

HAIRDRESSERS REGISTRATION (AMENDMENT AND EXPIRY) BILL 2010

Second Reading

Resumed from 9 March.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [9.50 pm]: This is the first time that I have been the lead speaker for the opposition. I will not speak for long on the Hairdressers Registration (Amendment and Expiry) Bill 2010.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Keep it short, like a good haircut!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I never have them!

I have raised with the Minister for Commerce a couple of issues outside the chamber and I will repeat them here. The Hairdressers Registration Board of Western Australia has a long history about whether it needs to be retained. In the 1990s when I worked for the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association of WA, which represents hairdressers in Western Australia, I was involved in discussions about the retention or abolition of the board. At that time, the union's view was that the board should be retained. However, it was never intended to be retained in the form that it currently exists. With the effluxion of time, it is clear that the board has outlived its usefulness. It did have a purpose, which was to provide certain standards in the industry. It is important to remember that this industry is dominated by women. It is a skilled occupation and it is important to protect the need to retain training in the industry. The minister and I discussed this in the corridor earlier. The retention of training in the industry is critical for the number of women who work in the industry and to maintain their wages because if the occupation moves away from being a trade occupation, the wages will inevitably decline.

It is fair to say that many employers like the registration board because it prevents quasi-hairdressers from coming into the industry who would perform only a limited range of tasks. The process of registration encouraged every employee in the business to be either an apprentice or a fully trained hairdresser. That was a benefit to the industry. It will be interesting to see how those training standards continue to be applied in the future. This industry is not without health risks both to the client and the employees. Often people make light of the problems associated with hairdressing. It is said that the difference between a good haircut and a bad haircut is a fortnight. The member for Mindarie might be able to contribute to that debate! Many chemicals are used in the industry and there are a wide range of health effects from the use of many of those chemicals. The beauty therapy industry is closely associated with hairdressing, and some of the chemicals used for invasive beauty therapies are quite difficult to comprehend. A material data safety sheet on a number of the chemicals used in the industry show that many of them are carcinogens and can cause serious problems if they are handled incorrectly. The fact that the hairdressing industry has prided itself on its extensive levels of training has meant that Western Australia has not experienced the types of problems that other jurisdictions have experienced. I know that the minister will take up the challenge to ensure that the problems that occur in other countries and other states do not occur in Western Australia.

Another issue that I have raised with the minister relates to clause 18 of the bill, which proposes to insert new section 22 into the principal act to transfer the assets of the board to the state to be administered by the department assisting the minister. This is where the minister gets his money. The money that is held by the Hairdressers Registration Board has been raised entirely by the fees paid by the hairdressers. It is their money. The minister told me that there is only \$500 000 left in the Hairdressers Registration Board. I have not been involved in the industry for seven years, but I understood that the board had quite a lot more money than that. If it is only that small amount, it is probably not a big issue. It would be good to see the assets of the board applied to benefit the people in the industry, whether that be supporting apprentices or further education for workers in the industry or for some other facility. I am sure that the Treasurer would love to get hold of the money, as happens with every government. We are not moving any amendment along those lines. When those assets are realised, it would be appropriate to use whatever amount of money it is—whether it is \$500 000 or more—for the benefit of the people in the industry because they have paid the money to the government. It would be appropriate to head down that path.

Despite the suggestion from some of my colleagues that I should call a quorum and that if I do not get it, I can continue my remarks tomorrow, I do not intend to say any more than those few remarks. The Hairdressers Registration Board performed an important function in Western Australia. It is true that both employees and employers have grown in a different direction from the Hairdressers Registration Board. If the board had been given additional powers and responsibilities in the late 1990s, it might have been worth saving but I do not think that the majority of people in the industry believe that the board needs to be protected. That is why the Labor Party joins the government in supporting this bill.

