

CASINO (BURSWOOD ISLAND) AGREEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2011

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin — Minister for Racing and Gaming) [3.00 pm] — in reply: Before we broke for lunch, I had just started my reply to the second reading debate. I thank members for their commentary. There were some good comments as well as some that were well outside the scope of the bill. For the benefit particularly of the members for Collie–Preston and Rockingham, I plan to give an overview as well as try to answer issues raised. I will go through the particular issues each member raised.

The Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Amendment Bill 2011 is a responsible bill. We are obviously dealing with Burswood Casino. On the poker machine issue, I want to reiterate, so that people realise, that true poker machines are not found at Burswood Casino. Burswood has electronic gaming machines. There is quite a difference, which I will not go into. The member for Collie–Preston is well aware of that. One of the great things about Western Australia is that we do not have poker machines outside the casino. We do not have them in clubs and pubs. Under this government, we will not have poker machines outside the casino. I congratulate governments from all sides who have stuck strongly to that position. The more I attend gambling conferences in the eastern states, the more it says to me what a great thing that is for Western Australia. We have destination gambling at Burswood Casino. Gambling is a way of life in Australia. I will talk about problem gambling shortly. One of the benefits of this bill is that it addresses problem gambling. It is quite surprising that no-one touched on that.

Burswood Casino is a great entertainment area. It is an entertainment destination. It is a fantastic tourism complex. We know that tourism around Australia has been fairly tough—the value of the dollar and all those things that go towards that. The casino’s expansion is a wonderful thing for Western Australians. This bill is about expanding the casino. It is not just about the extra 250 gaming machines and the extra table games, it is also about its actual expansion as a centre and the benefits that brings.

Although I am very aware of problem gambling issues et cetera, I take my role as Minister for Racing and Gaming really seriously when it comes to these matters. Burswood, as I said before, is much more than that. It is very much about providing an entertainment complex and working with the state government and the community to make sure it does its part as a corporate citizen. Generally, it does it well. Burswood Casino has committed \$350 million to further develop its entertainment complex. It has competition from casinos in Singapore and Macau on that side of it, but it will also provide a tourism destination in Western Australia that offers entertainment for local citizens. On the gaming floor, there will be a new restaurant and feature bar, and an exclusive rooftop international gaming salon. There is supporting infrastructure such as toilets, staff facilities, and plant and equipment. I think everyone knows about the Rockpool Bar and Grill restaurant, which is a huge attraction at Burswood. There is a new premium Japanese restaurant and a new food court. Two luxury villas will be constructed. Also, there is the redevelopment of the pool, spa and gymnasium, and refurbishment of the Atrium restaurant and the InterContinental Perth Burswood accommodation. Members who have been to Burswood recently would have seen that a lot is happening there. The expansion is a real positive.

In coming to an agreement with Burswood Casino on what it wants to do, we made sure that there were also benefits to the state in different ways. Expanding gambling at the casino could hit the racing industry. Increasing the number of gaming tables provides more opportunities for people to gamble. We recognise that. In negotiation with Burswood Casino, we have secured a \$13 million racing infrastructure fund—\$5 million for the first year. Quite a lot of that sum has already gone out and other funds are committed—up to about \$3 million. That sees \$13 million going out over the next four years, because some of it has already gone out.

Another thing that was not mentioned is that we recognise that, with or without a casino, there are problem gamblers. We know that casinos can add to that issue. The casino recognises that; we recognise that —

Mr M.P. Murray: What is the percentage of problem gamblers?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I have some figures that I will go to later. Compared with other states, we are nowhere in the ballpark. We are quite reasonable. But they are there, member. We want to make sure that we keep working with them.

I was surprised that no-one mentioned this: we have allocated \$2 million—\$500 000 each year—to help address responsible initiatives to look after people who have gambling problems. Some of that money will go to the Department for Communities, which is in the final stages of preparing a beyond gambling grants program. We will not do it straightaway. Gambling is not associated with just the casino. There is a 24-hour telephone help service and a government counselling service. We have responsible gambling awareness week and research programs. Of course, Burswood has its own program. I opened the centre there. The casino has a self-exclusion

rule. It has a responsible gambling information centre and voluntary pre-commitment, which is quite topical. Although we heard all the arguments before about the environment, which I will come to, I think members did not pick up that the great benefits of this bill will go to, firstly, the racing industry and, secondly, problem gambling, which I think is very important.

