

MINING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2015

Discharge of Order and Referral to Standing Committee on Legislation

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [2.10 pm] — without notice:
I move —

That —

- (1) the order of the day relating to the Mining Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 be discharged and the bill referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation for consideration and report by no later than Tuesday, 10 May 2016; and
- (2) the committee has the power to inquire into and report on the policy of the bill.

I have just a few comments to make. This is one of those rare occasions when we are all in furious agreement around the chamber; all parties have agreed to this referral. Although there appears to be strong support for the bill itself, some concerns have been raised in the bill's passage from the Legislative Assembly to this place. Following discussions behind the Chair, the government felt that the best way to resolve those issues would be to refer the bill to the Standing Committee on Legislation, which is a very effective committee that has a proud history of identifying potential issues within legislation. If there are issues with this legislation, this is the opportunity to address them. As I said, there have been some discussions behind the Chair and the government feels that this is the best way to resolve the issues raised. The Liberal Party will support the referral motion.

HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.11 pm]: On behalf of the opposition, I certainly welcome this referral motion. It is interesting that the government, for the first time in this period of government, has referred a bill to a committee without having to have an extended debate to convince it to do so, so I thank it for that. I know that although the Mining Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 passed through the Legislative Assembly without amendment, and there was, as I understand it, an agreement from the parties in that place to proceed with this bill, the Leader of the House is correct that since that time, discussions have been held with a number of groups that felt they were not consulted appropriately—namely, the Amalgamated Prospectors and Leaseholders Association and Goldfields First Network. From my discussions with them on a number of occasions since December, it is clear they certainly feel as though they have been left out of the discussion and they have significant concerns about how this legislation will impact on small prospectors. Let us face it, once the boom and bust moves through the state and companies' employment levels go up and down in the larger scheme of things, these are the types of employers and small businesses that will continue to operate regardless of the cycle and their voice needs to be heard. Using the committee process is a very effective opportunity for them to state their specific concerns about this bill and for us to see what comes out of that committee and whether the bill needs to be improved to acknowledge their concerns.

HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral) [2.13 pm]: I rise on behalf of the National Party to support the motion to discharge the Mining Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 and refer it to the Standing Committee on Legislation. Although the bill passed the Legislative Assembly unamended, the Amalgamated Prospectors and Leaseholders Association and certainly other small prospectors and members of Goldfields First Network have been in discussion with members of Parliament and for some 12 months have raised their concerns with members about the consultation process and the implications of the legislation. The bottleneck to this came when the bill passed the Legislative Assembly without amendment. Organisations such as APLA and Goldfields First believe that the Legislative Council, as the house of review, provides the opportunity for them to have their argument heard. I think they do have a compelling argument around the consultation. Although the Department of Mines and Petroleum would say that it has consulted on this bill for some four years, I think it may have consulted in the development of the policy but not answered any questions or issues that small prospectors and leaseholders had about the ongoing implications of this legislation on their organisation. Therefore, from my perspective as a member of the National Party and being mindful of the impact the bill will have on the regional communities in which they operate, I believe that reviewing this legislation will be a good outcome and a good use of the parliamentary process. I look forward to the outcome of the committee's report.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [2.15 pm]: I welcome the government's decision to refer the Mining Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 to the Standing Committee on Legislation. Like others, I have had lots of correspondence from very concerned miners, particularly from the goldfields region. It is a very complex bill and it is sensible that it will be referred to the committee. I support this motion.

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [2.16 pm]: I rise to advise that the Greens will support this legislation —

Several members interjected.

Hon Peter Collier; Hon Kate Doust; Hon Jacqui boydell; Hon Rick Mazza; Hon Robin Chapple; Hon Mark
Lewis

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: This referral—I am jumping the gun there; sorry. The Greens will certainly support the referral of the Mining Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 to the Standing Committee on Legislation. I thank the Leader of the House for moving the motion to refer this bill to that committee. On several occasions I have met with a group that is referred to as Goldfields First Network. That group of prospectors certainly is in the middle scale of prospecting—as in small miners—and consider that many aspects of this legislation will be deleterious to the way they operate. We must remember that those small prospectors are in large part the sniffer dogs for the mining industry. They go out and prospect on country and quite often their research leads to larger corporations coming along and drilling an alluvial seam to find the larger deposits that are of value to the industry. Their concerns about the impact of this bill on them are valid. I look forward to the committee hearing from a vast array of people who have expressed their concerns not only to me personally, but also through correspondence to our various offices.

HON MARK LEWIS (Mining and Pastoral) [2.17 pm]: The only issue which we have not yet discussed and which I thought I might mention is that this motion will allow the Standing Committee on Legislation to go to the issue of policy. I was concerned that if the Mining Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 was referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation, the committee would not be able to go to the issue of policy, but I am pleased to see that the Leader of the House has included that matter in the motion. The concerns of the interested parties are that the committee will need to go to the issue of policy when it considers this bill.

Question put and passed.