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [9.57 pm]: I will not hold up the member for Vasse for too long. I know that this is a matter about which he is passionate. As a former Minister for Small Business, I am heartily happy that finally the Hairdressers Registration Board of Western Australia is on the way out. Its lack of relevance was often cited to me and I did my utmost to see its dispatch. I hope that the Potato Marketing Corporation will not be long behind it. I will raise a couple of issues about the implications of winding up the Hairdressers Registration Board. The member for Cannington said that in its initial incarnation the Hairdressers Registration Board served a useful purpose. Some more uncharitable people would say that it had protectionist overtones when it was set up and that it was about preventing hairdressers who got off a boat from Naples from working in the local market by testing them on whether they could adequately perform a wisteria perm. That was one way to act in a protectionist manner to keep them out. In recent years there have been some unintended consequences regarding the board. In my electorate and the member for Nollamara's electorate are a lot of African women who want to set up a service to braid the hair of other African women in particular. However, they fall foul of this regime. As members can imagine, not a lot of African women want a wisteria perm, but people who want registration must effectively be able to do that. I very much welcome this development. It is a start. I think we need to look seriously at the range of other similar bodies. This is the start of what I hope is a development whereby the necessity of some of these boards is seriously scrutinised and assessed. Having said that, this is a far cry from things such as plumbers or electricians. A public safety issue is a different issue. As the member for Cannington said, the implications for a bad haircut last for only 14 days. I will conclude and let the member for Vasse vent his spleen or whatever. I welcome this bill and I congratulate the government on progressing it.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [10.00 pm]: I will be brief. The member for Cannington has outlined the opposition's position on the Hairdressers Registration (Amendment and Expiry) Bill 2010. The opposition will support this bill.

I have had a number of emails from hairdressers, both in my electorate and outside it, on this bill. A couple of the emails were in support of retaining the Hairdressers Registration Board of Western Australia. However, the vast majority said, as the member for Cannington pointed out, that the board has outlived its purpose having been in place since the mid-1940s.

My hairdresser, Mario Costanzo, is concerned about the level of skills of the young apprentices that he supervises and trains. I found myself in an interesting position last week when I was getting my hair cut. I told him that this bill would be debated this week and I asked him what he thought about it. He said, "Well, we pay our fees, but the board doesn't do anything anymore. I understand that it is well past its due date." However, he expressed a concern with the level of training within the industry. Generally, the market will probably resolve that over time as those institutions that do a better job at training their students will grow and flourish, whereas those who do not do such a good job will decline.

As it was pointed out in the former Minister for Commerce's second reading speech, the legislation has basically superseded the role of the board. Legislation has come in over the past decade that makes the board otherwise redundant.

The member for Cannington made a good point about the winding up of the board and the assets—in particular cash. I think the member referred to an amount of \$500 000. He suggested that rather than it being returned to consolidated revenue, the minister might be able to find an appropriate way to support apprentices in the hairdressing industry. Apart from that, I have no comment to make other than to indicate once again that the opposition will support this legislation.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave denied to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Consideration in Detail

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.M. Harvey): Minister, do you wish to bring your advisers to the table?

Mr W.R. MARMION: No, I do not.

Clauses 1 to 17 put and passed.

Clause 18: Sections 22, 23 and 24 inserted —

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I place on record that the Leader of the House does not need to panic. The opposition is not worried about this bill. This is an opportunity for the minister to respond to the comments I made in the second reading debate. Principally, we are doing this to allow the member for Vasse, who was the minister at the

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

time of the second reading, the opportunity to speak to this bill. It is a fair and reasonable thing to do. If the minister wants to comment on the issue I raised about the assets of the board, I would be pleased.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I wish to thank all members who contributed to the second reading debate—the member for Cannington, the member for Girrawheen and the member for Victoria Park. I note that the opposition will support the bill and has read the second reading speech.

I take on board Mario Costanzo's view about training and the member for Victoria Park's view that the market will sort that out.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: He made that point to me while I had a haircut last week.

Mr W.R. MARMION: The member for Cannington referred to the winding up of the assets. I have an updated figure. The cash assets are approximately \$737 000. There must be some liabilities, hence the net equity is approximately \$642 000. In terms of winding it up, there will be outstanding leave to consider. It may be that the actual surplus might be very small. We can take on board the point that if there is a negligible amount of money, it might end up in the consolidated account. We will see what we can do.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Out of interest, has the board been active?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes, the board has been meeting to meet its constitutional requirements.

Clause put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Minister for Commerce) [10.07 pm]: I move —

That the bill now be read a third time.

MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse) [10.08 pm]: I want to make a couple of comments on the Hairdressers Registration (Amendment and Expiry) Bill 2010 and thank the member for Cannington for devising a path forward for me to speak on it. I introduced this bill to the house.

On or near 27 April, when my job changed in this house, I gave a range of undertakings to the Premier about issues that I would or would not speak on. The one thing I could not let pass without making a few comments on is the abolition of the Hairdressers Registration Board.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is your place in history.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: It is my place in history, Premier, and I will claim it. I do so with all deference to the new and well-performing Minister for Commerce.