Two very important initiatives come with this bill. I will address the member for Collie–Preston directly on a couple of issues he raised. One issue was changing the rules for two-up. The member and I talked about this before the regional Parliament in Bunbury. I became aware of this some time ago with the celebrations for the centenary of Wickepin, which is just inside the 200 kilometres radius. As part of its centenary celebrations, people there wanted to celebrate what it was like to play two-up, but they could not do it. I knew why there was that exclusion radius. It was introduced at a time when the casino was trying to get established, and the exclusion included games of two-up. That is why we were able to negotiate a change that takes the radius back to within 100 kilometres. Therefore, if people are outside a 100-kilometre radius, they will be able to play two-up. I may as well address that with the member now. I know that the member for Collie–Preston says it took a while to get there. Yes, it did, but we did many other things with this agreement. We cannot keep bringing agreements back and forth. This is the twelfth agreement since the casino started. They do not happen very often, so we have to get them right. I acknowledge that the member would have liked the change to have been made earlier, and so would I. I think this agreement for responsible gambling of two-up and gambling on cruise ships, which is very important, has been done properly and we now have it. As long as this is passed by Parliament, it will be enacted and Collie will not have to worry about it any more—nor will the other clubs outside the 100-kilometre zone.

Mr M.P. Murray: Did I hear an apology?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: No; I think I said to the member for Collie–Preston that I wanted to do this. I do not remember saying that we would have it done by this date. If I unintentionally misled the member, I apologise. But I will say that I have done it. When I spoke to, not the former minister, but Minister Griffiths about this, nothing was ever done about two-up. It did not happen until we did it. I spoke to him about it in relation to Wickepin. I acknowledge that it has taken time, but it is now happening; it is in this agreement. It suits what the member talked to me about, and I thank him for bringing it to my attention.

The other point is that within the 100-kilometre radius of the Burswood Casino, two-up can be conducted at a racing club, only in conjunction with a major sporting event or other special occasion. Although permits are issued by the Gaming and Wagering Commission, that matter will come to me as minister, or whoever is minister in future, to make the decision. We have liberalised things to make sure that two-up can be played on a racing cup day or at some other worthy event.

Mr M.P. Murray: Sorry to butt in, but Burswood now runs two-up on a very limited basis.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Yes. That is one of the reasons we discussed it with the Burswood Casino. That is fair enough. As I said at the start, Burswood has a business to run. Over the years, agreements have been entered into by governments of both persuasions. Since I have been the minister I have found Burswood really good to deal with. The casino has to look after its people, obviously. I think this is a pretty fair decision. We should remember that we allow two-up to be played without a permit on Anzac Day at RSL clubs, at no cost to them. A club that is not an RSL club can apply to hold two-up games if the occasion is part of Anzac Day celebrations. I think the two-up side of the legislation is very good.

The other part of this agreement, which I was lobbied for from both sides of this place and generally from the public, concerns gambling on cruise ships. The member for Gosnells also raised a concern about gambling on cruise ships. This issue is very much about tourism and allowing people to have gambling opportunities when they go on trips. People would book a cruise and enjoy gambling but as soon as they got within the Western Australian coastline, they could not have a go on the machines. Obviously, people do not have to play on poker machines, but they will be able to do so in Western Australian waters. A lot of lobbying was done to allow people who are on a cruise to do this. We thought that was fair and reasonable in light of tourism and what tourism operators want. I guess that prohibition was included in the agreement to protect the Burswood Casino. When the matter first came up, I think the member for Gosnells said that we did not want to encourage floating casinos, and I agree with him. To ensure that that does not happen, cruise ships must be on a scheduled deep-water cruise and transiting through Western Australian ports from and to locations overseas or interstate. Ships cannot just hang about out at sea and provide gambling opportunities. The cruise companies must still get a permit from the Gaming and Wagering Commission to do that. We will monitor that closely, but I am sure it will work well. I think it has arisen through public demand. When cruise ships come within a 12-mile radius of the coast, gaming machines have to be shut down. They can stay on the ships, but they cannot be used until the cruise recommences. I think we have done that in a responsible way. The member mentioned the time it has taken to introduce this bill, but to ensure we get that stuff right, we need to consult properly and try to work out where pitfalls might arise. We do not want to be caught and have to come back with another agreement.

