



Speech by

## Peta-Kaye Croft

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

Hansard Wednesday, 14 March 2007

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### SECURITY PROVIDERS AMENDMENT BILL

**Ms CROFT** (Broadwater—ALP) (5.05 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak in support of the Security Providers Amendment Bill. I have been looking forward to these changes coming to the House because of a very sad experience that I had to endure when I was 21—which everyone will agree was not that long ago. I am pleased that the minister has been able to introduce these changes to the House today.

I was very good friends with a young man who was victimised by a nightclub bouncer. He was taken out the back of one of the clubs that we were at one night and was beaten until his teeth were broken. Because we could not find him we made the assumption that he must have gone home ahead of us and so we all went home. The next morning we found out what had happened. Most people would assume that bouncers have the training and professionalism to deal with young people who are intoxicated in a way that reduces the risk of harm to anyone. On this occasion that did not happen and my very good friend ended up with his teeth broken; his whole face was unrecognisable. The personal cost of this unnecessary incident included not only the pain of the injury and the embarrassment my friend had to face at not being able to go to work but also the thousands of dollars in dental costs to his family to reconstruct his whole mouth.

On this occasion the bouncer was on a working holiday from England. Further scrutiny of people who are applying for licences will minimise the risk of this kind of thing ever happening again. Recently there was another incident on the Gold Coast. Rising Sydney surf star Sam Page was on the Gold Coast for a holiday and was the victim of a bashing by a security bouncer. He ended up in hospital. His parents had to go through the same ordeal that my very good friend's family had to go through. It is no surprise that this incident ended up in every single newspaper from the Gold Coast to Sydney and Melbourne. From a Gold Coast tourism perspective, this is not the type of incident that we want to happen. We do not want it to happen to our local people or to visitors to the Gold Coast.

It has taken some time for the department to review the legislation, but there has been very good reason for that. The department has worked well with the Queensland Police Service. Not only did it have to establish a code of conduct; it also had to work out a training regime that will improve this industry. We all know that people of all ages look forward to enjoying a night out with their friends and family in an environment that ensures safety and where the risk of undesirable incidents is reduced.

I am pleased to see that the requirement for crowd controllers, security officers, private investigators and security firms to hold a licence in order to operate has been expanded to include dog handlers. This afternoon many members have mentioned a number of incidents involving dog handlers and the responsibilities they have. Many people have much trust in the work that they are doing. We are asking someone else to ensure our personal safety and security.

I am pleased that by expanding the definition of security providers the licensing requirements will now capture firms and providers that avoided those requirements. This is because the previous act had not included these people or the businesses had been defined in another way that was not covered by the act.

The probity checks of licensees has been tightened. There is now a better partnership with the Queensland Police Service and the department of fair trading in scrutinising applicants. I have mentioned

that the changes will occur to the training regime. I think that this is a very important part of this bill. A lot of constituents have spoken to me about needing to improve the training in this industry not only to improve the reputation of the industry but also to ensure the monitoring standards are kept for the industry.

The bill provides for an improved training regime that will see license holders required to obtain ongoing training to make sure that their skills are relevant and up to date. No changes will be beneficial to the community unless they are supported by adequate penalties and enforcements.

The bill proposes increased penalties for operating without a licence. I understand that the minister has worked very hard to ensure that these changes are complemented with significant increases in compliance measures. I would ask the minister to explain in her summary how the department will enforce the changes and if the industry stakeholders, such as unions and training providers, perhaps through the code of conduct, that will ensure compliance. I look forward to the minister's response on that issue.

These changes are needed to improve the reputation of the security industry, to ensure public confidence and trust in those people who work in the industry and to provide services in the industry. Increasingly, people are becoming more protective of their personal security and that of their families. People want to be sure that their privacy is kept with the greatest confidence, and that is guaranteed by the growing security industry. This has already been mentioned in the briefing paper supplied by the Parliamentary Library. It explains how the workers in the industry have increased and that people are now relying on the services offered by the security industry.

I hope that the code of conduct and changes introduced in this legislation reinforce to the industry that they have to uphold a certain standard. I also hold great hope that this legislation will go a long way to ensuring that we will never hear of the disturbing incidents of thuggery and violence that have unfortunately marred the industry reputation in recent times. I congratulate the minister and her department for the work that they have done. I commend the bill to the House.