

RACING RESTRICTION BILL 2003
RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA TAX BILL 2003
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Second Reading - Cognate Debate

Resumed from 16 May.

HON NORMAN MOORE (Mining and Pastoral - Leader of the Opposition) [11.16 am]: I will add to the comments made by my colleague Hon Barry House on the racing and wagering legislation before the Chamber. I was fortunate enough to have been Minister for Racing and Gaming in the previous Government, albeit for only one year. During that 12 months I learnt a reasonable amount about the industry, but I suspect there is a vast amount I still do not understand or know because of the nature of industry. I found it a fascinating 12 months. I recognised some areas in which problems had arisen and where some solutions might have sorted out some of those difficulties. The short period of only 12 months and coming to grips with being a new minister trying to understand the industry as well as I needed to perhaps precluded me from doing more than I was able to do. However, I managed to get around a fair bit and look at what was happening in the racing industry in Western Australia. I use the term racing in its broadest sense to cover galloping, trotting and greyhound racing. I have had a long personal involvement with galloping, having been the secretary of the Murchison racing association for the past 25 years. I still hold that position as one of my particular electorate interests. The industry began as a sport. People still talk about galloping as the sport of kings. Although it is a sporting activity, it is very much an industry. It is a very important industry in Western Australia. It involves the employment of many thousands of people and very large investment by participants in horse and dog racing, not to mention all the infrastructure needed for training establishments. Large funds are also spent by the principal clubs in operating events.

In the short term I sought to deal with the considerable concern voiced by all aspects of the industry about the future of the industry. Something needed to be done to ensure that it had a viable future. There are many reasons the industry found itself in those circumstances. Some of the reasons related to its own conduct. In my opinion, some people in the industry had not changed their attitudes for the past 30 to 40 years. They are still living in the past when all people needed to do was have a good horse to see thousands of people turn up at the racetrack. If trots were run on Friday night, half the population of Perth would turn up. Things have changed since those days. People's opportunities to do other things with their leisure time have expanded dramatically. People in Western Australia do not now go to the trots on Friday night and the gallops or footy on Saturday afternoon, or swap them over week to week. Many other things are available for people to do. I guess that the introduction of the casino has also provided another vehicle through which people can gamble if they wish to. People who are into gambling in a big way are often looking for instant gratification. A poker machine or a table at the casino gives a very rapid result, whereas races entail waiting 40 minutes for the next event, so people are not getting an ongoing fix for their gambling.

The industry was having problems for many other reasons, many of which were to do with tensions in the industry. For example, it was always brought to my attention by people in the country that the ambition of the Western Australian Turf Club was to put country racing out of business so that all the activities of the Turf Club could be centred at Ascot and Belmont racetracks. Whenever I went to a country club or talked to country racing people, I was led to believe that the Turf Club was about to get rid of them. Having been involved in country racing for a long time, I was well aware of the importance of country racing to country communities. I was very anxious to ensure the survival of country gallops. I also had the same view about country trots. The country-city divide was a serious issue that needed to be addressed. However, the way in which funds were allocated and the industry was managed gave the principal clubs some capacity at least to frighten some of their country cousins about what they might do in the future.

Another area of concern was the ongoing antagonism that existed between the trots and gallops codes. It is similar to farmers and cowboys, Sydney and Melbourne and all the other traditional ongoing battles that never seem to be resolved. The greyhound industry seemed to be on the outside and did its own thing. Because the Western Australian Greyhound Racing Authority is effectively a government agency, not a lot of publicity was given to the views of the greyhound code, whereas the other two codes, because they were not government agencies, were able to say what they felt like saying in the media. It is interesting that in seeking to deal with some of these problems, I managed to bring the trots and gallops codes together probably for the first time ever. When I made the decision to proceed with the legislation that I brought in, which set the \$50 million cap, I managed to provoke the Trotting Association and the Turf Club into joint opposition to what I was seeking to do. I gather that for the first time ever the Turf Club chairman and the Trotting Association chairman came together and featured in a very nice coloured photograph on the back page of *The West Australian* in joint opposition to the proposal I was putting forward as minister. I thought it a tremendous achievement to bring those two groups

together in opposition to a common enemy, as they perceived me to be. In that context I was rather amused to read an article by Peter Austin, the racing editor of *The West Australian*, of 24 April of this year. When talking about me he wrote -

Moore introduced the capping of the TAB funds to be distributed to the codes, which virtually hamstrung the industry and also helped to create a political rift between racing and trotting.

I was absolutely astounded to read that. As I said, I created a set of circumstances in which they came together for the first time. To suggest that somehow or other I had been responsible for the rift between racing and trotting is fanciful to say the least. The article goes on to say that I created a rift within the Liberal Party, which is again highly fanciful. I was thinking about writing a letter to the editor, but I thought I would save my thoughts up for this occasion to get them off my chest.

Hon Nick Griffiths: What was the date of the article?

Hon NORMAN MOORE: It was 24 April and headed "Bunfight looms in new racing body Bill". Mr Austin and I had a number of discussions when I was the minister. I sought to explain to him what I was seeking to do in the capping of the Totalisator Agency Board distribution. I thought that he understood what I was seeking to do, but he wrote in the article that it had virtually hamstrung the industry when in fact it did not but provided a very secure base for all participants in the industry, based on existing levels of funding, which enabled them at least to see into the future on the basis of a guaranteed base amount of money. That was based on what they were getting at the time. All that the legislation I brought in did was to ensure that the codes were provided with an assured sum of money - in other words, that they got the same as the previous year regardless - and that any growth could be distributed by the minister. I did not want that to be a permanent state of affairs, which is why a sunset clause was put into the Bill. It gave somebody outside the codes the capacity to put money into areas of need. My decision was to put money into areas of need, which I perceived at the time to be essentially country racing and country trotting. Some extra funds were distributed on the basis of that legislation. I did not hamstring any industry, as suggested by Mr Austin. The legislation gave to the three codes the certainty of the base amount they would always get and of the fact that it would not be reduced. Country gallops and trots would be looked after in that sense.

