



Speech by
Jon Krause

MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT

Hansard Tuesday, 27 November 2012

YOUTH JUSTICE (BOOT CAMP ORDERS) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr KRAUSE (Beaudesert—LNP) (11.36 pm): As the member representing the electorate in which the Gold Coast region boot camp trial will be held, I want to make a brief contribution to this debate. I thank all members for their great interest in the youth justice program. As the Attorney-General has said, a \$2 million investment over two years in youth diversion programs is a sound investment when we consider that it costs \$200,000 a year per youth offender to keep them in detention. If we keep 10 youths out of detention, that is a sound investment.

Some weeks ago the Attorney-General visited my electorate and met the people who were going to be running this diversion program. I thank him very much for coming down and seeing it firsthand and also for visiting other operators of similar programs who have been doing things like youth diversion programs—or boot camps, for want of a better name—for many years and with great degrees of success. I commend that part of the bill and look forward to the expansion of the program after the trial is completed. I am sure it will yield good results, and hopefully there can be further investment in that youth diversion program in the Beaudesert region as well.

The other part of this bill deals with introducing new exemptions into the Anti-Discrimination Act, particularly where it deals with accommodation used in connection with work as a sex worker. This exemption is in response to a decision that was made by the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. Motels are just one type of business or enterprise where proprietors should have the right to determine who they transact business with. The state should not be in the business of telling people who they can or cannot deal with, whether that be forcing people or banning people from joining unions or forcing people or banning people from shopping at a particular place or not dealing with a particular person. This provision certainly corrects the situation that came as a result of that decision of the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal. It reinstates that right to private businesses.

The other amendment in the bill introduces an exemption on the basis of citizenship or visa status in government policies. I presume that this amendment will allow the government to direct assistance of a financial nature primarily to Australian citizens or permanent residents of Australia. It is the government's responsibility to look after those people in the first place. Of course, citizens of other countries or newly arrived people need a pathway to citizenship, but our government programs in the ordinary course of business should be able to be targeted at Australian citizens or permanent residents so that we look after our society first and foremost.

I reflect on the billions of dollars that have been spent by the federal government in Canberra over the last few years due to its weak border control policies. Money spent building detention centres and housing people who have arrived on our shores illegally could have been better spent looking after those who cannot meet their weekly expenses. Those billions of dollars could have gone towards assisting those people whose pension increase or superannuation is being eaten up by carbon tax increases or other tax grabs by the federal government. Instead it has had to be directed to fixing up Labor's mess because of its weakness in dismantling John Howard's policy in relation to border protection. The point I am making is that the exemptions to the Anti-Discrimination Act introduced in this bill are sensible provisions and the bill itself is a good bill. I commend the bill to the House.