Much has been said about the Heirisson Island issue, and I need to clarify the matter. The Heirisson Island sculpture park proposal—it is not finalised or funded yet—is a City of Perth project that the state would like to support, because, as I think the member for Victoria Park said, Heirisson Island just sits there. Although it is a nice open area—I have no problem with that—we can make better use of it. The idea of a sculpture park seemed to be a good idea. I need to ensure that people understand that all this bill will do is authorise the government, through me as minister, to allocate up to \$5 million for that project. No money has been allocated yet; the project has not been finalised. Who knows where it might go at the end of the day? I understand the City of Perth is looking for federal funding, which has not been forthcoming. I am not sure of the status in that regard. The bill will authorise that \$5 million because the government thinks it is a good project.

A lot has been said about the environment and spending money on the Swan and Canning Rivers. I will give a little bit more detail about this project because it is very much about the environment. Rather than take money away from what might be spent on the rivers and the environment, it will complement and improve the environment. I do not think people did their homework to find out exactly what it is about, and I want to clarify it, but I am not blaming anyone for that.

Mr M.P. Murray: It came from reading the second reading speech.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: If that was not clear enough, I am now clarifying it.

Mr M.P. Murray: Don't blame others for it. You're pointing the finger elsewhere.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Okay; let me tell the member. This funding is for the establishment of parkland and landscaping—basic parkland infrastructure, barbecues, shelters, observation facilities et cetera. There is no intention for Heirisson Island to be used for sculptures or major infrastructure. The City of Perth master plan document on Heirisson Island—I am prepared to table this; it is a public document—refers to integrating art and landscape, celebrating the Aboriginal story, strengthening the sense of island and giving recognition to the original land form. Heirisson Island was manmade. Its history describes how people could not get through that area and they had to carry the boats across because it was marsh land. Therefore, Heirisson Island was created in the form we see it today. The master plan document, importantly, indicates that it will enhance the natural environment. I will not list everything, but someone said there should be trees et cetera. The master plan refers also to using local plant species in a natural setting. It is about the environment and making it a better place. It refers also to minimising the environmental impact, and I can go on about pedestrian movement et cetera. I am saying that, although I acknowledge that the second reading speech was not clear, I want to clarify now that making it a better place is what that project is about. We should remember also that all this bill does is authorise us to allocate that \$5 million from that fund.

As members know, the funding of the Burswood Park Board comes from the casino wagering taxation levy, which has been the case since 1985. I acknowledge the previous minister's decision, which was a good decision. The eleventh supplementary agreement authorised the Burswood Park Board to expend moneys on projects for the Swan and Canning Rivers. That will stay in this agreement so that will continue. The amount of \$12 million has been spent. A further \$3 million is allocated in the next Burswood Park Board budget. It is not shown in the Department of Environment's Swan River Trust budget; it is separate from that, and that is why it is not shown there. It is extra funding.

The main issue was the funding. I think last year the board collected about \$7.5 million; it was predicted to be \$9 million. The board is getting quite a lot of money to do those types of things. We should remember that the board is independent. The money goes to the board; the Minister for Environment applies to the board for funds, and the board makes a decision. The board can decide to spend more on the Swan River or it can decide to spend less. The Burswood Park Board has allocated \$3 million to that for next year. Members should remember that this is an agreement with Burswood Casino. Heirisson Island is very close to the Burswood Park area. The member referred to the proposed sculpture park. I am happy to table this document titled "Heirisson Island Sculpture Park: Master Plan Report 2008". I have not been closely involved in deciding what the sculptures will be, and some of the member's comments, while quite humorous, were not very accurate. There is a real desire to do this properly.

[See paper 3486.]

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Obviously we have increased taxation on the new gaming machines and automated table machines, through a composite tax rate over five years, which is set out in the agreement. We have arrived at a good measure which will see more funding coming back to the government and to the Burswood Park Board, and which is also fair to the casino. We have tried to strike a reasonable balance. Those are the main points that I wanted to touch on. It is good for the development of the casino complex and also for Western Australia. There will be many benefits from the state flowing to racing, the environment and to the Burswood Park Board.

