

Mr WOOD: Well, that gives me some idea. That, perhaps, explains why in section 129J(4) and (5), you have a different approach to how a person can inspect. An alternative solution decision is done through the Registrar, and an access modification decision is done through the chairperson of the Building Appeals Board. That makes sense; it fits in what you are saying. I will study that again because it is something that, as a local member, I may have people query. I probably need to get a better hold on what that means in relation to the changes. I said it was only going to be short, and there is nothing else I want to question. Thank you, minister.

Mr McCARTHY: Thank you, member for Nelson. It is with good faith I say yes, I really enjoyed working through this with the experts. You are most welcome. Should you have any questions about the legislation please let us know and we will provide access to the experts to work through it with you.

Bill agreed to, without amendment.

Bill reported; report adopted.

Mr McCARTHY (Lands and Planning): Madam Speaker, I move that the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to; bill read a third time.

BUSINESS NAMES (NATIONAL UNIFORM LEGISLATION) IMPLEMENTATION BILL (Serial 199)

Continued from 22 February 2012.

Mr ELFERINK (Port Darwin): Madam Speaker, the government can relax, we will be supporting this bill. However, with a tinge of regret in one respect, we have supported the changeover - I note the staffers are getting into the advisor's box, you will not be there for long - with a tinge of angst about our federal system. Whilst we, on this side of the House, have agreed with this for the good commercial reasons that exist to support these changes, preliminary bills were passed some time ago. This bill completes the transition of the Business Names Register, essentially, from the Northern Territory to control of a federal government department.

The reason I express a pang of angst over this is it is another small erosion of state rights or Territory rights transitioning to a national government. Whilst I support this legislative instrument and understand the good commercial reasons for it, I reiterate the Country Liberals' position: we will only support these forms of

legislation if they are good for the Northern Territory.

Curiously, this arrangement between the states and the federal government, particularly when Labor states ruled supreme, was a one-way street. There seems to be very little devolution of decision-making powers back to the states. There are a number of areas where such devolution would be worthwhile considering, particularly when you consider the vertical fiscal imbalance as it currently exists. However, this is a step along the road to rationalisation of business names nationally. This is the final step; after it leaves this House we shall not utter the words business names legislation again. As indicated the last time around, the government can continue to expect support in relation to this legislation.

Dr BURNS (Education and Training): Madam Speaker, I support this legislation. It has been a number of years coming, as other members ...

Mr Elferink: You are trying to make the advisors' trip worthwhile.

Dr BURNS: No, I love to speak on these bills. It has been three years between the time the intergovernmental agreement was signed in relation to business names and the passage of this bill in this parliament. It will achieve the goal of having a single national scheme for the registration and regulation of business names.

There is no doubt business names can cause much friction. We have seen the instance of some very well-known multinationals taking on small coffee shops and ...

Members interjecting.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Minister, can you come to the point of the bill, please.

Dr BURNS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for your guidance. There can be friction; there can be dispute about business names. There have been instances of large multinationals getting upset because small coffee shops have adopted a name somewhat like the multinational name. We need to have some uniformity not only to protect the big players, but also the smaller players across jurisdictions. This bill, I am advised, will make it easier for businesses to register their business names across jurisdictions, cut red tape and, presumably, expense, and also give greater protection to those business names which, of course, is very important. Names like the Australian Labor Party and the Country Liberal Party - I do not know whether they are business names, but they are brands each party protects.