Even though Mr Austin is described in that article as the racing editor of *The West Australian*, what he failed to tell anybody was that he has been engaged by the Turf Club. I am not sure whether he still is, but he certainly has been engaged by the Turf Club to promote its cause. He should issue a disclaimer saying that he has been engaged by the Turf Club in the past, and may still be, to promote the Turf Club's view. The Turf Club, for reasons best known to itself, was the greatest antagonist to the proposition that I put in place to guarantee that country racing survived. The Turf Club seems to have the view that it is being badly dealt with and hard done by in all the percentages of the distribution of funds that are contained in the current law. It seems to forget, however, that the industry over many generations has changed quite dramatically. There was a time when the trots were probably generating more revenue than the gallops. These cycles come and go. There were times in the 1960s and 1970s, for example, when there were some magnificent trotting horses in Western Australia. Vast crowds of people attended Gloucester Park every Friday night to see horses of the calibre of Pure Steel and San Simeon racing. It is similar with the gallops. It seems that when a horse captures the imagination of the population, people take an interest in that code. At the moment Northerly has attracted a huge amount of interest in the gallops among Western Australians. It seems to me that part of the solution to the problem facing the industry is to find some champions. The only way to get champions is to encourage breeders to have their horses racing in Australia, particularly Western Australia. It is interesting that some of the main breeders in the State are breeding horses for markets other than Western Australia.

The Turf Club seems to take the view that at least at this particular time it is the most hard done by of the codes and that the trots have been given a hand-up by the legislation that is in place. The history of the percentage distribution indicates that there has been an ongoing battle between the two associations. Various ministers in the past have changed the percentage distribution for different reasons. In addition, because the racing industry is a gambling enterprise, the Government taxes the profits of the Totalisator Agency Board, just as it taxes the casino and other gambling activities. When I was the minister, the industry adamantly demanded a reduction in the Government's tax take. Hon Nick Griffiths was clever enough to go to the last election promising a half percentage point reduction in the tax take, with no strings attached. I thought that was an extraordinary way of spending some \$4 million of state government money. However, that was a political judgment he made that paid dividends. I was not prepared to make that decision without knowing a lot more about the industry and how the money it received - about \$50 million, not an insignificant amount - was being spent.

Going back in history, it is interesting to note that the last increase to the Government's tax take from the industry was brought about by Brian Burke's Government in the 1980s. Brian Burke increased the tax to about seven per cent, which just about brought the industry to its knees. The Labor Party, now that it is dishing out

these extra dollars, might reflect on the effect that its previous ministers had on the industry. Many people in the industry experienced some pretty hard times in the 1980s, except for the high-flying, four-on-the-floor entrepreneurs who supported Mr Burke and who spent vast amounts of money on interesting racehorses. There are some interesting anecdotal stories of the high-flyers in the racing industry in the 1980s. I will not go into them now; everybody knows what I am talking about. Very large amounts of stake money were made available for a couple of events, such as the Australian Derby and the Perth Cup, and subsequently very little for anything else. The big wheelers and dealers in Western Australia were, therefore, into the horseracing industry, some were even chairmen and committee members of the Western Australian Turf Club.

It was suggested to me then as minister that the Government should reduce its tax take and allow the industry to have those extra dollars. As I said, the then Opposition agreed to a 0.5 per cent reduction in the Government's tax. I came to the conclusion, having spent eight to nine months seeking to understand the industry and meeting lots of people, that what was really needed was a thorough in-depth analysis of the industry. That is the reason I appointed Gavan Fielding to head a committee of inquiry into the whole industry, not just the governance of the industry. The inquiry had a very simple one-line term of reference and the committee comprised people who were not directly involved in any practical sense in the industry but people who would have delivered a reasonably balanced and independent assessment of the way in which the industry was headed. That committee was set up in my time as minister and I had hoped that in the event that the previous Government was re-elected, I would have received a report and gone about providing the support to the industry that was deemed necessary, based on a thorough, independent and in-depth analysis of the whole industry. As circumstances transpired, Hon Nick Griffiths' promise of a 0.5 per cent reduction probably encouraged a few people to vote the other way. It often transpires in this business that the Government puts matters in train but is never involved in the outcomes. The new Minister for Racing and Gaming changed the terms of reference and the membership of the inquiry, and concentrated attention on the governance of the industry rather than far broader issues. The report that Ray Turner brought down, therefore, was essentially a report on governance. The report is very good and the Government's response in most instances is very good, and I commend the minister for it. I read in today's paper that he is one of the ministers who are on shaky ground. I do not ever believe what I read in the newspapers about ministerial performance because they are invariably wrong; I believe that on this occasion they are wrong too. The minister has done the right thing by the industry, he is regarded as a champion of the industry and I commend him for that.

Hon Murray Criddle interjected.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: He did not give us any tips that I am aware of.

Although I am genuine in my commendation of the minister's performance, some members of the industry believe he is beholden to one section of the industry; namely, the Turf Club. I am sure the minister will deny that but that view is held by some people and might be a reflection on the personality of the chairman of the Turf Club, who projects a very confident approach to the way in which he does things. He has said that if the legislation is amended, he will tell the minister to get rid of it, implying that he somehow controls what the minister is or is not doing.

The recommendations in the report provided by Mr Turner, whom I also hold in high regard, are being implemented by the Government to set this industry on a new path. Restructuring generally can be compared with today's cartoon and regarded as a reshuffling of the deckchairs. I hope this legislation is not simply a reshuffling of the deckchairs because the industry needs more than just different management; it needs a whole lot of other things to happen. It needs people in the community to start taking a more serious interest in the industry. There is no point in having trots every Saturday night with one bookmaker, 27 customers and 400 people in the committee room having a magnificent meal. That is not good enough for the future of the industry. Similarly, it is not good enough for a couple of thousand people to turn up at Belmont Park on a Saturday afternoon. The industry must be grown and I hope desperately that this new board has the capacity to do that. It is interesting to note that there is hardly a soul at some city meetings but at other meetings, such as the Kalgoorlie Cup in Kalgoorlie, where people are dynamic, switched on and enthusiastic, a person can hardly move among the huge numbers of people there. It appears that a lot depends on the capacity of individual people and individual places to make things happen.

As I said, there are swings and roundabouts in this industry and they must be catered for. That means the industry must be prepared to be innovative, to look at new ideas and to work out what the community wants from the industry and why in some areas people are not attending race meetings in the numbers they used to. It is not enough to simply say that the industry should continue because it employs many people and that the Government should grant it an ever-increasing amount of the funds generated by the TAB or the industry should provide ever-diminishing amounts of taxation to the Government. It is all very well for a Government to provide support to an industry to ensure its survival, but the industry must have a future otherwise the Government will just be sending good money after bad. I hope desperately that this new board - Racing and Wagering Western

Australia - can do the job of re-energising the industry and the interest that the community has in racing, trots and greyhounds. I am sorry that the minister could not find a better name than Racing and Wagering Western Australia. Most people do not know what wagering means. Even though the term is known by the minister and me, it is not often used in an administrative sense - it means putting money on something.