The member for Collie–Preston raised concerns about Burswood Park, which I think I have addressed, and he asked me how many machines there would be. There will be 2 000 electronic gaming machines and 220 table games. This increase is in line with increases made by the previous minister. The member should remember that the casino wanted more machines; it asked for 500, but we did not agree to that. The decision was made by the Gaming and Wagering Commission, and the government can approve it or not. The member for Collie–Preston also asked about two-up and other special events and whether there was an avenue for appeal. The only way to appeal the decision is to the Supreme Court on the basis of natural justice. When an application for a special event is made, the department makes a recommendation to the minister of the day, who then makes a decision. The bill liberalises the two-up laws, reducing the prohibition on playing two-up from a 200-kilometre radius from the casino to a 100-kilometre radius. However, the casino still has two-up games. If race clubs apply for a special event, such as a cup day, the minister will take that into consideration when deciding on their application for a permit. I am sure that as minister I will look at that in a positive way, as would other ministers. The member mentioned a figure of \$83 334 a month. That remains; that guaranteed price was included when the casino opened. We are now getting up to \$9 million a year.

Mr M.P. Murray: I was asking about the floor price.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: That has not changed. In reality, because there will be more games in the casino and the tax rate has gone up, we are increasing that figure. Once again, it gives the Burswood Park Board the flexibility to do more things. However, the board decides what it will or will not do. The board has always acted very responsibly. The previous minister would probably support me on that.

I will cover one last point that the member for Collie–Preston raised. He referred to nods and winks about the stadium. I categorically state that there have been no nods and winks with James Packer. This has not come into it. I dealt very much with Barry Felstead on the casino agreement. When we finalised the casino agreement, we had to get all the legislation in place and here we are. It has nothing to do with the decision on the stadium.

I thank the member for Rockingham for his support. He has a very good understanding of this bill, and he spoke very well on it. However, the member's views on the Swan River Trust's budget are something that we could argue about. Burswood Casino's allocation to the Burswood Park Board is a separate issue. For the member's information, as at 30 June 2011 it was \$12 million, with \$2.5 million for healthy catchments; \$2.133 million for drainage and nutrient intervention; \$3.8 million for enhancing environmental actions on the riverbanks; \$1.42 million for community and partners—that is working with community and partners, the river garden program et cetera; \$115 000 for land use planning; \$995 000 for river health; \$551 000 for river science—that is research; \$200 000 for a river protection strategy; \$100 000 for a boating management strategy; and \$194 000 for riverside planning. They are some of the projects that have been funded.

Mr M.P. Murray: And you do not see any change in the future?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: It is up to the board. The Minister for Environment will probably go to the board and say, "We should do this." The board will make the decision. The board has allocated \$3 million to that in its own budget next year. I cannot say what the board might want to do in the future. If the board feels that no request has been forthcoming, it might want to allocate moneys in different ways; that is up to the board.

Mr M.P. Murray: Therein lies the problem; it is whether the minister kicks that off.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: The board makes the decision. This is the agreement we struck with Burswood Casino; it authorises up to \$5 million for the Heirisson Island sculpture park. The casino thought it was a good idea to support that. This bill simply authorises me to sign off on that.

In addition, grants totalling \$290 000 have come out of the gaming community trust, which is unclaimed winnings, to support sustainable gardens and river gardens projects et cetera. We will use those funds as well to assist the river. There is a demonstrated will and understanding in that area. I do not want to say much more than that, because that covers the points raised.

I advise the member for Rockingham that the levy still goes to the Burswood Park Board. The member for Rockingham raised a good point about involving Burswood Casino in announcements. I have taken note of the member's comment, because when it is involved in good projects, it should be involved in those announcements. Burswood Casino is good to work with and it is doing good things for the community, and we should involve it.

I think that I have covered the issues raised by the member for Gosnells. I acknowledge the member's credentials in the environmental area. I have listened to the member speak quite often and I always find his speeches informative and interesting. The member raised the betting side of gambling. I am not a gambler. Over the years when I have gone to the casino, I might have had a bet, but I do not go to the casino to bet; I am not a great gambler. However, it is part of our way of life, although we need to keep constraints on it. This is a bit outside

the bill, but I am working with federal Labor ministers Macklin and Arbib on issues such as displaying betting odds et cetera. That has been discussed in our office, and far too much of that is being displayed. We are working with federal ministers, and I was in Canberra last week to discuss match fixing et cetera. There is a real will in my office to work with the federal government to address a lot of those issues, and this government is supporting it on that.

I thank the member for South Perth for his support. He raised pretty much the issues that I have addressed and he supported the view that Burswood Casino should get a bit more credit for what it does. The member acknowledged the government's support of the racing industry and urged the government to assist that industry wherever possible. I agree with him, and I think a real opportunity was missed—not by Racing and Wagering Western Australia but Perth Racing. RWWA is working very hard with the government to get the best we can for racing.

