

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

WEDNESDAY 5TH MAY 2012

SUPPLY BILL 2012

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (17:09): I rise today to make a grievance speech in the Supply Bill debate. I just want to make some comments on the latest developments regarding marine parks, where a map with a few green spots on it has been placed on the website and we are trying to work out exactly where the new sanctuary zones are. I want to give Daryl Spencer's version of what he thinks of the new sanctuary zones. He is the President of the West Coast Crayfishermen's Association. His letter to me today is titled 'A Northern Zone's Perspective'. I quote directly from his letter:

Hello good people.

Anyone who has had anything to do with management/research in the Northern Zone Rock Lobster Fishery over the past 20 years should have alarm bells ringing in their ears after the release of the latest version of the sanctuary zones.

This has the potential, unless changed, to devastate a fishery which has been on its knees over the past five to ten years. We have endured just about everything you could imagine being thrown at us: 50% quota cuts, the SARS virus, the biggest upwelling in history as well as the uncertainty of the Chinese market.

There is no alternative but to either change these new zones or the Government must compensate.

And then you will not have a fishery as the guts will have been ripped out of it—senseless, as this industry is sustainable and provides employment and much needed export income, and direct income, to regional areas of South Australia.

Common sense must prevail; the managers and researchers must stand up and show that this will happen.

Once these areas of Lobster bottom are locked up the biomass attached is lost—our significant bulk of tagging data shows this. 90% of our lobsters are territorial, they don't move from settlement to the time they are caught or die.

We have an 'oasis-type' fishery where we have a quota of 310 tonne in an area TWENTY times the size of the Southern Zone which has a 1,250 tonne quota.

THINK ABOUT THAT.

So this should show you that if you lock up these oasis areas, which may seem small, but with the majority of the other areas 'desert' or sand, the impact will be huge.

We, the managers of the fishery, have worked hard at making this fishery sustainable. Those in power responsible for making these decisions must be alerted to the mistake they are making.

We are all in favour of marine conservation via marine protected areas. But they must be implemented in a sustainable way with real science backing them up and all the facts/justification on the table.

This doesn't seem to be the case at the moment. Aside from banning commercial fishing, which should be addressed under the Fisheries Act, what threats or risks will these sanctuary zones protect against? They won't protect against climate change, run-off from the land or commercial shipping. And all of this at the expense of our sustainable, low impact, export fishery.

I hope this gets the message across and that the Government is listening. Let's learn from the MISTAKES made in Victoria.

Everyone needs to keep at it or risk seeing a fishery fade away.

Daryl Spencer

President West Coast Crayfishermen's Association

Port Lincoln S.A.

He certainly is not a lone representative of different fisheries groups around this state still voicing their disgust at these proposed sanctuary zones put out by this Labor government.

Another issue that I want to discuss today is the forced schools amalgamation. This involves one of the schools in my area. The Murray Bridge Primary School and the Murray Bridge Junior Primary School will be forced to amalgamate. I presented a petition to this house on Tuesday 18 October 2011, signed by 723 residents of Murray Bridge and Greater South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government not to go ahead with the proposed amalgamation of the Murray Bridge Primary School and the Murray Bridge Junior Primary School.

The review committee states that it received a total of 112 submissions/petitions against the amalgamation, with only one being for the amalgamation. The result of this review is likely to cut or reduce the following programs: breakfast club; canteen upgrade for the student pathways program; student physical education programs,

which means equipment, the gymnastics program, hydrotherapy and Be Active; and the dance media program will be halved.

Neither the primary school nor the junior primary members were in favour of amalgamation. The review committee acknowledged that the pilot amalgamation has affected support staff workload, roles and responsibilities. This amalgamation will result in the removal of base grant funding to these schools of \$358,000. This reduction of funding will see programs such as yard support, pedal prix, artists in residence and mentoring programs reduced. With the amalgamation and loss of funding, this will have a negative impact on the educational and social needs of the school students.

The loss of leadership accessibility and support for counselling and direct intervention in behaviour management and loss of support programs will lead to problems carrying over into classrooms. School support officer hours are to be reduced, which assists students with disabilities such as Asperger's and ADHD, who are integrated within mainstream classrooms, and social programs. The conclusion reached by the panel clearly reflects concerns or doubts expressed by Australian Education Union members and community members, and these concerns arise from the loss of significant funding to the school under amalgamation. After all of the above, the review committee made the recommendation that the schools amalgamate. This was signed off on 19 December 2011.

I want to read the minority report by Virginia Gill into *Hansard*. Ms Gill was the AEU representative on the Murray Bridge amalgamation review panel. She indicates that she is submitting a minority report for the following reasons:

As indicated in the report, the vast majority of the submissions from the school community were opposed to the amalgamation due to concerns deemed by them to be very significant. These include:

loss of specialised intervention programs to support students with special learning needs, including a reduction in SSO hours for classroom support for these students;

the need for well resourced staffing and initiatives to engage positively with students, parents and members of the wider community in a complex category 2 site;

increased demands on the workload of the leadership team and the principal in particular, leading to reduced accessibility to the principal by parents and the wider community members;

reduced resources for programs and strategies to support Aboriginal students in their learning to close the gap in terms of learning and life outcomes for them; and

concerns about staff morale and well being expressed by primary staff in particular during the trial amalgamation pilot in 2011;

Submissions/petitions opposed to the proposed amalgamation numbers 112, and only one was in favour of the amalgamation. This is particularly significant in my decision to lodge a minority report, as the voice of the school community, while certainly not ignored by the panel, is so overwhelmingly opposed to amalgamation in 2013 .

Still quoting from Virginia's minority report, she states:

I would like to acknowledge that I believe the principal and all panel members acted in good faith and that the processes undertaken to prepare the panel report by the chairperson in particular were comprehensive. My key issues focus on the reduced finances available to such a high-needs, complex site, and the views of parents, teachers and support staff provided to the panel in consultation process. My understanding is that the process of setting up the amalgamation review committees was to investigate the issues as seen by the communities and the schools. I believe it is clear that the community's preference was that the two schools retain their separate identities. I am also very concerned that the community may respond very negatively to a decision to amalgamate the schools, given their strong opposition to it.

That is why I cannot understand why this process worth \$375,000 was spent by the education minister to talk about a proposal to amalgamate schools when, obviously, the minister and her department and this Labor government had already decided because they could save about \$5 million across the state—I think it was already decided.

This is so-called consultation, with just a tick the box, thinking that they talked to community members. They do not even listen to their own union members who support the Labor Party. They certainly came into my office. I have never had so many union members in my office at any one time lobbying me to stop this proposal. It shows that this government will still operate in an announce and defend way of doing things instead of consulting in a proper manner so that communities can get the right outcome.

I believe this will have a damaging impact on the educational outcomes at the Murray Bridge Junior Primary School and the Murray Bridge Primary School. The government should have listened to the community. The government was comprehensively told by the community that they did not want this to happen, yet the government just runs roughshod over a community once again. The year 2014 cannot come soon enough.

