



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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TAB QUEENSLAND LIMITED PRIVATISATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (11.41 a.m.): I am pleased to rise to support the TAB Queensland Limited Privatisation Legislation Amendment Bill. This is a bill that makes sense. The changes that are being made to the nature of the bill are ones that have come about as a matter of necessity due to the history of relations between the main TAB bodies in Australia.

I found it interesting that in the Premier's second reading speech he spoke of the consultation that occurred between his department and UNiTAB. I found it interesting because it has not been clear, particularly on matters pertaining to racing, that the government is prepared to negotiate at all. In fact, in relation to the debacle that has occurred with the future of Eagle Farm and Doomben, consultation with relevant stakeholders like trainers and owners was minimal. Some of the major problems of these turf clubs relate to training and stabling facilities, yet this government found no need to discuss any possible moves with the trainers at Eagle Farm and Doomben or other members of the racing fraternity. These trainers make up a massive proportion of trainers of horses that run in Brisbane.

We are talking about UNiTAB, and in doing so perhaps we should talk about the millions and millions of dollars that the state government receives from betting taxes. Whilst I was very pleased to see the government back down from its idea of moving out to Wacol, I was not entirely impressed with the proposal. Whilst \$12 million, as was pledged yesterday, is a better result than we could have expected at the start of the day, it was by no means enough for the complete overhaul being mooted.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member was not here at the beginning of this debate. I have said that I will not allow a general debate on racing in this amendment bill. I would like to advise the member of that. That was supported by the Clerk.

Mr LANGBROEK: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I talk guidance from that. I am talking about a viable UNiTAB. I will make a few more comments that are relevant, I would hope, and I stand to be corrected if I am wrong.

On UNiTAB, and the possibility of expanding and other opportunities, I encourage the Premier to continue to look for ways to expand UNiTAB. Although the chance to merge with our New South Wales counterparts during the last year has gone, I hope that these amendments do not signal an intention by the government to bury the idea of expanding UNiTAB. I commend the bill to the House.