Hon Nick Griffiths: It'll probably be known as RWWA.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I do not like that name either.

Hon Nick Griffiths: I'm open to suggested amendment.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: Whatever it is called, I wish the body well. It will take over the principal club functions for the existing Turf Club, Trotting Association and Greyhound Racing Authority. It will have a significant role to play. I am interested that the three clubs were prepared to accept an overarching organisation to take over most of their functions. I thought the organisations would be more interested in the nature of the future review than they appear to be. Giving away significant powers and functions to an unknown body should be agreed to on an understanding that a serious and in-depth analysis will take place of the new body's success or otherwise. The three clubs appear to be prepared to go along with this restructure, and have argued against the sensible proposition of my colleagues that a sunset clause be included in the Bill to invoke a review in five years. It is in the interests of those bodies to ensure that the board acts appropriately in assuming the principal club status.

Another matter of great significance that has not attracted much comment is that the Totalisator Agency Board will be abolished and handed over to Racing and Wagering WA. The TAB is a significant organisation, with turnover of \$904 million in 2001-02. The TAB paid \$40 million in tax to the State, and provided approximately \$58 million to the industry in that year. It is a very significant financial organisation that is being handed over to the industry. Some TABs in other States have been privatised. I do not know what our TAB would be worth if it were to be privatised, but it must have value as an organisation generating such dollars. It is being "given" - that word best expresses the change - to the industry. I have some legitimate concerns on this matter, about which I will not go to the barriers.

The existing Totalisator Agency Board is a very successful organisation. I pay great credit to the board members and the management of the TAB who have been able to achieve significant growth in the industry in economically flat times. It is a tribute to their management capacity. Also, the TAB's success relates to betting on racing in other States, rather than only meetings within Western Australia. The TAB has been able to manage its activities and the opportunities it provides for punters. Therefore, it has maximised returns to the TAB and, hence, to government and the industry. It has done so as an independent organisation. The TAB is not beholden to anybody, except that the minister of the day appoints the board members and is responsible for the behaviour and performance of the board. In my days as responsible minister, the board saw its role as maximising revenues generated, and, therefore, maximising the assistance it provided to the industry. It was not beholden to the trots or gallops of Western Australia versus those in the eastern States. It was a money-making organisation, which it remains. I acknowledge that some of the codes were not happy because the TAB, in its endeavour to maximise returns, had an effect on when certain race meetings were held. Many complaints were made about that aspect. This affected the capacity of some race clubs to maximise returns from their operations. I acknowledge that problem. The TAB must continue to operate on the notion that its role is to generate revenue, not to be the plaything of the industry. Almost a conflict-of-interest scenario arises in that people requested to make the money will also spend it. Racing and Wagering WA will run the TAB and generate the revenue, and it will also decide how the revenue will be expended. It will also determine when race meetings will be held. It is important that York holds meetings when it wants to, rather than RWWA determining to make more money, say, on the Gosford gallops held at the same time. Achieving the right balance, and watching how the board will make these determinations, will be an interesting exercise. It will be hard work. The board will be pressured by the industry to deliver what the industry wants in programming events. At the same time, the board must provide the industry with maximum dollars to run the industry.

If I had my druthers, I would leave the TAB as a separate and independent body with one mission statement - namely, to maximise the return from gambling in Western Australia for the benefit of the racing industry as a whole and the amount of tax the Government will receive. The TAB's contribution of \$40 million is not insignificant in the context of the Government's budget. Some people make the philosophical argument that gambling should not be taxed at all. I believe gambling should be taxed as one way to ensure that people gamble less. Another argument is that the Government encourages people to gamble because this increases the tax take. It is a two-edged sword about which one can be philosophical; I will spare the House my philosophical views at this time. I have serious reservations about the major part of the Bill that gives the Totalisator Agency Board to Racing and Wagering WA. I will watch it carefully over the next few years to see how it pans out.

Racing and Wagering Western Australia is an interesting type of organisation. It is not a crown agency. It is not subject to ministerial direction or the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman, and it is not a public sector body under the Public Sector Management Act 1994. We know what it is not, but we are not sure what it is. It is a strange creature, to say the least. It is subject to the Financial Administration and Audit Act and the Freedom of Information Act. It is also required to report to Parliament, which again is unusual as it is not a crown agency or a public sector body. It is also subject to borrowing restrictions. It is required to provide the responsible minister with access to information, to provide strategy development plans and to prepare and submit for tabling in Parliament an annual statement of corporate intent. It seems to be an organisation that is neither one thing nor the other. I understand the reasons it has been established this way; however, it is still an unusual creature. It is the type of creature that needs thorough consideration, and we on this side of the House will suggest a five-year review, which I will talk about later. A review is important; however, the body will require more than a simple ministerial review bearing in mind what will happen to the Totalisator Agency Board and given that the body itself is a strange hybrid creature that will be created for the purpose of the industry. As such, it will virtually be unlike any other body.

The chairperson will be appointed by the minister; I do not have a problem with that. However, it is rare for a minister to appoint the chairperson of an industry group. An organisation will run racing in Western Australia, yet the minister of the day will have a strong involvement. Again, that raises interesting issues. The board will comprise two representatives from thoroughbred racing, two from harness racing and one from greyhound racing. Obviously the greyhound industry did not argue too publicly about its representation, because, as a statutory authority, it is not allowed to. It is pretty hard for members of that group to tell the minister that he is wrong, especially if their job depends on the minister. By virtue of its being a statutory authority, the poor old greyhound industry has been silent on many important issues. As an aside, the \$50 million capping I put in place meant that the greyhound industry provided significant extra money for racing and trotting. The money went from the pocket of the greyhound industry into the pockets of the racing and trotting industries. The two main antagonists - the racing and trotting industries - became the beneficiaries. The poor old greyhound industry seems to draw the short straw because it is unable to publicly promote its cause. Perhaps down the track the minister can give some thought to whether it should remain a statutory authority.