The role of the member for Maylands in the horse housing program is quite interesting. Well done. There is also the pet greyhounds program. All those programs are terrific. The member for Maylands talked to me about lobbying the minister on environmental issues. I spoke to the previous minister and I speak to this minister on environmental issues when I see fit. Everyone in Western Australia wants the Swan and Canning Rivers to be healthy. Whether we live in Wyndham or on the river at South Perth, we are all very proud of our Swan River.

I just tried to explain the \$12 million funding to the member for West Swan—so far, \$3 million is budgeted for next year—and the income of the Burswood Park Board. The member for Victoria Park also made a contribution. He made the point that Heirisson Island is underutilised and he supports us doing something about that. The member also supports Burswood as an entertainment precinct. Burswood is the gateway to Perth and in years to come it will be further developed. The casino is doing a good job and I continue to work with it to do whatever we can. The member for Cannington also made a contribution and he covered pretty much the same issues. The member for Warnbro talked about giving more to local governments. I think that the Burswood Park Board can provide that money to only the local governments that are attached to the Swan and Canning Rivers, but I can look at that more closely. That just about covers everything.

This is a good bill. I remember supporting the bill that was put through by the previous minister. I want to make sure that the member for Collie–Preston hears this next point. One of the points he made was that the bill took a long time to get here, and I acknowledge that. This expansion of the casino and everything that goes with it is huge for Western Australia. If the opposition does not support this bill, we will have to go through the whole process again. We would be here doing this in another year down the track. I seek the member's support for the bill. I have explained how it works. This is similar to the bill from the previous minister, albeit we did some stuff with racing et cetera. We have maintained and expanded on what the previous minister did. I thank my staff for their cooperation —

Mr M.P. Murray: Before the minister sits down, there is one small item. Although the minister has said sorry about the previous race meeting at Collie and not having two-up there, do I have a commitment from the minister that the Collie races this year in October will get a licence for two-up?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I will tell the member for Collie–Preston what commitment I will give him. If this bill goes through —

Mr M.P. Murray: No, the minister has said that once before.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I cannot give the member —

Mr M.P. Murray: We will go into consideration in detail then; we will stay here for the rest of the day.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I guarantee the member that —

Mr M.P. Murray: We will start on the short title!

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Let me speak. I guarantee the member that at the Collie Race Club —

Mr M.P. Murray: We'll be here to 12 o'clock tonight if you wish!

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Does the member want me to speak? The member can oppose the bill and we will be here for another two years. Does the member understand what this bill does?

Mr M.P. Murray: Yes.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: How far is Collie from the casino in Perth?

Mr M.P. Murray: One is 100 kilometres, the next is 200 kilometres.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: How far is Collie?

Mr M.P. Murray: Collie is 193 kilometres or something.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I cannot do it until this bill goes through the Parliament. Therefore, we need the opposition to support it —

Mr M.P. Murray: What if it gets knocked back in the upper house?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: If it gets knocked back, we must go back to first base.

Mr M.P. Murray: That is why I said that I will give the minister the support if he gives me the undertaking —

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Our members will support it in the upper house.

Mr M.P. Murray: The minister can do that on a ministerial direction; it has been done previously.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: What is that?

Mr M.P. Murray: Give the okay for the two-up at the Collie races.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Collie can apply for it.

Mr M.P. Murray: No, that is not what I asked.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: If this goes through, Collie does not have to apply, because it is law; that is why the member wants me to do this and complained to me that it had not been done. We are doing it. We need a bit of commonsense here. The member is a reasonable man. We want to get this through before 30 June because we need to enact the legislation.

Mr M.P. Murray: If it does not, it lies on the table and I will miss out again.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: If it does not, Collie would have to apply for an exemption and then I would have to consider it. Obviously, from what I said here, I think I would probably look at it. This bill cannot be amended; it either goes through or it does not. Our side gives the bill full support. I call on the member for Collie–Preston’s side to also do that. Then the member for Collie–Preston and I can have a game of two-up at the Collie races.

Mr M.P. Murray: Was that a “yes” or a “no”? I am not quite sure.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I gave the member a good run on this throughout the second reading debate. I have given every assurance. I cannot speak for the upper house, but I know that our side will strongly support this bill in the upper house because it will be of great benefit to Western Australia. This bill delivers what the member for Collie–Preston has asked me to do with two-up. I agree with what the member wants, and this bill delivers it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave not granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 3 put and passed.

