



Speech by

Robert Messenger

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Hansard Tuesday, 4 September 2007

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr MESSENGER (Burnett—NPA) (6.27 pm): Along with my shadow minister and coalition colleagues I, too, wish to pledge my support for this legislation. I would like to acknowledge the good environmental work which is being carried out by different land care and environmental groups in the Burnett and also the big farming groups—the Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers and also Canefarmers. The farmers understand the need to be proactive and sensitive to environmental needs. Every schoolchild in the Burnett knows that if they throw those plastic bags away they are going to end up in the waterways and damage our beautiful marine life.

Might I take this opportunity to say how beautiful that marine life is in the Burnett. We have some iconic flora and fauna there. We have Mon Repos Beach, which is quite famous for its turtles. There are about 220 kilometres of coastline stretching from Woodgate through to the Town of 1770 and also further north to Turkey Beach. I guess we are at that point where we can go swimming all year round without encountering the stingers at 1770, although sometimes the irukandjis come down.

Of course, my electorate encompasses the very beginning of the Great Barrier Reef. So the people in my electorate are very sensitive to environmental considerations. Lots of tourists come to the district and, I am pleased to say, increasing numbers of tourists, too, because tourism is a very valuable industry. Tourists like to see a clean environment and the people in my electorate like to present a clean environment for those tourists.

I would like to add my support for a public reporting provision, which is omitted from this legislation. I would like the minister to consider a recent example from the Town of 1770 and Agnes Water where the council and her department were, I think, guilty of littering. A sewage truck used to pump out sewage from a marina. That truck used to come down the road, park and then dump raw sewage into a hole in the ground that was probably no more than 15 metres from the road. That happened for 10 years.

Ms Nelson-Carr: How long ago?

Mr MESSENGER: I will tell the minister about that a little bit later.