



Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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TRANSPORT OPERATIONS (ROAD USE MANAGEMENT—GREEN VEHICLES CONCESSION) AMENDMENT BILL

Miss SIMPSON (Maroochydore—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (8.25 pm): It is with pleasure that I rise to speak to this legislation. This is a positive bill. This is policy that is about pointing us to a better future. This bill is in recognition that petrol fuel-guzzling cars really have a limited life span. This bill is in recognition that the new technologies which are on the market and others that are still to come to the market are ones that are going to totally change the way that people are transported. We know that there is a need for better public transport, but there will continue to be a need for vehicles—vehicles which are able to take people throughout city areas and throughout rural and regional areas—into the future; individual vehicles which are appropriately fuelled with alternative fuels.

I commend the shadow minister for the initiative in bringing this legislation before the House. It appears from the negative comments, the constant interjections and the rude comments from Labor members on the opposite side that they have no intention of supporting this legislation. I think it is a great shame that when the state National-Liberal coalition brings positive policies forward to the parliament, almost without exception the Labor Party says that it will vote against it. With regard to this negativity to good ideas, it obviously feels that it should never, ever accept the fact that good ideas can come from outside its own domain. It would be a positive step if it decided to follow this legislation—the Transport Operations (Road Use Management—Green Vehicles Concession) Amendment Bill—because this is really about promoting those technologies that some of my colleagues have outlined earlier.

Green vehicles are not only hybrid vehicles; they are also electric vehicles or, to quote from the legislation—

green vehicle means an electric vehicle or a petroleum electric hybrid vehicle.

petroleum electric hybrid vehicle means a vehicle that uses an on-board rechargeable energy storage system and a petroleum power source for propulsion.

This is about vehicles which use up to 50 per cent less fuel than conventionally powered vehicles and which significantly cut exhaust pollution—so significantly that it is 80 per cent compared to conventional technologies. This legislation is not something that will put a hole in the state government's budget. In real terms it is a fairly small amount. But it is also an opportunity for government to lead the way by providing concessions on registration and saying that it is willing to support these alternative technologies. It is about giving more than lip-service; it is about government actually showing that it does support these alternative technologies by way of taxation concessions—in this case, with registration concessions. The coalition does have a positive policy with regard to concessions for green vehicles.

But the coalition also has an existing policy to encourage the use of economically sustainable and environmentally friendly fuels. As the members of this House should know, the coalition has long advocated for the ethanol industry. The coalition has long advocated for alternative fuel sources—clean and environmentally friendly fuel sources—such as ethanol. Yet it seems from what I have seen in this

House that the members opposite think that ethanol is something that you drink rather than something that you put in your car, but we certainly want to—

Opposition members interjected.

Miss SIMPSON: Certainly from the interjections that we have heard from the other side so far. We want to continue to promote these environmentally and economically sustainable alternative fuels.

This legislation comes in addition to legislation that we have introduced into this parliament before, but without exception the Labor Party has voted against them. That is most unfortunate. I commend this legislation. I commend the initiative of Rosemary Menkens, the member for Burdekin and our shadow minister in this area. The future is about new technology but it is also about supporting those technologies that are already on the market—that are viable but need the leadership of the government to speak to the community about the uptake of them. Ultimately, when we look at the government fleet, there certainly has not been leadership in regard to the use of environmentally sustainable vehicles.