Clause 4: Section 3 amended —

Mr M.P. MURRAY: My question is about the twelfth supplementary agreement. Some of my problems are probably more technical. To start with, the clause enacting the agreement is at the front and the agreement itself is at the back. It concerns me because it seems back-to-front; we must agree to the state agreement in this bill and then we find out what the clauses in that agreement are. That is a concern. I know that the Minister for Racing and Gaming has done it very well, but if the provision regarding the Heirisson Island sculpture park project was at the front of the bill, we would discuss that and then say okay. The minister has done a fair job on it, but I am concerned about the way the bill is worded and set out. I think that it is a bit difficult. Either we do or we do not agree to that state agreement part of the bill.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Parliamentary counsel put it this way, as they have done the last 11 times a bill on this issue has been before the house. I wanted to ensure we did it the same way.

Mr M.P. Murray: It may be that the member for Collie–Preston is a bit more technical than some of those other people!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The reason we have gone into committee is I would like to examine the issue of the Heirisson Island sculpture park project, and of course I would have hated to see the director general of the department sit around the Parliament for two days without having the opportunity to participate in consideration in detail. Those are the two reasons behind raising this issue. However, if we go to clause 5 of the agreement —

Mr Terry Waldron; Mr Mick Murray; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Chris Tallentire

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Member for Rockingham, can you just clarify something for me? At the moment we are reading clause 4. Would you like to do that?

Mr M. McGOWAN: We are dealing with clause 4, which refers to the twelfth supplementary agreement. Going to the agreement that it refers to—if members like, we can wait until clause 6, which inserts the schedule —

Mr T.K. Waldron: It is probably better to wait until clause 6.

Mr M. McGOWAN: If the minister would like me to do that, I can wait until clause 6. In fact, I am happy to do that, if that is the preferred option.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Is it an amendment to the schedule that you are after?

Mr T.K. Waldron: I can answer that now.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, thank you.

Mr T.K. Waldron: I think that you left the house when I spoke about this.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I did and I am sorry.

Mr T.K. Waldron: That is all right.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, we will stay on clause 4.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We are dealing with the twelfth supplementary agreement. Turning to page 10 of the bill and the money going towards the Heirisson Island sculpture park project, my question is: where is that money, in specific terms, coming from as part of the aggregate of tax revenue received by the state from Burswood? Which component is it coming from and was there an alternative use that that money could have been put to?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: This does not come from tax revenue, but from the Burswood Park levy, which I think last year totalled \$7.5 million. This year it is estimated to be \$9 million. This authorises us to take money from that funding. I understand that there is currently around \$10 million in the Burswood Park Board account and there will be further moneys next year. To let the member know, because I do not know if he was here before, I will just comment on the plan for Heirisson Island. That money is to be used for the establishment of parklands including landscaping and basic parkland infrastructure, including barbecue shelters and observation facilities. That is the intended use; it is not for the actual statues et cetera. However, the project still has a way to go. It is a City of Perth project that we are supporting and that Burswood was prepared to support. As I pointed out when I tabled it—I do not know if the member was here—a lot of that document was about environmental improvements to Heirisson Island and the river. My point was, and I am really genuine about this, that this was not about taking money away, but about money complementing what has been done. I am doing exactly what Labor did when it authorised moneys to be used for the Swan and Canning Rivers. This is complementing what Labor did. The expansion of the casino and the increasing tax rates and levies enables the board to make other decisions because it has more money.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The issue always was that the Burswood Park Board had too much money to spend on the park and therefore an alternative use needed to be found for that money or the agreement needed to be changed to have that money go into consolidated revenue. I think that they were probably the main options. A third option arose when we amended the levy—I think it was the levy; it was five or six years ago—to enable the board to authorise the transfer of money to the Swan River Trust. That is how the additional money went toward the Swan River Trust for expenditure. As I pointed out earlier during the second reading debate, governments have choices. The government can choose where it wants to spend money. It can choose its highest priority. The government could have chosen to allocate the increase in revenue to the Burswood Park Board—this \$5 million or thereabout over however long—towards the original plan, which was for environmental initiatives along the length and breadth of the river. Being someone from the country, the minister knows that our waterways have significant issues—very significant issues.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Yes.