This issue has been around for a long time. Previous governments of both persuasions have looked at the Hairdressers Registration Board and it has been a very difficult task in terms of reform to remove it. It is a sad indictment of my career, as interesting as it was, when I reflect that the most significant reformist achievement has been the abolition of the Hairdressers Registration Board. By golly, Madam Acting Speaker, did it not deserve it?

I will share with the house an interesting experience that occurred to me. I will paraphrase and simplify this and no doubt offend the members of the Hairdressers Registration Board. Upon assuming the role of the Minister for Commerce, I received a letter from the Hairdressers Registration Board. Again, without having the letter in front of me and paraphrasing it in an incredibly simplistic way, it said, "Dear minister"—sometimes on reflection I wish I had kept that letter.

Mr W.J. Johnston: You can put in an FOI for it.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The record keeping in my office was often a little flexible. The letter said that it had been noticed that a significant number of African people had moved to Perth. They have, and it is fantastic. My view strongly is that those people of African descent do and will continue to make a fantastic contribution to the cultural dynamic of Western Australia. I have met a number of representatives of the African community. The letter went on to say that a number of these African ladies—perhaps, some men as well—engage in a process that is referred to generally as African hair braiding. I thought that was interesting. Indeed, they do; in fact, I had the unique opportunity to closely inspect some braided African hair. It is simply a method to keep one's hair, I suppose, under control when it is long. The letter writer said that it was the view of the board—again, perhaps I am oversimplifying the letter—that this process of African hair braiding is a breach of the Hairdressers

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

Registration Act and that we should regulate it and outlaw it. We will scour the suburbs of Perth and root out those hair braiders and we will persecute them and prosecute them to the full extent of the law, as allowed by the Hairdressers Registration Act! One of my former advisers at the back of the room was never that attentive when we had those meetings, but I think I said, "Let's write a letter back and say thank you for your letter. Rather than regulate African hair braiding, I think we will abolish the board!" I reckon that was in October or November 2008 and here we are, I do not know, 18 months later and this legislation is going through this house, and it is a great day of celebration.

Every time I go back to Busselton, my hometown, my hairdresser, Amanda, a very patient English migrant in the barber's shop in Busselton, impresses upon me the need to abolish the Hairdressers Registration Board. Hairdressers in my hometown, Gloria Craig and others also impress on me the need to abolish the Hairdressers Registration Board. I often asked them why. Amanda shared an example with me. A couple of years ago when we could not get hairdressers, Amanda had a person who came to her hairdressing business in Busselton and said that he or she wanted to work there and cut hair. Amanda gave the person a test and she said that the person was really good. This person had cut hair in some of the leading salons in the United Kingdom and had come to Busselton—why not; it is a wonderful place?—but because the person was not registered, Amanda could not give the person the job. That is ridiculous! It is absolutely ridiculous to expect that a person would come to Perth and have to take a course to get the tick to be a hairdresser when that responsibility should rest with the owner of the hairdressing facility. If owners cannot make a decision about the quality of the people on the tools in their premises and the government has to get involved, I think we have confused ourselves and confused the role of government. Although this in and of itself is something that we can dismiss with a flippant couple of comments about African hair braiding, it is actually an important first step in reducing regulation—the sort of regulation that you, Madam Acting Speaker (Mrs L.M. Harvey), uncovered time and again when you scoured the countryside as part of the Red Tape Reduction Group.

Indeed, one of the things that I have discovered—as I think anyone who is involved with the formulation of public policy would discover—is that it is really easy to introduce bad regulation and legislation and it is incredibly difficult to get rid of it. I think that is what we need to be mindful of in this place. That is one of the reasons the government introduced—it was an initiative of the former government, perhaps tidied up and sharpened by us—the regulatory gatekeeping unit in the Department of Treasury and Finance. Now legislation and regulation that go through government have to be checked against their impact on small business because we often pass legislation in this place that has unintended consequences. Occasionally there is legislation and/or regulation that is well past its use-by date, and that is indeed the Hairdressers Registration Act.

Two examples spring to mind. One was legislation we introduced into this place to deal with stamp duty as it applied to motor vehicles used by motor vehicle dealers for incidental use. If members speak with a motor vehicle dealer in Western Australia, they will hear that the legislation drives them mad. The member for Victoria Park has a number of dealers on the strip in his electorate and he can ask them about this incredible imposition on their time to fill in pathetic pieces of paper. That legislation is working through government now, as I recollect, but it just takes so long to unwind shoddy, poorly thought-out pieces of legislation. There is a probably another example —

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Not brothels, member for Victoria Park. We do not have any of those in Busselton that I am aware of!

