



Speech by

## Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Thursday, 13 March 2008

---

### VALUATION OF LAND AMENDMENT BILL

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (3.08 pm): This legislation is rushed, retrospective and has red flags hanging off it. When anything comes before the parliament in such an appalling way where there has not been prior consultation, real consultation with those who are most affected, where there has not been any consideration of the downstream impacts, we have to question not only the competence of the minister but also how this department and how this government as a whole are operating.

This legislation has been an absolute dog's breakfast. That it is now being guillotined and rushed through is only further indication that this minister and this government do not want a real examination of the implications of the legislation. And now, at the last minute, amendments have been dropped on the table of the House once again without adequate scrutiny and accountability to the broader public and broader industry. We know that there have been discussions with industry at the last minute. Industry was promised certain things. The government did not deliver on those commitments and so there is another revision of amendments. But still this legislation is on a short time frame. It is to be pushed through and rushed through in a way which raises the question: what else has the government missed?

The implications of land valuation are significant for a broad range of people. There are implications for the rates that an average householder pays. The government says that the wording of this legislation is all about particular types of commercial property—in this case major shopping centres. However, industry has said that the wording of the legislation sets a precedent that could be interpreted to be applied far more broadly. Why should we come into this place and listen to the government say, 'Trust us. We don't intend to really rip you off and apply this more broadly. Just trust us.' We do not intend to trust the government because those who have the legal expertise and understanding of how valuations operate say that this legislation does have far broader implications than just commercial properties and particularly shopping centres. We should listen to people in the industry who undertake valuations for a living. They have to be responsible as professionals for the valuations and the advice they give their clients. I wish there was the same level of responsibility at a ministerial level for the advice they give the public about the legislation they are presenting.

What we see with this legislation is a situation where the full implications are really unknown, other than what we have been told to date by industry. I have talked to industry and they have said that they were prepared to shut down their investment in Queensland. That will affect a lot of people—a lot of battlers who rely on their jobs and who rely on certainty and investment in their areas. Such investment ensures that there is ongoing supply of industrial land for other types of development and commercial property, and that gives surety of jobs and surety of investment in the Queensland economy.

This legislation has been handled so badly that it has evoked some of the strongest wording I have heard from some industry members who are usually fairly sedate in how they apply their language to legislative issues. They have been quite clear that if the legislation goes through in its current format—and they still have questions about the amendments—there is the potential that jobs will shut down and there will be a reduction of real investment and ultimately the delivery of timely commercial infrastructure in local communities.

On principle, when it comes to anything that is retrospective, anything that is rushed—amendments that we see slapped down on the table at the last minute without proper scrutiny—we have to say that it is dangerous and it has not had the scrutiny that this parliament and the Queensland people deserve. I certainly register my opposition to the appalling way this has been handled. If there are going to be alterations to the way valuation systems operate in Queensland, it should be done properly. It should not be done in an ad hoc way. It should not be done retrospectively because the government stuffed up in the way it handled a particular case in the courts as that has ramifications for the valuation system. The government should understand that these issues matter. They do impact the battlers who are supposedly in the backyards of the Labor members. I have battlers in my backyard who rely on government to make legislation. It affects the big end and the small end of town. We deserve better and so do those people.