Mr M. McGOWAN: My contention is that governments make choices and this government's choice is to authorise expenditure of that \$5 million on the island for, as the minister said, some barbecue areas and parklands and so forth. That is all worthwhile stuff, but it is a choice. To get down to tintacks, that is what this government chose to spend that money on, as opposed to putting that additional money towards the trust. As we have noted, the trust has had a reduction in revenue in real terms over the forward estimates and it has had a reduction in revenue over the past couple of years. This is another portfolio, but I think that Treasury, or more importantly the Treasurer, has pulled out some of the money beneath the levy that goes into the Swan River Trust, thereby reducing the trust's capacity to deal with environmental issues in the river. It was this government's choice that that money go towards the island. My choice would be that it somehow increases the amount of money going into the broad expanse of environmental initiatives for the river. My questions are: is

that correct; and, if so, why did the government decide that? Was it a personal decision of the minister that he wanted that money spent on the island, or an initiative of Burswood or was it an initiative of someone else within government?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Just a couple of points and some good questions.

Whereas Labor simply authorised money, this authorisation of \$5 million actually sets a cap. Previously, it was up to Burswood whether it expended \$12 million or more. But this is capped. It cannot be taken any higher. It is up to \$5 million. The decision was taken by cabinet. The City of Perth wanted a sculpture park and was looking for federal funding. As part of negotiating the agreement, we talked to Burswood Casino and it thought it was an excellent idea. Obviously, we hope that the sculpture park will beautify Heirisson Island, which has pretty much sat there without much being done to it. We are in government. We can set our priorities. But one thing must be remembered about this priority, which is something that I tried to communicate during my reply to the second reading debate, but maybe I did not make that clear. Although this is a sculpture park, the big part of the document I tabled is about environmental issues. As I said, what the previous government and the board have done with the rivers is excellent and I see this as complementing that work. The amount is capped up to \$5 million and we may not need to spend all of that money. The project might, in the end, not go ahead. I do not know yet. However, the government has made a decision and that money is there. I think it is a good decision for the people of Perth and Western Australia.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Referring again to the twelfth supplementary agreement, the minister spoke earlier about works to be done on Heirisson Island. The Burswood Park Board annual report refers to heritage trails, a public golf course and all those sorts of things.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member, I might just interject. I suggest that we move these few clauses, to get to the specific area that the member wants to talk about, which is actually in the schedules.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Unfortunately, Madam Acting Speaker, one of the problems with the bill is that the agreement is in the front half and once we approve that it is very difficult to go back. I think that it is very wise to do this first.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I will let you come back to it.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5 put and passed.

Clause 6: Schedule 13 inserted —

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston, do your worst!

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Thank you for that assistance, Madam Acting Speaker. We have moved forward!

I want a comment about whether there is any provision in the bill for jetties or landing places for boats.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: That is outside the scope of the bill, member. All this bill does is authorise—as did the bill under the previous minister—money to be put toward the project. I have given a bit of an overview of the project. I have not been heavily involved in the project; my office has been involved to a small degree. But this bill is not about that project. That project may not happen. This bill is just about authorising it if it does. I will not debate what is in that; that is a City of Perth document and a master plan for what it wants to do. We have authorised that \$5 million. I will not debate the project today because I do not know. All I know is what we have done and what that \$5 million can do.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Although I understand that, the minister in his speeches, answers to questions and through interjections has said that he is aware where the money is going, but now he says that he is hopeful the money is going there. That is quite different from what I previously understood. Does the minister understand what I am saying? Once the money goes to that board, the only control that the minister has is when he signs off on something that the board wants to do.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: The \$5 million will be put towards the establishment of parklands, landscaping and basic parkland infrastructure. It is not intended to be used for sculptures or major infrastructure. As I said, it has to come back to me and I have to sign off on it. I do not think I can say any more; I think I have said it about 38 times.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I refer to page 8 of the bill where the term “cruise ship” is used. I wonder whether the minister can advise me how I can be sure what the definition of a cruise ship is.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: It is defined on page 6 of the bill, which states —

“Cruise Ship” means any vessel that:

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- (a) has a minimum capacity of 100 passengers;
- (b) is conducting a scheduled deep water cruise; and
- (c) is transiting through Western Australian ports from and to locations overseas or interstate;

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have one final question to do with playing two-up. Page 8 of the bill seems to re-authorise the playing of two-up in RSL clubs on Anzac Day, which of course has been a longstanding tradition. I wonder whether that is what it does; and, if so, as I recall there was some effort to expand the definition of a club in which it might be played to include naval clubs, Army clubs, Air Force associations and so forth. Does that provision restrict or change that definition? What does the clause do?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I am advised that when the bill was drafted, the whole clause was taken out and put back in with the addition of subparagraph (ii), which is what the member wanted when he was minister. It states —

at events or in premises that the Minister is satisfied are sufficiently connected to the celebration of Anzac Day ...