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: We are third reading, Whip, I am just winding up.

Another example of how difficult it is to undo shoddy legislation is the current efforts to free up retail trade in Western Australia. I watched with some interest some of the opposition's colleagues in the upper house cover themselves with layer upon layer of complete stupidity this evening as they attempted to argue why this Sunday the member for Victoria Park's constituents will not be able to go to that Woollies at the bottom of the hill and go shopping.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Top of the hill.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: At the top of the hill. It is ridiculous! It was absolutely ridiculous. I used to call them public policy Luddites; I think that is being too generous. What I saw tonight was a herd of public policy Neanderthals dragging their knuckles across serious public policy formulation in Western Australia. I appreciate this is a third reading debate and maybe I am going off on a bit of a tangent —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.M. Harvey): I was coming close to drawing you to the bill before the house!

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I was going to reflect shop, distributive and allied employees—is that what it is called, member for Cannington? It is the member for Cannington’s old union and it has not paid a legal gun for hire to provide legal opinion on this bill because we might find ourselves in a similar position. I understand that the union paid for the legal advice that those public policy Neanderthals—the member’s colleagues in the upper house—fed on —

Point of Order

Mr B.S. WYATT: The member for Cannington went into consideration in detail for the sole purpose of giving the member for Vasse the opportunity to contribute to the third reading debate. In the goodwill of that mood—I know that under standing orders, the third reading contribution has to relate to consideration in detail, as I am sure you are aware, Madam Acting Speaker—I am sure that the member for Vasse is not simply going to use this opportunity to attack our colleagues in the upper house. I am more than happy for him to treat the Parliament as his personal punchline as he is wont to do, but I certainly request that if he will use it as an opportunity to make vindictive attacks on members of the other place, you draw him back to the consideration in detail that had one question on clause 18.

The ACTING SPEAKER: To the point of order, member for Vasse, I will draw you back to the bill that is before the house. The third reading stage is not an opportunity to bring in other broad-ranging debate.

Debate Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I will wind up, but I was just making the point that once we have legislation in place, it is difficult to undo it.

I will just conclude on my observations of those public policy Neanderthals in the upper house, I thought that —

Mr P.B. Watson: I preferred it when you sulked around the place; you were much better then!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Sorry?

Mr P.B. Watson: I preferred it when you sulked around the place, you know, looking for a friend. You’d put a bit of Lindt on your head so somebody would come up and lick you!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: That is a really intelligent contribution to the debate.

Mr P.B. Watson: I am not talking to a very intelligent person.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I put it down to the fact that there is a large space between the edge of your brain and the inside of your cranium!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! In the interests of hearing the end of this third reading debate at this time of the evening, member for Vasse, I draw you back to the bill. Members, I request that you stop interjecting.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I was simply going to say that the contributions from members opposite pale into insignificance compared with some of the contributions from one of the minor parties—that party not being the Nationals. Notwithstanding that —

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Which party would that be, member for Vasse?

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The Greens.

But this bill is an important part of a reform agenda. It highlights how difficult any reform agenda in government is. I think that when we look back in history at the abolition of the Hairdressers Registration Board, people will say that it was no big deal. By my recollection it has taken three governments, two or three different inquiries and a hell of a lot of effort to get this bill abolished —

Mr C.J. Barnett: It was easier to put a man on the moon!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Premier, I could go one step further—it was more difficult than reconstructing the Cottesloe pylon! Notwithstanding that, the Hairdressers Registration Board will effectively, I hope, as this bill passes through the upper house—and one always gets concerned about what could happen there—be abolished. It is an important, albeit historically small first step on what will be a great period of reform by government in how we govern small businesses, in particular, and control their activities in Western Australia.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [10.20 pm]: It was not my intention to participate in the third reading debate. The third reading debate was, of course, only a device that we went into so that the member for Vasse could make a contribution to the debate. We need to understand that the member for Vasse was the minister

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Wednesday, 23 June 2010]

p4544b-4551a

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

responsible for this area when this bill was introduced, but because he is no longer the minister responsible he was not able to speak in the second reading debate. The Labor Party is always very fair and reasonable in trying to give members the opportunity to contribute to debate. It is very interesting to listen to the member for Vasse's contribution. It is easy always in politics to abuse people, but it is very hard to do the job.

