



Speech by

DESLEY BOYLE

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

Hansard 4 June 2003

GAMING MACHINE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (9.10 p.m.): I am pleased indeed to support the Gaming Machine and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2003 and to pay my compliments to the Treasurer. This bill very much reflects the style of the present Treasurer in the Beattie government.

In May 2001 Treasurer Terry Mackenroth announced a statewide cap on the total number of gaming machines in hotels. Not long after that, he announced that he would consider a scheme for reallocating gaming machines within the cap and that he would do that in consultation with the hotel industry. Since that time, and with the assistance of the Department of the Treasury and the Office of Gaming Regulation in particular, he has painstakingly and steadily developed what I believe to be an absolutely sensible and reasonable scheme, which forms the basis of the bill before us tonight.

Today I have paid my compliments to three Labor treasurers of Queensland. This morning I attended a breakfast where the Premier and the Treasurer were presenting the budget to businesspeople from Brisbane, and I was pleased to see former Treasurer David Hamill. I can report to honourable members of the House that the former Treasurer is looking well indeed and not at all regretting his retirement from politics. I am minded to recall that he started the review of gaming in Queensland in the previous term of the Beattie government. He had asked the member for Cleveland, the member for Algester and my good self to review gaming in Queensland because it had, consequent on actions of the now opposition but for a brief period the government, got out of hand. That was when I discovered that we had enough gaming machines in Queensland. I am pleased to say that the review itself was supported by then Treasurer Hamill and has been, in very detailed and practical ways, followed through on by Treasurer Mackenroth.

As it happens, I am able to inform honourable members that former Treasurer Keith De Lacy, a former member for Cairns, is present in the gallery tonight. Honourable members would be well aware that it is some five years since he retired. He has gone on contributing to the business life of Queensland and has also developed his skills as an author, writing a very fine book titled *Blood Stains the Wattle*. I recommend that book to all honourable members if they have not already enjoyed it.

During the introduction of gaming machines to Queensland, I recall how difficult it was for Keith De Lacy to find a sensible way to recommend to the Goss government to move forward. What we are doing tonight is a consequence of the cap on gaming machines. We are putting in place some way for the gaming machines that are surplus to the requirements of any particular hotel to be redistributed. The mechanism that we are using is reasonable and well considered in terms of the geography of Queensland, establishing three different regions within Queensland. It is important to recognise that this redistribution of gaming machines only concerns category 1 licensees, which of course are primarily hotels.

Managing this involves the creation of authorities whereby only one authority will be allocated by the Queensland Office of Gaming Regulation for each approved gaming machine. Trading will only be permitted within each region. Government quite properly will oversight the sale process and sales will occur via a tender. Of course, the scheme requires that a commission will be paid to the government as part of the sale of each authority through the tender process.

In Cairns, people who enjoy gaming machines as a recreation and those who do not all approve of government taking a cut of the proceedings. As the member for Logan expressed clearly, they enjoy

the tremendous benefits that have accrued to community groups through the taxation, as it were, of gaming machines.

It is important to recognise that the scheme that we are introducing tonight places restrictions on the number of authorities sites may trade each year. The sites will be able to make only one sale in every 12-month period. Finally, and importantly, we are instituting special arrangements for any disagreements that occur. These special arrangements are what one would expect in the year 2003: they are suitable, non-confrontational dispute resolution processes. I commend the bill to the House.