Therefore, if the organisation is having an Anzac celebration at a town hall, the minister can allow that—which is commonsense to me.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 11 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin — Minister for Racing and Gaming) [3.54 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston) [3.55 pm]: I would like to say that I have just received the winning Lotto numbers for tonight, but I cannot yet! What I will say is that I thank the minister, even though the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Amendment Bill 2011 has been slow in the making. I hope that Western Australian newspapers realise that everything the minister puts in his press releases is not entirely true because it has taken 18 months for this legislation to get up. I always remember that the minister's press release came out because I put out a press release asking for this legislation to be introduced. It was a very good blocking tactic and he certainly blocked the middle stump.

However, 18 months later we are at the third reading stage of the bill. Unfortunately, in that time the Collie Race Club has missed out on two lots of two-up because it has only one meeting a year. Maybe there were a few games going on in the dark under headlights, I am not quite sure, but do not let Mr Sargeant hear about that! The local electorate and surrounding areas that wish to have two-up games in the future will certainly be pleased when this bill passes. Although this is not the biggest issue confronting country towns, it is certainly one of those things that make a town worth living in. As I say, playing two-up on Anzac Day did not come up in the debate a lot, but a very good game of two-up is played at the RSL in Collie on Anzac Day and also the Collie–Donnybrook race may be able to go back out under the big gum tree at Mumballup Hotel. Therefore, those sorts of things that make country life worth living can be brought back in. It is only recently that interest has been brought back to this issue because we are moving towards, as I said, the Collie–Donnybrook race and the races in October. The race club has already approached me about getting a permit to play two-up. It is a race club that had been very good but was down on its knees until some of the younger blokes moved in. Certainly, they have revitalised the club from where it was. It has gone from 300 or 400 people turning up to around 1 000 people now turning up. It is a highlight of our social calendar. The ladies are able to get dressed up, come out and strut their stuff, and there are fashion parades and all those things that go with country racing. I think about 30-odd pacers have been trained in Collie, and because of the interest generated through the local club many syndicates have been formed in the racing area. This bill plays a part in that social structure. The unfortunate thing is that there have not been too many winners in the gallops area, but the pacing area has been very good with some very good horses. One good country horse won a few places in the city. Just recently—I cannot think of the name—a filly won the \$100 000 race at Gloucester Park for a gentleman called Mr John Bell who made great mention in his acceptance speech that it costs \$2 million to win a \$100 000 race. I think he has about 25 horses. One of my electorate staff is very hopeful that a horse that she has shares in with that gentleman will win in the future, but I do not think that will happen given the way it went around for the first two times.

In saying that, again, I thank the minister and his advisers for their indulgence and look forward to working through this measure and enhancing the lives of country people.

MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin — Minister for Racing and Gaming) [4.00 pm] — in reply: I thank the member for Collie–Preston for his comments about the press releases. I have seen a few of the member’s press releases over the past couple of years, and some of them were not exactly hitting the ball accurately, but I will leave it at that because I am a fair man.

The member made some good comments about country racing. I thank the member for his support of the bill. What members have probably failed to pick up and acknowledge during the debate on this bill is that the racing infrastructure fund has played a huge part in the success of country race clubs and will do for the next four years. That is not to be sniffed at.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: That is okay. But it is happening.

The government is also providing funding for the responsible gambling program, which is being delivered through the Department for Communities. That is an outstanding program.

The best thing about this bill is that we want to make Burswood not only a better destination for people who want to gamble, but also, more importantly, a tourism destination, and a place for people from overseas and interstate, and local people, of all ages to go to. A lot of people enjoy what that facility has to offer. This bill will enable Burswood to deliver a lot more for our state. It is a great investment for our state.

The other changes that we have been able to make through this bill for two-up and cruise ships are also very commonsense changes, and I wonder why they have not been made before now. I say to the member for Collie–Preston that, with the support of the member’s colleagues in the upper house, I look forward to playing two-up with the member in Collie later in the year, and we will have a drink.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Lemonade!

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Of course. That is what I meant.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.