



Speech by

Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Hansard Thursday, 20 May 2010

BUILDING AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (9.00 pm): I, too, rise to speak on the Building and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010. I would like to focus initially on the amendments to the Building Act 1975. I, too, understand that this is stage 2 of a legislative implementation process that began late last year and that it is in response to the review announced on 14 December 2008. These amendments will establish the pool inspector licensing system framework, create the Pool Safety Council, allow inspectors to conduct inspections and issue certificates, set up approval processes for inspector training courses and establish the state based swimming pool register.

As both of the speakers before me have said, the death of one child in a pool drowning is one death too many. If these amendments make that death less likely, they have my support. But I must comment briefly on the original review and ask on behalf of a constituent, Mr Harry Wrangle of Elimbah, why his individual submission was not even acknowledged? Harry is passionate about pool safety and believes that greater safety lies in pool gate design. I understand that Harry provided the swimming pool safety review committee with several design improvements. Unfortunately, his submission appears to have been neglected completely. In the interests of keeping our children safe around pools, I would ask that the government leaves no stone unturned when it comes to exploring all of the options, and I ask that it not be another 20 years before this legislation is reviewed again so that people like Harry can contribute their knowledge and skills.

This bill also makes amendments to the ULDA Act and the RNA Act, both of which the member for Gympie has commented on at some length in outlining the LNP's position.

Let me conclude by making brief comments on the amendments to the Building Act commonly referred to as the 'ban the banners' provisions. I am beginning to wonder if the Australian Labor Party should actually be renamed the 'Australian Backflippers Party'. It appears the Queensland division has been taking lessons from its federal counterpart and has begun backflipping of its own accord. Yet again we are amending legislation that, if the government had consulted on properly in the first place, would have been right the first time. I must confess that it was rather comical to hear in our opposition briefing the comment that these amendments bring the legislation closer to the original election commitment. It does make you wonder, as the shadow minister has noted, if the original legislation was more about appeasing the Greens and not about the ALP election platform, let alone the wishes of the broader electorate. Perhaps we will get there in the end.