The board will comprise two representatives each from the racing and trotting industries and one representative from the greyhound industry, and the remaining four members will be chosen by a selection panel. The selection panel will be established under the terms of the legislation. The suggested construction of the board has caused a great deal of interest and consternation in the industry and community. Without going into any of the reported allegations and suggestions, if I knew who the members will be, I would probably have a different attitude to some aspects of the Bill. The Bill will create a board that will have a range of powers. The Totalisator Agency Board will generate funds and it will spend that money. We would have a better idea of how the board will function if we knew who the members will be. Two representatives will be nominated by the racing industry. They will not necessarily look at the broad requirements of the industry because they will be lobbying like hell for the gallops. Why would they not? If they do not lobby like hell for the gallops, they will not be renominated. The same will apply to the representatives of the trotting and greyhound industries. Previous tripartite bodies that comprised government, union and industry representatives never worked because the representatives each had a vested interest and would not bend.

Hon Kate Doust: Sometimes they work.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: They never work. The best way to ensure that boards work is to have independent individuals who have no axe to grind. That is one of the reasons the committee of inquiry into the industry did not comprise representatives from the three codes. If it had, the representatives would have spent all their time arguing their own case and would have never reached an agreement. The five representatives from the three codes will have an axe to grind on most issues, and they will be expected to have an axe to grind. As I said, there is a concern in the community that the chairperson will lean towards the position of the Western Australian Turf Club. I do not know who the chairperson will be. I hope the minister will choose somebody who does not have a relationship with any of the codes, otherwise he will have an ongoing battle on his hands.

There is a rumour going around - I desperately hope it is not true - that the present chairman of the WA Turf Club will become the chairman of the board. I will be disappointed if that happens, not because I lack respect for that chairman, but because he has vigorously argued the cause of the Turf Club. That is his job and I admire him for that. However, when it comes to certain issues he will have no regard for the position of the other codes. I do not hold that against him either. Although he has tremendous qualities, he has a strong attitude towards certain issues and, therefore, will not be the right person for this job. The chairperson must be someone who is acceptable across the industry. I am sure the minister knows what I am talking about. The minister will do himself and the board a disservice if the chairperson is seen to have a leaning towards one of the codes; he or she must be seen to be independent. We will look at variations of this as we go through the committee stage. There

are different points of view about who should be appointed and the number of representatives each code should be allowed. Given this particular mix, some people are concerned about the interests of country racing. Again, taking into account what I said before, the divides I discovered were between the codes themselves and between the country and the city. If the minister wants to break down the barriers between the different competing interests, he must ensure that each point of view is heard. Each group must believe that its point of view is being heard. The minister must ensure that the board's membership comprises people who understand what country racing and gallops are all about. They must understand the importance of the Mt Magnet Race Club to Mt Magnet. The two race meetings it holds each year are major social events. That is what country racing is all about. It is not about the industry or making money; it is about having a good afternoon out. Country race clubs are often run by volunteers and they are an important part of the social fabric of country communities. They must survive not only for that reason, but also because they provide a track where horses that cannot make it in the city or the bigger provincial centres have an opportunity to run. Although we would love to see more horses running on country tracks, enough are already involved to make it a viable part of the industry. The bigger provincial towns also need a board that understands that race meetings in places such as Geraldton, Albany, Kalgoorlie and Bunbury are a big activity. The meetings that are held every year are not only a significant part of the social fabric of those regional communities, but also important to their economic construction.

As an aside, the provincial gallops have probably been the most hard done by in the TAB distributions over recent times, because they have never been able to reach an agreement with the Country Racing Association even though a prescribed percentage of funds from the TAB goes to country racing. I have been told that the provincial race clubs like the new structure. They do not want the current distribution percentages to stay in place for very long because they believe they will be better off under the new arrangement. If the Country Racing Association will be better off, it will be at the expense of another group. I do not know which industry will be worse off. If one group receives more money, another group is bound to receive less. I say to the provincial clubs that our proposal to leave the percentage in place for five years will not in any way remove their capacity to raise extra money to overcome the disadvantage they have, because the money that will be earned in excess of the guaranteed \$50 million can be spent by the board on those areas of need. Provincial gallops is one area of particular need. I hope that is taken on board by those who argue that point.

The new board is all about the governance of the industry and will be involved in virtually all the day-to-day management and activities of racing across the State. It will be very important to ensure that the people on the board can oversee, for example, the steward activities, the drug-testing activities, when the race meetings will be held, apprentice training, insurances, the broadcasting of race meetings, the welfare and long-term viability of the industry and rules for the conduct of racing. They are all vital in ensuring that it is an industry of integrity. The Government must ensure that this body can engage the right people to do that. Over the years the Western Australian Turf Club, the Western Australian Trotting Association and the Western Australian Greyhound Racing Authority have engaged people of substance who have been able to give us an industry that is largely devoid of any suggestion of corruption. In the future we must be absolutely vigilant in ensuring that there are never any suggestions of corruption taking place in the industry. Therefore, the board must ensure that it has the right people to undertake these functions and that they look at the industry-wide requirements as opposed to the particular requirements of each of the codes.

I will now spend a moment talking about the \$50 million. The Totalisator Agency Board Betting (Modification of Operation) Act 2000 was introduced by our Government to set in concrete that each of the codes would get the same proportion of the \$50 million they were getting of the TAB distribution, regardless of what it happened to be, and that the first \$50 million would be guaranteed and set in concrete based on the percentage of 55.26 per cent for thoroughbreds, 29.76 per cent for harness racing and 14.9 per cent for greyhound racing. That was a much maligned, misrepresented and misunderstood piece of legislation, because it guaranteed the three codes a certain number of dollars each year. The first \$50 million of the TAB's distribution was allocated to them on a legislated percentage basis, and that is what they got. Any growth above that was distributed. As I said earlier, my view was that although it should be distributed by the minister as an interim measure, I did not see that as a long-term proposition. There is merit in the proposition in this Bill that the money in excess of the \$50 million - certainly in the two years that the minister envisages - will be spent by the board. That is appropriate. Somebody other than the minister should do it. However, we must ensure that at least a basic sum of money goes to the three codes. The Government's proposition is that the \$50 million will stay in place for two years and, after that, it will be distributed at the discretion of the board with a proviso. The proviso is that Racing and Wagering Western Australia is to use its best endeavours to ensure that the amount paid or accredited to any racing club is not less than the revenue, after taxes and expenses are deducted, generated from wagering conducted by RWWA on races conducted by that racing club during the year. According to the 2001-02 figures, gallops currently get \$32.09 million. The proposition put forward in clause 106(3) of the Bill would guarantee it only \$9.3 million, based on the turnover generated by the Turf Club in Western Australia. Trotting currently gets \$17.28 million. Based on what it generates within Western Australia as a guarantee, it would get only

\$3.2 million. Greyhounds currently get \$8.7 million. Based on the post-2005 proposition contained in Labor's Bill, it would be guaranteed only \$2.21 million. Clause 106(3), based on my understanding of how it is to be interpreted, would not give much comfort to those codes that think they can get rid of the legislated percentage.

