




Speech By
Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (4.32 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Transport and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2017. I thank the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee staff for their assistance with the inquiry and the professionalism with which they produced the committee report No. 48, especially given the workload they had at that time. I also thank the members of the committee from both sides of the House for their participation in the committee process and consideration of the bill. This bill is what is sometimes referred to as an omnibus bill. As we heard earlier from the member for Glass House, the LNP opposition will not be opposing the bill. However, omnibus bills should always be treated carefully. On occasions, it is the little changes in omnibus bills that can result in profound and unintended consequences. Sometimes there is a bit of a sting in the tail with these bills and they do demand significant scrutiny. The bill will amend 12 transport and non-transport acts. Those acts are listed in the committee report and also in the explanatory notes.

It sounds like we have a fairly benign piece of legislation before us. However, it is important that I point out to the House, so that members are aware, some of the government's lack of professionalism when it comes to this bill. For instance, on explanatory notes that accompany a bill, part 4 of the Legislative Standards Act 1992 requires that the explanatory notes be circulated when the bill is introduced to the Legislative Assembly. It sets out the information the explanatory notes should contain—that is, it should provide a reasonable level of background information and commentary to facilitate understanding of the bill's aims and origins. I draw members' attention to the committee comments on the explanatory notes in the committee report. The committee was of the view that the explanatory notes did not provide the level of detail and did not contain a reasonable level of background information and commentary to sufficiently explain the proposed amendments and their implications.

The committee was also briefed on the bill by nine departmental staff. During the briefing I raised a number of questions about the consultation undertaken in relation to the bill. It is stated in black and white in the explanatory notes that the department did not undertake any specific community or industry consultation on the bill's proposed amendments. At the public briefing, the committee asked the department if it was aware of any issues raised consistently during the consultation process. The department advised—

Nothing that we are aware of of any significance. So far we have had general support for the reforms.

Given that the explanatory notes state there was no public consultation undertaken, the committee questioned that response. The department was somewhat caught out. They backtracked and tried to clarify it by stating that consultation did occur through some government agencies on some of the bill's amendments.

In response to further questioning from the committee, the department provided written advice regarding the consultation undertaken for the proposed amendments on the adult proof of age card and the Transport Security (Counter-Terrorism) Act and in relation to the consultation undertaken by the National Transport Commission on the transport of dangerous goods. However, members should be

aware that the National Transport Commission is an independent advisory body based in Melbourne. The department's advice confirmed that the department only consulted with other government agencies and did not undertake any public consultation on the amendments contained in the bill. I asked the question: how could the department know there was general support for the reforms if they had only asked other government agencies? That is akin to asking Dracula if he would like to be in charge of the blood bank.

In relation to the other amendments, and there are a number of them in the bill, the department advised the committee that no consultation had been undertaken because those amendments would not adversely impact on the public given they were clarifications of existing legislative provisions; they were administrative, technical in nature and consequential to other pieces of legislation; or they removed some redundant provisions. I asked the question: how can the government make an assumption when they have had no community or industry feedback on which to base this statement? The committee also heard in the hearing that the amendments had been identified over a period of some years now. That is even more reason to have good public consultation with industry groups, as matters do change over time.

It is very disappointing that there was no consultation with community or industry outside the committee process and the committee process should not be used as a substitute for proper consultation by governments seeking to make legislative amendments. As the member for Glass House did, I draw members' attention to the comments made by the committee, which strongly recommended that in future the department undertake public consultation on proposed amendments, no matter how minor the issues may appear.

I will now address some of the concerns raised in relation to the cost of the adult proof of age card. As at 15 July 2017, there were some 207,942 active cards. Since 2010, over 710,000 cards have been issued. The current cost of a card is \$66.65, making the Queensland proof of age card one of the most expensive proof of age cards on the eastern seaboard. I am advised that the cost, for instance, in Victoria is \$10, in South Australia it is \$22 and in the Australian Capital Territory it is \$6.27. In response to a question from the committee about whether there was any additional cost to the government to provide the proposed photo identity card, the department advised that—

The cost of acquiring the photo identity card, which the consumer pays for, covers the cost of manufacture and systems and interaction time.

Why do they cost so much more to manufacture in Queensland compared to other states? Something is not quite right here. If they are cheaper in other states, there must be some way that those costs can be driven down in Queensland. It is a sensible reform to ensure that all Queenslanders have access to a form of official ID. However, the cost should not be prohibitive for young people. I urge the Deputy Premier and the government to adopt the committee's recommendation and consider offering concessional discounts for young people aged 15 to 17 years.

The committee also made a recommendation in relation to clauses 58 and 79 of the bill that relate to legislation governing the transportation of infectious substances. Unfortunately, these particular clauses were not well explained in the explanatory notes. The department's explanations could not give a clear line of sight on the effect of the changes in clauses 58 and 79. I appreciate the Deputy Premier's clarification in the House today. I commend the bill to the House.