



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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TRADING [ALLOWABLE HOURS] AMENDMENT BILL

Ms NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (9.39 p.m.): I rise to speak in strong support of the Trading (Allowable Hours) Amendment Bill. This legislation creates a uniform trading zone and rectifies the ludicrous situation that would have existed if the Industrial Relations Commission's plan had been implemented. Ipswich people need to be clear about what the alternative would have been. On Sundays it would have been possible to shop at Mount Ommaney but not 15 minutes away at Redbank. Ipswich consumers would not have had the same choice as their neighbours. While we do a huge amount of work to promote local shopping, on Sundays we would not have been able to support Ipswich businesses even if we had wanted to. It would have meant Ipswich jobs were lost. While I appreciate that there are concerns amongst some Ipswich businesses about Sunday trading, the fact is that once Brisbane had Sunday trading, Ipswich had to have it. Clearly, this decision was the only sensible one.

I strongly reject the argument that Sunday trading is necessarily anti small business. It may disadvantage the convenience store, as opposed to Woolies, but it creates real opportunities for small businesses such as coffee shops and book shops that specialise in recreational shopping. I believe the Beattie government has taken genuine and commendable steps to ensure that working on Sunday is voluntary. Certainly no-one should be forced to work on Sunday and this legislation establishes a structure to ensure that freedom is protected.

I spent many years working at Big W, Booval and during that time the staff were always very keen to work on Sundays and receive payment at double time and a half. I am sure that there are many workers in Ipswich, many of them young people, who look forward to that decent money, which only ever came at Christmas when I worked at Big W, becoming a regular thing.

There is some concern in Ipswich that Sunday trading will not take off. I share that concern. Currently a lot of money is being invested in Ipswich shopping centres. A new car park is being built to cater for the huge trade at Booval Fair and the \$10 million redevelopment of the Westway centre will make a real difference to shopping options at Ipswich. The Riverlink development is awaiting council approval. I believe that if the council is vigilant and the development is done well, it could create a real boost as well as shopping opportunities for the centre of Ipswich. We know that there is money to be made from retail in Ipswich and that there is money to be invested, so what is missing? The Ipswich CBD is letting the community down. While Ipswich is a community with soul and, as all the evidence shows, with money to spend, the empty shops and quiet streets of the CBD do not reflect that vitality. The state government made a significant investment, along with the council, in the CBD when the Global Arts Link was built, and more funds are coming for Darcy Doyle Place.

However, public infrastructure alone is not the answer. The Ipswich City Square is crying out for redevelopment. It was massively redeveloped by the Kern Corporation in the eighties but barely a cent has been spent on it since. The time for redevelopment has well and truly arrived. The original planning was certainly questionable and it remains a great shame that Ipswich turns its back to the river. However, improvements can certainly be made. We need a redevelopment that incorporates a department store and that greatly extends the number of specialty shops available in the CBD.

While I question the sense of the situation which developed in the eighties where one company and now one person—T.P. Tay—owns the entire centre of town, the fact remains that that is so. This situation cannot simply be solved by government money. Ipswich City Square is a private centre and

needs private investment. It is a let-down to the people of Ipswich that the centre of our city should be left to wither on the vine. While I remain the member for Ipswich, I will work to see that investment is made in our CBD. This bill provides further opportunities for investment, jobs, work and shopping choice for the people of Ipswich and I commend it to the House.