

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE (TRUST PROPERTY) AMENDMENT BILL

10 November 2011

Adjourned debate on second reading. (Continued from 25 November 2010.)

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (10:47): I rise in support of the member for Bragg's bill. Much has been covered by speakers in this place, including the member for Schubert about the sale of the properties—Moralana Station, Munduney Station and Martindale Farm—by the university. The issue here comes back to what recurrent funding has been available from the federal government to support further education at the university and what state funding is going to support the education especially of rural people in this state.

What bothers me and the whole rural education scene in this state is that everything seems to be coming down to a few acres at the Waite Institute and I think there are many reasons for that. I have been very troubled in the past few years about the future of Roseworthy and whether that institution is safe into the future, and I mean the very long-term future of agricultural education in this state.

We have seen many courses cut that used to be run out at Roseworthy. We had the horse course. Viticulture was a big course out there which has now come into Adelaide and a lot of the Ag. science courses are now mainly run out of Waite. I was very concerned that, with the way things were going at Roseworthy, it was getting run down to almost nothing. Thankfully, there has been an injection of funds to put in the veterinarian school out there, and I was fortunate to be at the opening of that with several other members. It is a fantastic facility and may it be well used and maintained. It provides a great impetus to get up to 450 or 500 students, I believe, back into that campus. I think that before that happened, we were at very real risk of losing a major facility for the state.

There are many concerns about these properties being sold by the university. They were bequeathed to the university, and it uses the excuse that they were only bequeathed for 20 years and they have kept them for 40 years. Well, is it good enough for the people of this state, though, to see these very good income earning assets sold off so that other items on the university's learning agenda can be propped up? I do not think so. They should have been retained by the university. They were forgotten about in the earlier legislation, and legislation should have gone through before any sale could proceed.

I said that I would be succinct with my remarks, but I reiterate that, as the shadow minister for agriculture, I am very concerned about primary industry education in this state. I am concerned about the build-up and spread of the suburbs, and I know there will be a lot of pressure on Roseworthy to retain all its property from developers out there. You hear all sorts of rumours all the time, but all I can say is that Roseworthy had better be kept as it is, with all the acres that are attached to it, in its present form. We do not want to see things like this going away and the foot off the pedal with agricultural learning experience in this state.

Finally, we have already seen one problem this morning where this government has just taken its eye off the ball, as far as supporting our local primary producers goes, by importing Chinese apples into the health department. It is interesting that after a little bit of media that decision has been overturned.

So, someone does not have their eye on the ball. This government has taken its eye off the ball with primary industries in this state, using it as a cash cow to prop up suburban projects—\$180 million over four years ripped out of primary industries support and 180 jobs. It is not good enough for the future wellbeing of agriculture in this state. I support the bill.