

TOURISM SA NUMBER PLATES – 19 February 2009

Mr PISONI (Unley) (11:31): *I move:*

That this house calls on the state government to promote the attractions of South Australia by including Tourism SA's website address on all new numberplates for South Australian registered vehicles.

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:52): I also support this motion by the member for Unley. I think it is an excellent motion. It makes me wonder why, as of late last year, we do not have any slogans on our numberplates. We do have a great state and we should be doing everything we can to promote it. Obviously, when he was overseas, the eagle eye of the member for Unley noticed the Maryland-plated vehicles and this style of advertising where people can link straight into the website. In this day and age, some of us over 35 struggle with the internet at times and getting used to things such as YouTube and Facebook, which are fast becoming the mediums of communication this century, and I am sure they will be run over by something else in the very near future.

Obviously, it is the only way to go in terms of promoting this state. We can look at the diversity in this state from the Far North, the Far West and the Upper North, through to the Flinders Ranges and down through the Mid North and the wine-growing region of Clare. You then come down through the Barossa Valley, obviously through Adelaide and down to the McLaren Vale area, and I do note some excellent accommodation in the McLaren Vale area which I think should be absolutely promoted. It has not been promoted well by some, but it should be noted that some excellent opportunities exist down there and that some excellent people work in the industry down there. A friend of mine, Chester Osborn, at his d'Arenberg winery does a fantastic job promoting wine from that area.

When you look at tourism through the Mid and Upper North you get to the River Murray and, for a lot of reasons—including, obviously, lack of water—there is a perception that nothing is happening on the Murray in a tourism sense. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is a lot of drama with people unable to access water and a massive problem with low allocations and that sort of thing—a lot of stress up and down the river—but there is still the opportunity to hire houseboats. Where you can find a boat ramp to put in your boat, there is still plenty of opportunity for skiing and other activities on the river. It is certainly having its problems, and slumping and that sort of thing is occurring, but people are managing to get by.

I note that in a lot of senses tourism has suffered an unfair hit with all the negative publicity about conditions up and down the full length of the river. But it is interesting, as you come down the river and look about, especially when you get to the bottom end—and Meningie and places such as Goolwa and Milang have copped their share of negative publicity—that it is opening up a new environment for visitors to see. I was talking to a friend from Meningie only the other day and he said that people are driving out on the exposed lake bed of Lake Albert and looking at the new environment and seeing what is happening out there. There is still a massive number of people stopping on Highway 1 to see what is happening and looking at different things along the length of the Coorong. Even though these areas are suffering, and suffering big time, people are still going there.

I am well aware that a lot of boats have left the Goolwa area, but a lot of people are still going there to look at the beautiful town and the area—on Hindmarsh Island and, also, around at Clayton and Milang. All these areas have suffered because of some low inflows, but it is very interesting what you see. As I mentioned previously, you see a changing environment, especially at Milang. I think I have noted it in this place before. You go there now and you see the natural self-regeneration of plant life on the lake bed that has been exposed in the last 18 months. I have heard it has to be mown to ensure kids can play there without a snake issue.

We need to promote tourism throughout the state, including up and down the river. Then we go further down to the Upper and Lower South-East. Some would say that the Lower South-East is the place of milk and honey in these times. It has always been a relatively wet place and is certainly wetter than where my property is in the Upper South-East. They are

blessed with groundwater they can access not only for irrigation but also for stock and domestic needs—as is the Mallee in my own electorate of Hammond.

We should be promoting the www.tourism.sa site on our numberplates and the beauty of our national parks—even parks such as Ngarkat. It is fantastic to get out in the natural bush. We used to get out all the time with a group on the October long weekend and have a great camping experience. I remember a very interesting trip I had with my then fairly heavily pregnant wife. From Tintinara, we came in the back way to the Lameroo end of the national park in an old three-speed Land Cruiser, and I do not think she will forget the trip, either. I said to my friends at the other end, 'If we do not make it we have plenty of food on board. I can be three days out here if I need to.'

Ms Chapman: Was she thrilled with that?

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, I will not go into the detail of the story.

Mr O'Brien: And she married you!

Mr PEDERICK: She was already married. She was heavily pregnant. I must clarify that for the chamber. I believe she was pregnant with my first son, Mack. Getting back to that, it was interesting that, when I was talking to my wife about getting married, I made it perfectly clear what I did out there in the bush and that sort of thing, but she was still keen. So that was a good thing.

Members interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Be that as it may, I will get back to tourism. I could not put her off marrying me, put it that way.

Members interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: I meant in light of my career as a farmer and that sort of thing. She came from a staunch ALP-voting family but I have managed to mend her ways. I am digressing and I apologise for that.

Mr Griffiths: Turned her from the dark side!

Mr PEDERICK: Yes, as the member for Goyder said, 'Turned her from the dark side.' I have lost my train of thought after all that.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr PEDERICK: Tourism, yes. We have done the Ngarkat thing. We do want to promote all of our tourism icons in this state including something like natural bushland. Yes; they do suffer fires in Ngarkat and I think we need better management in parks like that, and in Messent down in the South-East, as well. South Australia has such great diversity, whether it is in wetter climates, drier climates or just the sheer beauty of the Flinders Ranges. A lot of these things are close to home—wherever you live. I commend the member for Unley for this motion, which I think should be supported in a bipartisan way to benefit South Australia as a state.