



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (11.41 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Local Government and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2005. From the outset I say that I support this bill. The area of the bill that I would like to concentrate on is the section that deals with providing local governments with the discretion to declare special entertainment precincts within their local government areas.

The legislation will allow local government to declare these special entertainment precincts under their local laws and by amending their planning scheme prepared under the Integrated Planning Act 1997, IPA. I note that special reference was made by the minister in her second-reading speech to Fortitude Valley in Brisbane. I would assert that Surfers Paradise would be the other obvious place where such a special entertainment precinct would, could and possibly should be constituted.

As the member for Surfers Paradise I represent undoubtedly our state's greatest nightspot. I share the minister's view that we need to foster our live music industry and venues such as the Surfers Paradise Beer Garden and the Trocadero, which have had some great live rock bands this year, to provide entertainment for music lovers.

It is important, though, that we balance the needs of residents of places like Surfers Paradise who love their locality and want to continue living there with the needs of our young and young at heart who want to party and see their favourite bands. My one concern is that with an area like Surfers Paradise—an area where there is a large influx of new residents on a regular basis—new people moving into the area will almost definitely be unaware of any special arrangements the Gold Coast council might make in the future with regard to naming Surfers Paradise a special entertainment precinct. It is vital that, in passing this legislation, the minister recognises the importance of reminding local governments of their duty to keep members of their local communities aware of any special arrangements they make with regard to special entertainment precincts.

As well, I note the concerns of the shadow minister for local government about local government being given the responsibility for monitoring these special entertainment precincts. I note—having received the same correspondence from the LGAQ that many other members have received—the LGAQ's concerns about fluoride and asbestos and its feeling that the state government is passing on the responsibility but no funding for the increased responsibilities. I hope that its feelings about fluoride and asbestos will not compromise its position on this issue.

I urge the minister to address the issue of whether local government is happy to be given this responsibility instead of Liquor Licensing being given it. I share the concerns of the member for Gregory, who last night expressed his memories of Liquor Licensing, which was brought in by Bob Gibbs, having difficulty applying provisions in all jurisdictions because of different interpretations. I am concerned that down the track we may have residents in certain areas saying that, under new section 956G, the effect of establishing a special entertainment precinct is that noise from amplified music played in licensed premises in the precinct's core area is regulated by local law instead of the Liquor Act. Liquor Licensing was obviously able to apply things that it had learnt over the years to all jurisdictions.

I am concerned that we may have residents in certain areas saying that local laws are not being enforced because different areas may say, 'We do not enforce these laws in exactly the same way.' That would obviously lead to frustration. I look forward to the minister's response on that. I commend the bill to the House.