Limited—the New South Wales TAB—is being made by request of the organisations involved.

As the Premier has previously outlined, the objective of this bill is simply to remove obstacles to create this merger. The two organisations and their shareholders will be making decisions on how the merger runs based on their own commercial judgment. I believe the most important point to note in the introduction of this legislation is the fact that UNiTAB is, and will remain, a Queenslander—just like Wally Lewis and just like the Big Pineapple.

The new UNiTAB will be headquartered in Queensland and will emerge as the second largest listed company in this state. The merged entity will result in investment dividends for Queensland while the new organisation expands its existing agencies and networks. Most importantly, UNiTAB assures the Queensland government that job numbers will remain the same for the next three years. It will also create the biggest wagering operation in this state.

I think the Minister for Racing, Merri Rose, will join me in recognising that this merger will result not only in direct benefits for the state's racing industry but also—very importantly—the potential for an additional \$10 million by the third year for the Queensland racing industry. The new entity will generate a greater turnover with the size of the pools it will attract. This means that Queensland's racing industry will have the opportunity to further strengthen its position as a major contributor to the state's economy and a major contributor to the leisure and entertainment sectors. Even more importantly, it will generate an additional \$5 million per annum in state

taxes—taxes which can be invested in essential services for all Queenslanders. This is good news all round.

As has already been noted, this is a significant bill for Queensland in its effects on the future of wagering and the racing industry in this state. These amendments, though mainly technical, are very important to pave the way for this commercial merger to occur and for the greater benefit of Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.