I want to make a couple of points about this bill. This is an important piece of legislation that provided an important benefit to women in this state. Hairdressing is an industry that was and still is dominated by women. Had it not been for this legislation—we know this because we have seen what has happened in other states—there would not have been adequate training for women in this industry. Women in this industry are paid a tradesman's rate. The member for Cockburn would understand exactly the issue that I am raising here. During the restructuring of awards in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was the tradesman's rate that protected these workers in this industry and ensured they were paid a very good wage that respected the training that they had received. The industrial relations system now is very different from what it was at that time. It will be a very important challenge for this government to ensure that the wage rates in this industry do not fall. It is glib and easy to make childish commentary about these types of laws. It is harder to achieve things. In 1946 when this legislation was enacted, it was visionary legislation. In 1946, this legislation provided an important protection for women.

I will not go on about this for too long, because I do not want to bore the house, but in the 1920s the retail industry was dominated by men, and the wages in the industry were high. After the war, women moved into the retail industry and wages relatively declined. That was an indictment on the community in this state and nationally. It took a union like the then Shop Assistants' Union to take the bull by the horns when the leadership of the union changed in the late 1970s and Jim Maher, the former national secretary, took over the union and raised wage rates to decent levels. Again, when the then Shop Assistants' Union amalgamated with the then Hairdressers' Union nationally in Western Australia, they were able to drag the rates of pay for women in this industry up from the poor rates that had existed previously to the proper tradesman's rate. I know that the member for Cockburn understands the point I am making about that. When the relativities were being set in the early 1990s, the rates for these women were set at the tradesman's rate. That provided an important protection for them. It was basically because this act required these women to receive proper training.

So it is nice and easy to say that this is an irrelevant piece of legislation. It is not. It was visionary legislation that protected women workers—women workers who contributed the \$640 000 that we discussed during the consideration in detail stage. So it is nice and easy to come in here and rabbit on about some deregulation. The member for Vasse was big on small government when he was in opposition, yet this government is the highest spending government in the history of this state. When this government came into power and it had the ability to do something about the level of expenditure in this state, it put expenditure up. The member for Vasse referred during the third reading speech to the Red Tape Reduction Group. An amount of \$40 million a year, according to that document, will be saved, not by the government and not by the taxpayers, but by the entire economy. It cannot be measured. That is how small the regulatory burden is that the member for Vasse was discussing. It cannot be measured in this state. If every single recommendation of the Red Tape Reduction Group were to be implemented in this state, it would not measure the effect on the economy. It is nice and glib to come in here and run these one-liners. But it is hard to do the job. That is why the member for Vasse is no longer a minister. We all understand that. It is nice and easy to make these glib and throwaway lines. But it is hard to do the work. This was visionary legislation 60 years ago. But it is no longer applicable, and that is why the Labor Party supports its abolition.

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn) [10.23 pm]: I want to add a few words to what has been said by the member for Cannington. I was very disappointed by the contribution from the member for Vasse. The member for Vasse sees this bill as a reform of small business and an eradication of red tape. That is not what this bill is about. It was never planned by our government or previous governments for that end. It is because time has passed. The reason the previous Liberal government wanted to get rid of the Hairdressers Registration Board is because the national standards in training that had been created throughout the 1980s were replacing all of the work that had been done by that board. It had served its purpose. It is not about a reform of small business and the eradication of red tape at all. The board itself has served its purpose, time has passed, and national standards have replaced the conditions that the board is able to enforce at the hairdresser level.

I would like to put on the record my thanks on behalf of the Labor Party to all those people who served on the Hairdressers Registration Board over the years because they did a very, very good job on behalf of people who work in the industry and the industry itself. They have actually kept standards up in the industry to ensure that when people go to a hairdresser, they are guaranteed that their hair will be cut, dyed, or whatever. Do not laugh. This is not a laughing matter.

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

Mr M.J. Cowper: I can laugh if I want to. How do you know what I'm laughing at?

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Because it reflects on the member's stupidity.

Mr M.J. Cowper: Have a look at yourself!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Just because we are talking about —

Mr M.J. Cowper: I wasn't talking about anyone; I didn't say a word —

Mr F.M. LOGAN: —women's hair and hairdressing. The member for Murray–Wellington does not have to laugh; there is nothing funny about it.

Mr M.J. Cowper: I wasn't laughing at that.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Yes, the member was; he was laughing like an incompetent idiot. For God's sake!

Mr M.J. Cowper: You're a drongo. You're a fair dinkum drongo.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Another major contribution from the member for Murray–Wellington!

Mr M.J. Cowper: You're a fair dinkum drongo.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: What a major contribution from the member for Murray–Wellington!

