



Speech by

Peter Wellington

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard Tuesday, 14 February 2006

NURSING REGISTRATION; ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—Ind) (12.14 pm): The state of Queensland's health services is a matter that is important to many Queenslanders. That level of importance was certainly demonstrated during question time this morning. Although many people have aired their views on the practice of the doctor's registration board, I want to take this opportunity to share with members the recent dealings that one of my constituents had with the Queensland Nursing Council. I do not intend to identify the person involved, but I am happy to provide particulars to the Minister for Health or his senior department staff if they are interested in following up this matter. The letter I received from my constituent states—

I wish to bring to your attention my dilemma as an experienced Registered Nurse from England. I moved to Flaxton in August last year on a nursing visa with my husband and 2 children and we were given permanent visas. Due to settling the children into their new life and renovating our farm I applied for nursing registration for Queensland at the beginning of November, assuming I would have my registration by the end of December. However, I am still waiting for the Queensland Nursing Council to process my application and in the meantime, have been offered 2 part-time positions as a Practice Nurse which I am unable to take up.

This letter is dated 13 February. The letter states further—

(I will mention my application was returned to me 3 weeks ago because I had used white out on one word—which was at their request.)

I find this situation incredible when Queensland is known for its chronic shortage of experienced Registered Nurses. Add the fact my nursing qualifications and training were thoroughly scrutinized by the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council prior to gaining my nursing visa then it borders on the ridiculous.

I am now ringing the Queensland Nursing council on a weekly basis in which they refuse to give me any information on when I will gain registration. My potential Practice Managers have also emailed them to no avail. I find this situation unacceptable when I am willing and able to work. I would be so grateful if you could help me in this matter.

Best regard.

After discussing my constituent's predicament with my colleague, the Independent member for Nanango, she advised me that she also had a constituent in a similar situation whose registration is still not resolved satisfactorily.

The other matter I wish to share with members is the state environment department's decision to remove long-established campers rubbish collection facilities from some forest camping grounds in my electorate. This was done without appropriate or apparent notice to the local council or the local community and created a situation during the peak Christmas-new year period where the Kenilworth township experienced an overflow of rubbish discarded inappropriately in public and private bins by frustrated campers. I understand that the situation led to the Kenilworth local rubbish transfer station having to be opened just so that the refuse could be disposed of safely.

I mention today this unpleasant incident because I believe that the situation could have been alleviated if the state government management staff involved in this decision to remove the long-established rubbish collection facilities had, before making that decision, contacted the local council and informed them of their pending decision. We in the hinterland of the Maroochy shire in the electorate of Nicklin are proud of our camping facilities. I take this opportunity to urge all ministers and senior public servants who are paid to act in management positions to consult other members of the community who may be impacted by their decisions.

I do not believe that a complaint of this type should have to be made to the minister for the environment. I am aware that in January the Kenilworth Chamber of Commerce wrote to the minister for the environment, Desley Boyle, echoing their complaints and their concerns. Why did they have to do that? Because it appears to me that the local management staff in the department were not prepared to inform the local council and were not prepared to consult the local community and inform them of their pending decision. Surely, if the government is prepared to pay people to act in senior management positions and make these sorts of decisions, then those senior management personnel have a responsibility to be answerable for their decisions. I hope that, as a gesture of goodwill, the minister will respond appropriately to the chamber of commerce and the Maroochy Shire Council and make a token offer of financial reimbursement to the council for the cost and inconvenience that was incurred by the council simply because a senior department staffer was not prepared to contact the local council and the local community and inform them of the possible implications of their decision.

Time expired.