



Speech by  
**Gary Fenlon**

**MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES**

Hansard Wednesday, 10 October 2007

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL**

**Mr FENLON** (Greenslopes—ALP) (12.25 pm): It is a pleasure to rise to speak in support of the Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2007 as it relates to litter enforcement. It is an amazing indictment on our society that it would appear that our society is made up of two classes of people—people who drop litter and people who pick up litter. I am not talking about authorised people or people who are paid to pick up litter. I pay tribute to the people who pick up litter in our parks and public places on their daily walks. They are simply picking up after people who can only be described as pigs and who deposit litter around our wonderful environment in Queensland. I pay tribute not only to those people who do that on their daily walks but also those in the many organised groups, especially those in my electorate, who do it on Clean Up Australia Day. I have had great pleasure in going out with those people. They clean up our parks. It is amazing the volume of debris that is left out in local environments that needs to be cleaned up on those occasions.

This is a very important piece of legislation. It is sad that we have to go this far. This area of activity should fall into the many areas of activity in our society that are governed by a behavioural imperative. I hope we can see major changes in this area as we have in the area of drink driving, albeit the incidents may still be too high. It is an area where behaviour should be the governing force. We should not have to be legislating to try to force people into correct behaviour.

This is an important piece of legislation that simply gives impetus to what should be good behaviour. Without traversing the ground that previous members have in terms of the specifics of the bill I shall allude to one element which the minister may wish to comment on. I congratulate the minister on his appointment. I am sure he will do a fine job in this important portfolio. There is an area that he might wish to comment on.

I note that the legislation specifically refers to littering on land and that there might be some grey area in relation to littering on our foreshores. There is a problem with regard to recreational boat users depositing rubbish on or around our foreshores, either into the water in Moreton Bay, for example, or on the beaches in those environs. However, we often see people with community spirit come along the next day to pick up that rubbish, and I commend those people for that. I hope this issue is adequately covered in this important piece of legislation, because the areas where that rubbish is deposited creates a further hazard to our marine life with regard to the plastics and bottles et cetera. That is an important area that should be covered in the future. With those comments, I commend the bill to the House.