We have argued that the guaranteed percentage of the \$50 million for each code should remain in place for the five years of this legislation. In other words, between now and the time the whole system is reviewed, the first \$50 million is to be distributed on the basis of the percentages that currently exist. That would ensure that each of the codes has a guaranteed base level of funding that will not change. It will not grow, but it will not decrease. Technically, if net present values are considered, it will diminish. However, it is a guaranteed quantum of money that will remain the same. Within that, the way in which the funds are allocated to country, as opposed to metropolitan, gallops and trots will also be set based on the percentages that currently exist. That means that for five years, that \$50 million will be allocated just as it is being allocated now, and those three codes can plan their activities based on the knowledge that they will get those number of dollars. Over those five years the amount in excess of \$50 million, less the cost of running RWWA, will continue to grow. Some say that it might not, but I believe it will. To give members an example of why I think it will grow, I have considered the past and I hope that the past, in this case at least, is played out again in the future. In 1991-92 the TAB distribution was \$16.1 million to gallops, \$8.9 million to trots and \$2.9 million to greyhounds - a total of \$28 million. In 2001-02, 10 years later, the distribution was \$32 million to gallops, \$17 million to trots and nearly \$9 million to greyhounds - a total of \$58 million. It has grown from \$28 million to \$58 million in 10 years - nearly double. That was at a time when the industry told us that things were pretty grim. This is why I said earlier that the TAB is to be congratulated on the way in which it has gone about maximising the amount of revenue it can generate from the industry. If the growth remains the same for the next 10 years - we are entitled to presume that this could happen - and it doubles again, the distribution in 10 years could be \$120 million. Let us say that it grows by half of that in five years, that would be \$25 million or \$30 million generated in addition to the \$58 million. That will leave, roughly, \$30 million to \$35 million extra on top of the \$50 million, after expenses have been paid, to be distributed to the industry at the discretion of the board. That is big bickies. It would not put a stranglehold on the industry, as Peter Austin would say. It would be a growing amount of money that could be distributed by the board on the basis of the needs that it determined. At the same time, it would ensure that the base amount provided to the three codes would remain constant and would not be subjected to clause 106(3) after two years. The clause currently means that the revenues could dramatically reduce. I am not saying that this would happen, but that it could. I have argued within my own party and with anybody who has raised this issue with me that a \$50 million guarantee is better than a cap. It is not a cap; it is a guaranteed \$50 million based upon a certain percentage distribution. I have argued that this guarantee should remain in place as the insurance policy for the three codes. At the same time, growth will ensure that the board has a growing capacity over time to put money into those areas of the industry that it deems necessary. I would like the \$50 million to be left in place forever; however, we have agreed that it should be five years. If it were left in place forever, there would always be a fundamental, basic allocation. Growth would continue into the future. Over time, the amount that could be allocated by the board would greatly exceed the fundamental \$50 million base. At least the base would be maintained and the industry could be run on the basis that it knew it would get a reasonable amount of money.

The Western Australian Trotting Association is genuinely concerned that it might be done over at some stage down the track. However, if the Racing and Wagering Western Australia board does not ensure that the trotting association gets its act together far better than it currently is, everybody will lose. When I was minister I was very depressed to see the state of the trotting industry in Western Australia. The first meeting I went to as minister was the major trotting cup of the Christmas period. I cannot remember which race it was.

Hon Nick Griffiths: I think it was the Fremantle Cup.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: No, it was not the Fremantle Cup; it was the other one.

Hon Nick Griffiths: I think it was. It was just after Christmas. You and I were there and you presented the award. The horse that won the race was named after another party, which both you and I thought was amusing.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: And paid \$1.75, I think.

Hon Nick Griffiths: Whatever, but another party won the race. It turned out to be somewhat prophetic.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: I had not been to the trots for a long time. I have a country electorate and going to the trots is not part of my life. Before I was a member of Parliament I went quite regularly to the trots. At that time there was never anywhere to stand at Gloucester Park on a Friday night. When I went I certainly could not get near the rails to see the race. There were 20, 30 or 40 busy bookmakers at the course. People generally went to the trots in large numbers. When I went to the trots as minister, a canon could have been fired along the rails and would not have hit anything. There were a lot of people in the committee room having a very pleasant night and I enjoyed it very much. However, I thought that there must be a better way to spend the money. I had a

look at the bookie ring and there were three bookies and no punters. The industry had gone a long way in the wrong direction over 30 or 40 years. I guess the gallops are in a similar situation. Twenty years ago a racegoer at the gallops would be in the ledger, because there was not enough room in the main enclosure. Yet the gallops now have the same problem as the trots; not many people go to the race meetings. We must ensure that the codes are given enough money to exist; however, they should not be given much more than that. They should be given enough money to survive and should then be told by the board that if they want any more, they must show some performance and deliver some outcomes. That should relate to not only the contribution the codes make to the turnover of the Totalisator Agency Board, but also the provision of attractions to get people to these events. That is the challenge for the Racing and Wagering Western Australia board.

I guess we will discuss in greater detail such things as sunset clauses, reviews and so on when we get to the committee stage. In a broad sense, the reason Hon Barry House correctly flagged the notion of a sunset clause is that both he and I believe that we are facing pretty uncharted territory. It is a big industry and it will have to be run properly. If the new structure is put in place, which, as I said, is a hybrid body, and is given control of the TAB without any impediments other than a ministerial review, it is possible that something may go very wrong and the Government will not be able to fix it. Many people do not understand what sunset clauses are, which is regrettable. Sunset clauses are legislative clauses that I feel should be used far more often. Review clauses tend to be used now because they make people feel good. I was involved with a number of review clauses as a minister. Nobody has the faintest idea of what is going on with review clauses. Review reports often sit on the shelf. They are tabled in Parliament and nobody looks at them. An agency just keeps going on and on. The last review report I did was for the Western Australian Tourism Commission; it was given a big tick for doing a very good job. The report was tabled in the Parliament, and because it said that the Western Australian Tourism Commission was doing a good job, it did not attract any attention. The review came and went without a flutter. If it had said that the Western Australian Tourism Commission was making a terrible mess, I suppose it would have been a front-page story. Ministerial reviews can be done in such a way that people are not aware of what is occurring and they do not get a lot of attention. A sunset clause basically states that an organisation will be reviewed after a certain period, and unless the Parliament makes a positive decision to renew that legislation, it stops. With a sunset clause, a review is conducted prior to the expiry date and a decision is made, based on the review, about whether it will continue. The emphasis is on the minister of the day or the organisation itself to give the Parliament the reasons it should continue, rather than the review, which says that it will continue anyway and that if the minister does something about the review, so what. Sunset clauses state that a positive decision must be made to go forward. I suspect that it will go forward.

