



Speech by

DON LIVINGSTONE

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST

Hansard 1 May 2003

SPORTS DRUG TESTING BILL

Mr LIVINGSTONE (Ipswich West—ALP) (3.38 pm): I rise in support of the Sports Drug Testing Bill 2003, and I commend the new initiatives which will extend the powers of the Australian Sports Drug Agency and keep our sporting fraternity free of performance enhancing drug use and doping practices. I would like to congratulate the minister and his staff on the work they have done in bringing this bill before us.

One of our greatest assets in this state is the reputation that our sportsmen and women have gained through high standards of integrity and fair play. The Ipswich area, for example, is quite famous for producing a long list of distinguished, top quality sportsmen and women who are household names throughout the country. I hesitate to name anyone at this time because I do not want any confusion to arise in linking their names to this Sports Drug Testing Bill. Suffice to say that their reputations and standards are of the highest level, and it is therefore extremely important that our young athletes understand these principles and work to maintain these high standards, especially in view of the personal challenges that they will need to face in an ever increasingly competitive world.

The Queensland government drug testing program has already established itself as one of the most rigorous drug testing initiatives in any state in Australia, and we should be very proud of this standard. The increased authority provided by this bill to the drug testing program through the services of the Australian Sports Drug Agency will allow for the testing of state level or Queensland government funded athletes in any sport and not only those who have volunteered themselves. This is a positive step in the campaign to keep our sports drug free. Not only will it equalise sporting opportunities; it will also provide the means to educate our athletes on the risks to their health and reputation in trying to achieve success through unfair advantages. This is not the Queensland or the Australian way. We are proud of our athletes and our sporting achievements and I welcome the protection and security of this bill. I commend the bill to the House.