



Speech by

LEX BELL, MP

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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INDY CAR GRAND PRIX AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr BELL (Surfers Paradise—Ind) (3.07 p.m.): When the Gold Coast Indy Car Grand Prix Act was brought in in 1990, it was brought in in a terrible rush, perhaps something appropriate for the subject. I remember being told that I had two days in which to digest the act and to make appropriate comments. I think it is fair to say that the act itself has borne the test of time fairly well, but equally it was reasonable that there would be some tweaking necessary after the act had been in force for some years.

Believe it or not, there is still considerable opposition to the holding of the Indy grand prix on the Gold Coast and it does seem as if quite a large number of those people opposed live within the electorate of Surfers Paradise. That is not unreasonable because that is where the track is. People who were residing in their present homes before the first Indy race have every reason to complain that a very noisy and disruptive event was imposed upon them without their approval. Those strong and very real and sincere objections to the Indy race are gradually diminishing with time as some people who hold objections advance to a better world and others sell their properties to people who come knowing that the Indy race will be held on that circuit each year.

However, I do believe that this bill does miss an opportunity. A few years ago when studying the subject of tourism law at Bond University I did a thesis on the basis of a compensation program for people who were seriously inconvenienced or harmed by the Indy race. It is akin to the compensation program at Sydney airport where travellers pay an extra \$1 or \$2 per ticket into a fund and those people who are assessed as being greatly damnified have the ability to make a claim on that common fund for compensation. I would have liked to have seen something in this amending bill today to address that problem, because that would have made the Indy race very much more acceptable to the people in the electorate which I represent. Nonetheless, it must be said that the majority of people on the Gold Coast, according to all of the surveys that have been carried out, do favour the continuation of the Indy race. Certainly, it is a great time on the Gold Coast for those who do not live within the precinct.

There are a few things contained in the bill that possibly would be better commented upon at the committee stage, but I would have thought that clause 28 relating to occupants' passes might have taken the opportunity of saying that there would be no charge for the pass. There can be conditions imposed. One might be able to argue that a condition could be a fee. That would be totally unacceptable. I looked in vain for some definition of 'place of business'. Perhaps that is in the principal act. Certainly, people who occupy residences or have a place of business are entitled to an occupant's pass. Certain things are unsure in my mind—for example, if someone owns two apartments can he say that that is his place of business and demand an occupant's pass?

I am also a little concerned with clause 33 relating to the non-placement of posters and advertising signs. In principle it is quite acceptable. I am a bit worried that it does not say that those signs already there are accepted and there could be some potential argument as to the wording in the clause at the moment. Equally, existing businesses may wish to put up additional signage. One would have thought that perhaps that might have been accepted. I believe that clause 39 and the following clauses relating to authorised persons do take the law of Queensland or perhaps the practice a little further than might be the case by enabling, I presume, security officers to have certain quasi police powers. I do know that certain officers employed by, say, universities do have limited policing powers.

I could see that authorised persons, apart from the police, would be security officers or people of that ilk. I find it to be quite interesting. I am not opposed to the concept, but I find it quite interesting. Perhaps that could be used as a parallel in other cases where shopping centres are seeking to have private policing or mall committees might be seeking to have certain powers for some of their authorised officers. I find that to be interesting. As I said, I do not really oppose it but it is something that we can use in other circumstances as well. All in all, I certainly have no opposition to this bill. I will certainly be supporting it.