If the board does the right thing and the Parliament of the day agrees, based upon a thorough, in-depth analysis of what has happened in the previous five years, it will carry on and everyone will be happy. However, if it is an absolute shemozzle and is not working, it will not continue into the future; it will stop because the Parliament will say that it will not do that any more. Unlike the views expressed by some people in the newspapers, sunset clauses do not mean that the board will stop in five years and that there will be no more races and no more TAB. Before the expiry date, the Government will have to find an alternative that takes into account the concerns raised about what was in place in the previous five years, if that is what the review finds. It is not meant to be an impediment to the industry in any way. It is meant to put in place a review process that has teeth and meaning. I thought that the industry would grab this with open arms. As I said a while ago, the principal club status will be given to the board and taken away from the clubs. They will give away a lot of authority. If it turns out that this board cannot manage, it is no skin off the board's nose, because it will not be running the races on a day-by-day basis. The problem will be with the clubs that are trying to make it work on the ground. That is why I believe strongly that something must be in place, whether it is a sunset clause or some other more rigorous review.

Hon Barry House has indicated to me - and I have no reason to argue with him - that the Totalisator Agency Board agents have serious concerns about the consequences of a sunset clause. That may well be the case legally, and I am seeking advice on that. However, I must say to the minister that to write letters to all the agents stating that the Liberal Party will privatise the TAB and that they will lose all their dollars does not help the debate and is not true. Generally speaking, as a minister, Hon Nick Griffiths is not the type of person who engages in these flights of fancy in respect of political -

Hon Barry House: Point scoring.

Hon NORMAN MOORE: - point scoring, or whatever is the word that describes politicians when they are trying to shaft the Opposition. This Bill is beyond what I regard as normal party political banter. It is an attempt by this Government, with the support of the Opposition, to put in place a structure that will give this industry a serious chance of being very successful in the future. On that matter, when Hon Barry House became the shadow Minister for Racing and Gaming, he had not had a big involvement in this industry previously. He has picked up an understanding of the industry very quickly. He has made a significant contribution to our reaching this point. As Hon Barry House said as our lead speaker, the Liberal Party will support this legislation. We

believe it has every chance of being a great success, and we all desperately hope it will be. If a person were being political, he would say that he hopes it fails, so that it will be all the minister's fault. We do not think about it in those terms. We want it to be a success. However, at the same time, we want to put in place a mechanism to fix it if it is not a success. It may be that Hon Nick Griffiths will be the minister in five years. There is no way that he will put up his hand, if it is not going too well, and say that he has stuffed it up and will cancel the whole thing. He will do what all ministers do after they have been in office for that long: he will defend his own handiwork. That is why Governments usually last for only two terms - they start defending the indefensible.

If a legislative requirement is in place whereby we must seriously assess and analyse the situation, we will get the best of all outcomes, because a minister will not be trying to defend something. A serious review must be undertaken, followed by a positive decision of the Parliament for the legislation to continue. I reckon only one sunset clause is needed. I would not have a sunset clause every five years. I would have one sunset clause in five years, provided there is to be one, without seriously disadvantaging some people. Once we get over that hurdle, we will know whether the board works, whether the three codes are comfortable with it, whether the direction the board is taking with the expenditure of the funds is the direction that people want it to take, whether the board is leaning towards one code or the other, whether the people on the board are the right people, and whether the TAB is functioning in the efficient way it should. In five years we will know all those things under the new arrangement. It would make a lot of sense to give the community the power to ensure that a proper analysis is undertaken.

I have said far too much on this matter. I have a special interest that comes from having been a former minister. I must say that shadow ministers who have former ministers on their team often find it to be more of an impediment than a benefit. I am arguing strongly that we should have the Bill I introduced. I do not know whether everybody still has the same view. However, I will maintain my view until I am persuaded otherwise; and I have not been persuaded otherwise. I will continue to argue for what I believe is important for this industry, having taken a special interest in it. It is a magnificent industry. I thoroughly enjoyed my 12 months as minister. However, I regretted further down the track that I had not promised to give all the tax back to the industry and sought to buy a few thousand votes while I was at it. I took what I thought was the responsible approach. This minister can decide whether what he did was or was not responsible for what happens in the context of this legislation. However, I made the decision to not give any tax money back to the industry until I knew how it was spending the money it was getting.

I took advice from some important people in the industry whom I will not name because they would be embarrassed. Several people who are not directly involved in the management of the industry have a very good understanding of how it works. Some of them have been involved in at least two of the codes. They are the people to whom the minister needs to talk. They have the future of the industry at heart and are not all about point scoring or trots versus gallops and country versus city. They can see the industry in its entirety. I hope the Government has people like that on the board of Racing and Wagering Western Australia.

I am happy to support the Bill. I desperately hope it works. However, as I said, we must give ourselves a chance in five years to make sure that it is working, and to put the minister of the day in a position in which he must seriously determine whether it is working; otherwise it will not stay in place. I believe that proviso is very important. Finally, the five years for the distribution of the funds is another important requirement, so that the basic funding of the codes remains in place. As I said, if I knew who the members of the board would be, I might have a different view about those two amendments. However, we do not and will not know. That is one of the problems with this whole issue. We do not know who will be doing the job. That is why we must put safeguards in place that will ensure that the board can operate effectively, and at the same time we do not frighten the horses. I support the Bill.

HON JIM SCOTT (South Metropolitan) [12.27 pm]: The Greens (WA) will support this Bill. We believe it follows the main thrust of the Turner inquiry pretty closely. There has been quite a lot of consultation with the industry. I say that despite being just a novice in this area, similar to the description of my colleague on the other side of the House, Hon Barry House. I have never been to a greyhound race or even to the gallops. I have a little background in the trots, because my father had a pacer when I was a young kid. I recall being carted around on the spider. That probably would not be permitted today, I suppose.

