



Speech by

Liz Cunningham

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Hansard Wednesday, 29 September 2004

PETROLEUM, GAS AND OTHER LEGISLATION BILLS

Mrs LIZ CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (11.38 a.m.): I rise to speak in this cognate debate to raise a couple of issues that are of concern in my electorate. There has been a fair amount of comment in relation to gas conversion at Queensland Alumina in the current election campaign. Queensland Alumina have put on record that it is not interested in getting involved in politics in the run-up to an election, but it is my understanding that it has certainly not stepped back from its goal in terms of gas firing. Many projects in relation to gas may be assisted by this bill, in particular the PNG gas pipeline. There has been talk about many of the projects in my electorate converting to gas as a cleaner energy fuel and, indeed, one of the new projects that was looking to start up as a gas-fired project had to convert to coal because the PNG gas pipeline had not gone ahead. I believe the proponents are still very keen to see the PNG gas line project proceed, but they are seeking a sound customer base.

For many people, access to cleaner fuel sources is something that they wish to see attained by as many industries as possible. In my electorate we have a lot of problems in relation to fine coal dust that enters people's homes. Irrespective of how astute they are in terms of trying to keep the house clean, the dust gets in. As a community we are certainly supportive of finding better fuel sources for heavy industry.

The second reading speech on the Petroleum and Other Legislation Amendment Bill states that to implement the Beattie government's coal seam gas regime some changes and restrictions have had to be introduced, including the restriction on the grant of a petroleum lease under section 40 of the Petroleum Act 1923 where an authority to prospect overlaps a coal or oil shale mining tenement. From the minister's perspective, will that element of the legislation have any effect on the shale oil project up my way? There are still a lot of problems with the plant itself as QERL is now winding down for mothballing. It is still causing a lot of problems for residents. I received a letter this morning from a resident in Targinie who said that their health was impacted on because of the acrid emissions from the site yesterday. I would be interested to know whether this legislation will have an immediate or short-term impact on the oil shale reserves in my area.

It also states that this legislation will result in native title having to be addressed where the area of overlap is non-exclusive possession land. I would be interested in the minister's comments in relation to the amount of delay that would be expected for that process to be finalised. That is not a criticism of the process, but I am interested in how long a proponent of any type and in any geographical area may have to face if the native title process has to be overlaid onto the other processes in relation to the granting of a lease. I look forward to the minister's response to those issues.