

Leader of the Opposition, I would support him. I would agree with him that they ought not get another crack. However, I will go back to the second reading just to clarify this for the record:

The third proposed change relates to circumstances in which a person has been required to repay the grant because they did not meet the resident requirements under the First Home Owner Grant Act. Currently, such a person is disqualified from obtaining the grant for a subsequent home that they buy, even though they have repaid the previous grant that they were not entitled to. This is a harsh penalty in many circumstances, and it is proposed to remedy this by allowing a person to qualify for a subsequent grant, as long as they have repaid the previous grant and any penalties and interest owing on that amount.

This is a very different scenario from the unscrupulous person who sets out to defraud the scheme. That person does not get another crack; no way. This simply is the ability to come back for a second try where they did not meet the resident requirements under the terms of the act. Therefore, it is not a general second crack for those who were intentionally getting their fingers into something they ought not. The change is being adopted across Australia to varying degrees. The Commonwealth's interest in this, and that of all of the states and territories, is the need to remain fairly consistent, or as consistent as possible, across the board. That is the intent of this bill: to move with the other states and territories who are all moving similar amendments. I thank the member for his contribution and the opposition for their support.

Motion agreed to; bills read a second time.

Mr STIRLING (Treasurer)(by leave): Madam Speaker, I move that the bills be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; bills read a third time.

RADIATION PROTECTION BILL (Serial 203)

Continued from 19 February 2004.

Ms CARTER (Port Darwin): Madam Speaker, all jurisdictions in Australia are working to change their legislation and practices to reflect the outcomes of the National Directory for Radiation Protection.

This directory has not been completed yet, but states and territories have been given detailed instructions as to what it currently contains, and so

this bill has been based on that. When the directory is completely finished later this year, regulations providing more direction will be developed and implemented. It is hoped that, within a short period of time throughout Australia, there will be consistency with regards to matters pertaining to radiation.

The Northern Territory is the first jurisdiction to implement legislative changes which are represented in this bill and that, generally speaking, the CLP opposition will support. The bill aims to do two things. It aims to improve safety with regards to radiation. This quest has been spurred on by the increasing incidence of terrorist activities in the world today. The second thing the bill aims to do is a result of the National Competition Policy. The aim is to remove unnecessary barriers which prevent more people gaining qualifications, skills and permission to take X-rays.

With regards to the first aim, improving safety for people and the environment, the new legislation covers both ionising and non-ionising radiation, whereas existing legislation only covers ionising radiation. Non-ionising radiation sources include things which require an external power source, such as X-ray machines, laser lights, welding equipment and solariums. Ionising radiation generally is emitted naturally by metals with half lives such as uranium and plutonium, as a result of the activities of their electrons. An example in the health setting includes radioactive implants. Part of the protective steps found in the bill include lowering the occupational and public health dose limits available. This is in line with national and international standards. All of this the opposition supports.

On the issue of radiographers, I am a little less fulsome in my support. This area is covered in this bill. I understand and support the need to reduce barriers which prevent skilled people from providing this service. However, this bill will be getting rid of the Radiographers Registration Board in the Northern Territory, and I believe this is something which must be considered with caution and dealt with carefully. I have been in contact with the board, and I am aware that, generally speaking, they support the changes. Therefore, given that endorsement, the CLP will also support this aspect of the bill.

However, we will watch with care how the transition occurs, and how well radiography services are provided in the Northern Territory during the time to come, in the hope that there will be no deterioration in care to patients and services to the public and health professionals because, what this legislation will do when it is assented to is transfer the current powers of the Radiographers Board to the Chief Health Officer. The Chief Health Officer will