Hon Nick Griffiths: When you mentioned the trots, I was relieved that you were referring to one of the codes, not a political movement.

Hon JIM SCOTT: Yes. I recall rethinking about trotting on one of my birthdays when I was in my early 20s. Some friends bought me a cup that they found in an op-shop, which was from a trotting meeting in Merredin. It was presented by James Scott, who was the president of the club, and was won by James Scott driving one of his horses. I was surprised to see that.

Hon Kim Chance: The horse wasn't Doodlakine Lass, was it?

Hon JIM SCOTT: No, it was not. I showed the cup to my father and asked him whether he was the James Scott. He said, "No, that wasn't me. That was the other James Scott." Another James Scott was around at that time. He said, "The only thing it doesn't say on the cup is that he was also the bloody handicapper."

As a non-gambler, I enjoy watching the horses but I have very little background in the industry apart from my long stint on the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation that dealt with quite a few of the regulations and rules of racing. It has been a learning curve for me but it is one of the areas on which I have received the most input from concerned parties. In most cases people are generally happy with the thrust of the legislation. A number of issues have been raised, in particular who will be on the board of directors. One concern was the jealousy and the lack of trust that had existed between the codes in the past. The composition of this board will test the resolve of the codes to pull together and make things work in a way that is fair to all codes. I ended up in favour of having one representative from each of the codes on the board, partly because it is fair to have equal representation from each code even though one might be bigger than the other. In a democracy, a person does not get more votes because he has more money. He is given a vote because that is democracy. The second reading speech in *Hansard* states that -

The directors of RWWA will not be appointed to represent or be delegates of any nominating organisation or particular code of racing. In fact, clause 18 of the Bill places a statutory obligation on each director to put the interests of RWWA ahead of the interests of the body that nominated the director.

Those directors will be on the board not to represent their particular industry, but to bring an understanding of the industry to the board that has the expertise; that is, the four persons chosen by a selection panel for their expertise in management, finance, business, commerce or information technology. The people who are experts in those areas will then be assisted by people who have expertise in the running of the industry.

I have listened to the concerns put forward by people who want country racing and trotting to be represented on the board. That would be ideal, but it is not a good idea to expand the membership of the board. If representatives from the codes outnumber the four experts on the board, they will end up squabbling between themselves and they will tend to dominate the proceedings. The whole thrust of this legislation is that the directors represent the interests of Racing and Wagering Western Australia and do not act as delegates from their particular codes. There is the opportunity within the codes for country people to be nominated as one of the three representatives on the board. As has already been pointed out, a large percentage of the total number of horses in the industry come from the country. I read that about 46 per cent of the trotting industry's assets are based in country areas, which is a healthy representation. Within each code there needs to be a proper process by which those people can be represented. There is also a requirement that one of the members on the board have some expertise in regional development, which I understand was a provision added to the legislation by the National Party in the other House. That ensures representation of the country interest. It may not be as direct as some people may like, but it helps direct the board to be cognisant of the needs of country areas.

The sunset clause is another matter for debate - the Leader of the Opposition just talked about it. I am concerned about that clause because, although I understand that the Bill can be resubmitted to be accepted by both Houses again with or without some slight amendment, it creates a level of uncertainty if there is a change of government or minister. People from the codes have expressed concern and they want some level of certainty about the future. I have put some amendments on the Notice Paper that allow for the setting up of a parliamentary inquiry involving both Houses. That will provide a strong basis for key stakeholders to have some input into any proposed changes, and it will also enable all sides of the political spectrum to examine how the industry has been performing. That will not only enable changes to be made if required, but also allay concerns about the future of the codes.

There has been some contention about extending the fixed terms from 2005 to 2008. I originally had some sympathy for that view, but I have since been inundated with expressions of concern from many people, particularly in the country area, including the Country Trotting Association, the Coolgardie Racing Club and the Country Racing Association. A number of people have told me that they are not in favour of that change. A great deal of concern was also expressed to me by operators from the Totalisator Agency Board about the impacts the change will have on their contracts. At this stage, I believe that the period stated in the Bill is adequate for the codes to get their houses in order and provide some certainty for the future.

I have addressed the three main areas of concern, although I know a number of smaller amendments are proposed by honourable members. The concerns are that there be a fair division between the codes of whatever comes into the industry; that there be equal representation on the board for each of the codes; and that the time allowed for the financial terms be fixed. Most people are happy with the Bill and the amendments, which are likely to be passed. I do not necessarily know that they will be passed but, counting the numbers, I think the

amendments are acceptable to, if not the perfect choice of, all members. Overall the legislation will be very acceptable.

One area in which I noted particular concern was the provincial race clubs, as Hon Norman Moore mentioned. A fax from Allan Young of the Coolgardie Racing Club reads -

We are concerned at the Liberal amendment to cap the first \$50 million of TAB distribution to current formula to 2008.

This would see the demise of racing at Kalgoorlie, Geraldton, Albany, Bunbury and Pinjarra because after the deduction of industry first charges of 8-9 million the distribution would remain as it is and under current distribution the Provincial Race Clubs would not last until 2008.

The club also provided some data to show that its percentage, given the input from those clubs, is less than other codes. However, we must all be aware that horses and horse owners do not stay in one spot; they do move around and I am sure that some horses taken to provincial races also race in the city. It would probably be the same with the trots. The horses are not linked to individual areas. There is always some confusion, and it is hard to put a precise figure on what the total share should be.

With my low level of understanding, it appears to me that what is being offered is very fair. Some of the codes need to revamp the way they have done things in the past, to attract people again. Like the Leader of the Opposition, I recall years ago going to trotting meetings that were packed with people. Those sorts of crowds are not getting along there today. Fewer young people are going into the industry, probably due more to totally different lifestyles rather than the trotting industry doing anything differently. It would have more to do with the myriad entertainments young people have available to them today, including the casino and other competing interests for people who like to gamble. Some remodelling needs to be done. I am very optimistic that the passage of this legislation will provide the opportunity for those changes to be made. With a really professional organisation with equal representation from all the codes there will be positive changes not just for one code or another but for all the codes in Western Australia, and we will see a blossoming of the industry. I support the Bill.