The SPEAKER: Thank you, members!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: That further reflects on his behaviour.

The people on this board who contributed their time and effort into the running of the board ensured that standards were kept up for people who visit hairdressers. The board wanted to ensure that when women in particular visit a hairdresser, they can walk out rest assured that they are satisfied primarily with the cut and particularly with the colour. There is nothing worse for people, particularly women, having their hair destroyed by a small business person who is a hairdresser. It is a total disaster. It is bad enough for men and people like me who come out looking like a shorn sheep.

Mr J.M. Francis interjected.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: That is right—I think the member for Jandakot and I probably went to the same hairdresser! It is an absolute disaster for women who feel terribly aggrieved if their hair has not been done properly. The Hairdressers Registration Board not only looked after the people who worked in the hairdressing industry, but also set the standards for hairdressing salons across Western Australia. For the people who work in the industry, working with chemicals—particularly for hair colouring—is a very dangerous occupation, and the board ensured that people were not in danger when they were using those chemicals, which is another factor of the standards that were created and applied by the Hairdressers Registration Board.

For those reasons, I think all members of this house should recognise and thank the people who played that role on the Hairdressers Registration Board over the past 50 or so years. I think they did a great job on behalf of the industry and on behalf of working people and small business in Western Australia, and I think the house should record that and thank them for their contribution.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough) [10.28 pm]: I realise it is very late and people are anxious to see the end of the Hairdressers Registration Board.

Mr B.J. Grylls interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I thank the Minister for Regional Development very much; I appreciate the praise.

I am on my feet because a few comments have been made in this house about the impact and views of hairdressers on the red-tape aspect that they felt the Hairdressers Registration Board unnecessarily brought into their businesses. The Hairdressers Registration Board was flagged as an issue to me when I was an endorsed candidate. I went into my local hairdresser to have a haircut and she said, "If you get in there, will you get rid of that stupid Hairdressers Registration Board? I cannot tell you how much trouble it is to get hairdressers registered through that board. I cannot tell you how insulting it is to put hairdressers whom I have tried to bring in from overseas through those ridiculous, draconian testing procedures. That board is defunct. It is past its use-by date and I resent having to pay the fees every year."

Mr D.A. Templeman: Are you sure that "defunct" is the word she used?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: She said "defunct" in fact. I am quoting my hairdresser, who has since retired.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY - Wednesday, 23 June 2010]

p4544b-4551a

Mr Bill Johnston; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr Ben Wyatt; Acting Speaker; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Fran Logan; Mrs Liza Harvey

To take this one step further, my stepdaughter has recently qualified as a hairdresser, and I cannot tell members how much grumbling and complaining there is. Therefore, this change will provide some personal relief for my household, because I will not have to listen to my stepdaughter complaining about the fact that she has to pay fees to this board, in addition to all the other things that she has to pay every year to participate in the industry.

I want to put on the record that in the consultations with the Red Tape Reduction Group, hairdressers formed part of the consultation processes at various different country towns across the state, and also in some of the metropolitan chambers of commerce and industry. They were unanimous in recommending that this board be abolished. Therefore, I am very pleased, as a member and chair of the Red Tape Reduction Group, to be seeing one of our recommendations fulfilled so very quickly after tabling the report. I commend the current Minister for Commerce, the previous Minister for Commerce, and also those members of the secretariat from the Department of Commerce and the Department of Treasury and Finance who have worked quite hard to facilitate the abolition of this board. Although the board may have achieved a purpose perhaps when it was enacted in the late 1940s, I believe it is well past its use-by date. This is a very good step to help relieve some of the pressure on hairdressers and small business owners around the state.

I commend the minister for bringing this bill before the house. I hope the Council sees merit in passing this legislation so that we can get rid of this ridiculous piece of regulation that has no place in a modern Parliament.

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Minister for Commerce) [10.32 pm] — in reply: I will wrap up very quickly. I, too, on behalf of the government thank all the previous members who have served on the board since 1946. Obviously, quite a number of people would have given up their time. I know that there is a small remuneration, but it is very small. Therefore, it is right that we thank those people. I also thank the people who worked on this legislation for many years to try to wrap up the board, including the Department of Commerce people. Maybe a number of people had the task handballed to them, and they probably thought it would never happen. I also thank the adviser who has sat at the back of the chamber for the whole day but who never had to come to the table on the floor of the chamber for the consideration in detail stage.

Mr F.M. Logan: Does this mean that you move on now to the Potato Marketing Board?

Mr W.R. MARMION: I think so.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.