



Speech by

DESLEY BOYLE

MEMBER FOR CAIRNS

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SECOND-HAND DEALERS AND PAWNBROKERS BILL

Ms BOYLE (Cairns—ALP) (3.46 p.m.): I am pleased to support the Second-Hand Dealers and Pawnbrokers Bill 2003. As honourable members have already been informed, this bill arises out of the competition policy agreement requiring all state and territory governments to review and, where appropriate, reform all anticompetitive legislation. That is what we have done. We have taken the opportunity in the process to modernise three different acts. I do not particularly want to comment on the changes to the Funeral Benefit Business Act 1982, other than to say that I think it is timely that we update the funeral benefit business industry in general and ensure that practices are proper for modern times.

I did want to mention in particular the importance of second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers in a city like Cairns. They are not always regarded as people in mainstream industry. They are not always attended to by chamber of commerce style businesses or spoken about in terms of awards and innovations, yet they are very important businesses in a place like Cairns. Cairns has always been a place at the end of the line, as it were, where people would come, sometimes for a new life, sometimes escaping a past life and sometimes simply for a warmer and more relaxed lifestyle than they have had in southern cities. Whatever the reasons, often in the process of moving to Cairns there has been a need to suddenly establish a new household at quite a distance from cities like Sydney and Melbourne. You can understand that many of the people who move to Cairns do not bring much with them. They set up house once they get there and try it out, as it were. In the process, they will generally be purchasing some second-hand goods to get the house up and running and to establish their lifestyle.

Equally, there are a good number of people who exit Cairns every year. It is a place where teachers, nurses, doctors, policemen and others come and work for a couple of years and then, often in the context of promotions, move on. In so doing they do not take all of their goods with them; they go to second-hand dealers. So the second-hand market in particular has always been a vibrant market in Cairns.

Nonetheless, I was surprised to discover through this bill that there are some 2,500 second-hand dealers registered in the state of Queensland, 54 collectors and over 200 pawnbrokers. It is right and proper therefore that we not only make sure that their practices are not anticompetitive but also make sure that we bring in some provisions that are going to make the business that bit more accountable, particularly towards ensuring that there is not crime associated with the second-hand property market to help protect consumers from purchasing stolen property.

One of the benefits in the bill for those who are in this industry is that it offers the option of extending licensing periods from one to three years, and I have no doubt that all of the dealers in Cairns will be pleased about this. I am pleased to support this bill.