HON JOHN FISCHER (Mining and Pastoral) [12.46 pm]: This legislation is of great interest to me. My family has been involved in the equine industry for many years, both through thoroughbreds and polo, which uses many ex-racehorses. Generally when I go to the races I spend a lot of time looking at the horses that come last. Unfortunately, most of the thoroughbreds I have raced have finished in that position. In the past I have exported many horses, both racehorses and polo ponies, to South East Asia and I have been involved in the export of veterinary gear and horse feeds. I have a background that gives me knowledge of the outer perimeters of this industry. Of far greater importance than my personal interest, however, is the interest of many people involved in the industry in Western Australia, particularly in the Mining and Pastoral Region, which is very much the grass roots of the racing industry.

The Leader of the Opposition recently referred to racing as the sport of kings. I am not sure that that is correct. A stone inscription in northern Pakistan, attributed to Omar Khayyam, reads -

Let other people play at other things, the King of Games is still the Game of Kings.

I can assure the Leader of the Opposition that this inscription refers to the game of polo. However, definitions aside, there is no doubt that the equine industry is extremely important to the Western Australian and Australian economy. Many people would be surprised to see the figures for employment and investment in the industry, not to mention wagering or gambling, both locally and in export areas. This Bill, along with three others, will change the way racing is managed in Western Australia. They have been created to achieve two purposes. A new organisation called Racing and Wagering Western Australia will be set up to govern racing in Western Australia. The Totalisator Agency Board will be abolished and its function taken over by the new board.

The position of One Nation on any change is that it must ensure the viability of racing in both the metropolitan and country areas of Western Australia. Naturally, because of the electorate I represent, I am particularly concerned about the viability of country racing and the Country Racing Association. In the city, racing - be it the trots, dogs or thoroughbreds - comprises only three of many events that the public can choose for its entertainment. In country areas, racing may be the only event on the calendar that attracts a reasonable crowd. In many small towns in regional areas almost everyone attends race meetings. It is very important for local communities that race events continue. As an example, I recently attended the Yalgoo race day. It was an excellent example of the benefits to country towns that the racing industry bestows. Approximately 800 to 900 people attended the meeting, manyfold the total population of Yalgoo. People came from all the surrounding areas and the metropolitan area. A large percentage of the people camped the night after attending barbecues and the local dance. The input to business in Yalgoo over the weekend was substantial, and that is not to

overlook the social benefits that race meetings bring and such occasions initiate. Such events can only continue if meetings are viable. That will happen only if these Bills guarantee bottom line funding to country racing.

I am aware that the legislation in Queensland is different. However, a recent television program showed that a country race meeting in that State could not get a race date allocated even though the organisers covered their own expenses. It is something that should never be allowed to occur in regional Western Australia. I will quote from the weekend edition of *The Australian Financial Review* of 15 and 16 March. The article is titled "Queensland's country races run into dire straits". It states, in part -

Queensland picnic race days, such as the famous Birdsville races, are under threat after a decision to slash dates from the state's rural racing calendar.

There are claims that more than 25 country race clubs face extinction after the state's top racing body, Queensland Racing, on Friday announced a major rationalisation of regional and rural race meetings.

The number of days for bush race meetings has been cut in an attempt to shore up the fortunes of the larger regional and metropolitan meetings.

Outback racing representatives say they are stunned by the move, and many are predicting the end of another bush tradition.

Queensland Racing said on Friday it had dropped race meetings from the TAB and non-TAB program.

Queensland Racing chief Bob Bentley said the changes to the TAB program were designed to deliver significant wagering growth.

...

Tony Fitzgerald, the chairman of Esk Racing and a spokesman for rural and regional training centres, said on Friday the flow-on effect for small communities from the cuts would be devastating.

"It's the social and economic impact we are concerned about," Dr Fitzgerald said.

"In these areas cancelling a race day will, for example, flow down to the butcher who doesn't sell any meat for the barbecue after the races."

That is a very pertinent fact that relates to regional Western Australia and towns such as Yalgoo. Country race meetings are an integral part of the social program of country towns. Genuine concern must be expressed that race meetings can continue. Very often the economic viability of a meeting may not seem very great in terms of racing administration but the effect of the social impact on a town is very great indeed. The distribution of funds to rural and regional areas should be guaranteed. I would like an assurance that the Country Racing Association will get a minimum six per cent funding. Currently, it is ensured that country racing bodies receive 28.09 per cent of the \$50 million allocated, with six per cent going to the CRA or non-TAB clubs. The remaining funds go to provincial and TAB country clubs. Clause 105 of the Bill contains the provision that, until at least August 2005, thoroughbred country racing will receive 28.09 per cent of funds. However, there is no provision to ensure that non-TAB clubs are guaranteed to receive any share. It is my view that this provision should be included in the Bill. By guaranteeing a bottom line country racing will have the assurance and the certainty that its code will continue to survive and provide the social occasions that are so necessary in regional areas.

I am happy to see that the Government has changed its original position regarding representation on the board and has increased the number of board members from nine to 10 to accommodate the additional trotting representative. It would be a very difficult workload for one person to cover all aspects of the thoroughbred racing industry given the diversity that we have in this great State. It is equitable that the trotting industry is in the position to offer the same representation. Because country racing is so important, it is essential that the interests of the country are protected and preserved in the future. That can be achieved by ensuring that at least one member of the trotting and thoroughbred representatives on the Racing and Wagering Western Australia board is from the country. I am well aware that country areas are well represented on the inaugural board under the proposed legislation. However, I want to ensure that is maintained and enshrined in the enacted legislation. With respect to the four people on the board selected by an independent selection panel, I also want to ensure that they do not come from the racing industry. It would be in the best interests of the racing community if those four people came from different backgrounds. That would ensure that a new range of entrepreneurial skills was brought to RWWA to assist it in taking the racing industry forward to a new era. It is vital to the development of the codes that the four representatives have proven commercial track records to ensure that economic innovation is brought to the board and the racing industry.

As has been well pointed out by the Leader of the Opposition, racing and wagering has changed significantly in the past 20 years. People have the option of gambling at the casino, on the Internet, or through the TAB. People

can bet on a multitude of activities such as football and soccer - virtually anything at all. Unfortunately, it means that horseracing must join the queue to get its share of the money spent on gambling. Betting on greyhounds has continued to increase over the past few years to the point that it now represents 20 per cent of all money spent on betting. This has occurred because greyhound racing is amenable to Sky Channel broadcasts. People want to watch racing on television.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to sessional orders.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm