

**2001-2002**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE  
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**No. 36**

**WEDNESDAY, 13 NOVEMBER 2002**

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1 The Assembly met at 10.30 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Berry) took the Chair and asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

**2 CIVIL LAW (WRONGS) AMENDMENT BILL 2002 (NO 2)**

Ms Dundas, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Civil Law (Wrongs) Act 2002*.

*Paper:* Ms Dundas presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Title read by Clerk.

Ms Dundas moved - That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Stanhope – Attorney-General) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

**3 CRIMES AMENDMENT BILL 2002**

Mr Pratt, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Crimes Act 1900*.

Title read by Clerk.

Mr Pratt moved - That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Stanhope – Attorney-General) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

**4 BUILDING (WATER EFFICIENCY) AMENDMENT BILL 2002**

Mrs Dunne, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Building Act 1972* and the *Building Regulations 1972*.

*Paper:* Mrs Dunne presented an explanatory memorandum to the Bill.

Title read by Clerk.

Mrs Dunne moved - That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Corbell – Minister for Planning) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

## 5 FARMHAND APPEAL – FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Mr Humphries (Leader of the Opposition), pursuant to notice, moved – That given the terrible drought which now affects most of Australia, and in particular 98% of New South Wales, and most of the neighbouring shires to the Australian Capital Territory, and that other Australian States have committed to support the Farmhand Appeal, this Assembly calls on the ACT Government to make a financial contribution to the Farmhand Appeal.

Mr Humphries, by leave, amended his motion to omit “98%” and substitute “99%”.

Debate ensued.

Question – That the motion, as amended, be agreed to – put.

The Assembly voted –

Ayes, 6

Mr Cornwell  
Mrs Dunne  
Mr Humphries  
Mr Pratt  
Mr Smyth  
Mr Stefaniak

Noes, 11

Mr Berry  
Mr Corbell  
Mrs Cross  
Ms Dundas  
Ms Gallagher  
Mr Hargreaves  
Ms MacDonald  
Mr Quinlan  
Mr Stanhope  
Ms Tucker  
Mr Wood

And so it was negatived.

## 6 TUGGERANONG COMMUNITY FESTIVAL AND SIMILAR LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Mr Hargreaves, pursuant to notice, moved – That the Assembly:

- (1) notes the outstanding success of the 2002 Tuggeranong Community Festival and congratulates the organisers on attracting record crowds to activities in Tuggeranong Town Centre Park; and
- (2) believes events like the Tuggeranong Community Festival play a vital role in strengthening local communities and encourages the ACT Government to continue providing financial and logistical support.

Debate ensued.

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 74 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a later hour this day.

## 7 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice being asked –

Mr Stefaniak sought leave to table a document.

Objection being raised, leave not granted.

*Suspension of standing and temporary orders – Tabling of document:* Mr Humphries (Leader of the Opposition) moved – That so much of the standing and temporary orders be suspended as would prevent Mr Stefaniak from tabling a document.

Debate ensued.

Question – put and passed, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

*Paper:* Mr Stefaniak presented the following paper:

Chief of Staff to Jon Stanhope MLA – Advertisement for position – Extract from *The Canberra Times*, dated 5 October 2002.

Questions continued.

## **8 WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – JOHANNESBURG, AUGUST TO SEPTEMBER 2002 – PAPER AND STATEMENT BY MINISTER**

Mr Wood (Minister for Urban Services) presented the following paper:

World Summit on Sustainable Development – Johannesburg, 26 August – 4 September 2002 – Report by Bill Wood (Minister for Urban Services) –

and, by leave, made a statement in relation to the paper.

## **9 TUGGERANONG COMMUNITY FESTIVAL AND SIMILAR LOCAL COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Hargreaves – That the Assembly:

- (1) notes the outstanding success of the 2002 Tuggeranong Community Festival and congratulates the organisers on attracting record crowds to activities in Tuggeranong Town Centre Park; and
- (2) believes events like the Tuggeranong Community Festival play a vital role in strengthening local communities and encourages the ACT Government to continue providing financial and logistical support –

Debate resumed.

Question – put and passed.

## **10 WAR ON IRAQ**

Ms Dundas, pursuant to notice, moved – That the Chief Minister write to the Prime Minister informing him that this Assembly:

- (1) opposes a war on Iraq as proposed by the US and Britain and opposes any involvement by Australia in such a war; and
- (2) affirms the role of the United Nations as the vehicle for seeking a non-violent resolution of the issues.

Debate ensued.

Ms Tucker moved the following amendment:

After paragraph (2) add the following paragraph:

“(3) and further urges him to commit Australia to work towards a universal program for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction that involves all nuclear powers.”.

*Paper:* Ms Tucker, by leave, presented the following paper:

*Collateral damage – the health and environmental costs of war on Iraq, Medact.*

Ms Tucker, by leave, was granted an extension of time.

Debate continued.

Mr Stefaniak addressing the Assembly -

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*Adjournment negatived:* It being 5 p.m. – The question was proposed – That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr Quinlan (Treasurer) requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate –  
Question – put and negatived.

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Debate continued.

Mr Pratt, by leave, was granted an extension of time.

Question – That Ms Tucker’s amendment be agreed to – put and passed.

Mr Hargreaves, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

- (1) Omit the words “as proposed by the US and Britain”, substitute “not sanctioned by the United Nations”.
- (2) After the word “issues” add the following words:  
“and urges the Federal Government to exhaust all diplomatic efforts towards peaceful resolution of the crisis, noting the United Nation’s continuing ethical duty to seek peace for the people of Iraq.”.

Mr Hargreaves, by leave, was granted an extension of time.

Question – That Mr Hargreaves’ amendments be agreed to – proposed.

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Question – That the motion, as amended, viz:

That the Chief Minister write to the Prime Minister informing him that this Assembly:

- (1) opposes a war on Iraq not sanctioned by the United Nations and opposes any involvement by Australia in such a war; and
- (2) affirms the role of the United Nations as the vehicle for seeking a non-violent resolution of the issues and urges the Federal Government to exhaust all diplomatic efforts towards peaceful resolution of the crisis, noting the United Nation’s continuing ethical duty to seek peace for the people of Iraq;
- (3) and further urges him to commit Australia to work towards a universal program for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction that involves all nuclear powers –

be agreed to – proposed.

Debate ensued.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

## **11 UNIVERSAL BUSHFIRE PREVENTION AND SAFETY EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS**

Mr Pratt, pursuant to notice, moved – That the ACT Legislative Assembly:

- (1) decry the loss of property and the extensive loss of natural bushland and pine forest in summer 2001-2002; and
- (2) notes that but for the excellent work undertaken by the ACT Rural Fire Services and Emergency Services greater devastation would have occurred;
- (3) notes that the majority of the fires were caused by human intervention and in many cases deliberately lit – an issue this community must confront in order to minimise dangers to the community;
- (4) notes that the fast approaching summer contains bushfire conditions that are anticipated to eclipse those of 2001/2002 with severe weather conditions likely to exacerbate a desperately dry situation;
- (5) urges the Government to immediately introduce universal bushfire prevention and safety education for all schools in the ACT, planned and coordinated by the Education Department and delivered by Emergency Services personnel and other approved trainers.

Debate ensued.

On the motion of Mr Quinlan (Minister for Police, Emergency Services and Corrections) the following amendment was made, after debate:

Omit paragraph (5), substitute:

“Notes the importance of the Government’s current fire safety education programmes in ACT schools and also programmes aimed at arson offenders in the ACT.”.

Question – That the motion, as amended, viz:

That the ACT Legislative Assembly:

- (1) decry the loss of property and the extensive loss of natural bushland and pine forest in summer 2001-2002; and
- (2) notes that but for the excellent work undertaken by the ACT Rural Fire Services and Emergency Services greater devastation would have occurred;
- (3) notes that the majority of the fires were caused by human intervention and in many cases deliberately lit – an issue this community must confront in order to minimise dangers to the community;
- (4) notes that the fast approaching summer contains bushfire conditions that are anticipated to eclipse those of 2001/2002 with severe weather conditions likely to exacerbate a desperately dry situation;

(5) notes the importance of the Government's current fire safety education programmes in ACT schools and also programmes aimed at arson offenders in the ACT –  
be agreed to – proposed.

Debate continued.

Motion, as amended, agreed to.

## **12 YOUNG ACHIEVEMENT AUSTRALIA**

Ms MacDonald, pursuant to notice, moved – That this Assembly:

- (1) recognises the students in the ACT who have participated in Young Achievers in 2002;
- (2) congratulates all the students for their participation, but particularly those who won awards last Friday;
- (3) recognises and congratulates Young Achievement Australia for the good work it does in giving young people experience in business practice.

Debate ensued.

Question – put and passed.

## **13 BULK BILLING SERVICES – GENERAL PRACTITIONERS**

Ms Tucker, pursuant to notice, moved – That this Assembly, noting:

- (1) recent decisions of General Practitioners practices to cease providing bulk billing services;
- (2) that this change has reduced the health system's capacity for early intervention in health problems, and seriously reduced access for low income people and families in particular; and
- (3) noting the reluctance of the current Federal Government to increase Medicare rebate payments to General Practitioners.

Calls on the Government to urgently develop a strategy:

- (4) to ensure that every person in the ACT, regardless of income, has adequate access to the services of a General Practitioner, during and after business hours;
- (5) including consideration of mechanisms to encourage and support General Practitioners to provide bulk billing; and
- (6) to report to the Assembly with the strategy and an implementation plan by the end of the December 2002 sittings of the Assembly.

Debate ensued.

On the motion of Mr Wood (Minister for Disability, Housing and Community Services) the following amendment was made, after debate:

Omit all words after "General Practitioners" in paragraph (3) and substitute the following words:

“Calls on the Government to report to the Assembly on what measures it is currently taking, and proposes to take, to ameliorate these problems, including the timeframe for any proposals. The report should include

- measures to ensure that every person in the ACT, regardless of income, has adequate access to the services of a General Practitioner, during and after business hours;
- mechanisms to encourage and support General Practitioners to provide bulk billing.

The Government should provide this report to the Assembly by the end of the December 2002 sitting of the Assembly.”.

Question – That the motion, as amended, viz:

That this Assembly, noting:

- (1) recent decisions of General Practitioners practices to cease providing bulk billing services;
- (2) that this change has reduced the health system’s capacity for early intervention in health problems, and seriously reduced access for low income people and families in particular; and
- (3) noting the reluctance of the current Federal Government to increase Medicare rebate payments to General Practitioners.

Calls on the Government to report to the Assembly on what measures it is currently taking, and proposes to take, to ameliorate these problems, including the timeframe for any proposals. The report should include

- measures to ensure that every person in the ACT, regardless of income, has adequate access to the services of a General Practitioner, during and after business hours;
- mechanisms to encourage and support General Practitioners to provide bulk billing.

The Government should provide this report to the Assembly by the end of the December 2002 sitting of the Assembly –

be agreed to – put and passed.

#### 14 ADJOURNMENT

Mr Wood (Manager of Government Business) moved – That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question – put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 9.29 p.m., adjourned until tomorrow at 10.30 a.m.

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**MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE:** All Members were present at some time during the sitting.

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**M J McRAE**  
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly