

NATIONAL COMPETITION POLICY, LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS REVIEW

**712. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:**

- (1) Is the Government reviewing Western Australia's liquor licensing laws in light of the national competition policy review; if so, what is the timetable for this review?
- (2) Is Sunday trading for liquor stores one of the issues under consideration?
- (3) Will the minister assure the House that the Government will or will not be deregulating the liquor industry in Western Australia?

**Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:**

- (1) Under the previous Government the then Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor prepared a document - a review of the Liquor Licensing Act - in answer to national competition policy considerations. The honourable member would be aware that when we were elected, I caused that review to be published, its having been kept under wraps prior to the election. I then sought submissions from the public, including stakeholders. I wrote to a number of stakeholders, and I think the honourable member was provided with a copy of the report in 2001. Early in the piece I received submissions. Those submissions were considered and the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor presented a report, which has been provided to the Department of Treasury and Finance, as part of the basis for dealing with the National Competition Council. That was done some time ago. The honourable member would be aware that the National Competition Council is an unelected body that gives advice to Hon Peter Costello. He asked me a question about this a couple of weeks ago and I pointed out that if anybody is putting the finances of the State at risk over matters to do with national competition policy, it is Hon Peter Costello if he decides to go down that path.
- (2) The honourable member would know that the National Competition Council has raised that matter for a long time. Similarly, he would know that during the election campaign the Government said no to that proposition; and that is the Government's position.
- (3) No, that is not the Australian Labor Party's agenda, and it is not the Government's agenda. I wonder whether that is on the honourable member's agenda.