

PETROLEUM AND GEOTHERMAL ENERGY SAFETY LEVIES AMENDMENT BILL 2012
PETROLEUM AND GEOTHERMAL ENERGY SAFETY LEVIES AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 2012

Cognate Debate — Motion

On motion by **Hon Simon O'Brien (Minister for Finance)**, resolved —

That leave be granted for the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill 2012 and the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012 to be dealt with cognately.

Second Reading — Cognate Debate

Resumed from 20 June.

HON JON FORD (Mining and Pastoral) [5.21 pm]: The opposition supports the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill 2012 and the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012. The purpose of the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill is to amend the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Act 2011 to expand the current levy system to include regulatory activities performed in relation to the submerged lands adjacent to the coast of Western Australia. We have talked at length about this on at least three occasions, so I do not think we need to talk about it again at any length. It is part of the policy of the opposition. The opposition supports the government in getting cost recovery for safety management. It is an important initiative and will certainly allow the agencies to compete with industry.

The Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill (No. 2) is a consequential bill because it is required to be produced as a separate amendment bill as section 46(7) of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1899 requires that bills imposing taxation must deal only with the imposition of taxation.

As I have said, the opposition supports the bills and commends them to the house.

HON ALISON XAMON (East Metropolitan) [5.23 pm]: The Greens (WA) also wish to indicate that we support the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill 2012 and the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012. As has already been stated by Hon Jon Ford, the policy behind the bills has been debated at length in previous debates. This is consequential legislation which we knew was coming and which will further enhance the move to a cost-recovery model to ensure that we can compete against industry and that we have highly qualified safety inspectors and people who are qualified in safety case regimes.

I used the opportunity of the briefing to ask about how successful the changes have been to date and was pleased to be advised that apparently the changes that these bills are building on have been successful in attracting high-quality candidates within the Department of Mines and Petroleum who have managed to work closely with industry and, as a result of their high level of knowledge, have gained a level of trust with industry to progress safety cases and safety issues on-site. This has been a positive initiative by the government. I note that it has received support from across the chamber. I also note that a previous amendment to similar legislation by Hon Jon Ford to ensure that those moneys were isolated was a positive initiative, because it has meant that we can have full transparency of how this money is being collected and spent. Certainly, the Greens (WA) are not seeking to have an extensive debate on this issue. As I have said, I believe we have thoroughly canvassed the issues previously. The policy of the bill is sound and it appears that in practice it is achieving the outcomes that it was expected to achieve.

HON WENDY DUNCAN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.26 pm]: I rise also to say that the Nationals will support the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill 2012 and the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012. The bills will expand the current levy system to include regulatory activities in relation to submerged lands adjacent to the coast of Western Australia. The aim of the inclusion of these activities is to enable adequate funding of the regulator to provide for appropriate occupational health and safety laws. As has been mentioned, this policy has been well debated in the house.

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority stopped collecting the levies on 1 January and, since that time, the Department of Mines and Petroleum has been doing the auditing and recruitment without the levies. I guess that industry has had a bit of a levy holiday. The introduction of these levies will certainly ensure that we get the highest possible safety standard in this segment of the industry. The levies will be lower than they were under NOPSA, because the focus is on just Western Australian coastal waters rather than the whole coast and Bass Strait, as was the case under NOPSA. The good thing about this new regulatory environment is that not only will we have better and more skilled safety audits, but also the industry will pay less. There will be some

new levy payers under this legislation. Some diving operators will come under the scheme. There are 24 operators accredited nationally, but only eight have received accreditation to work in Western Australian waters. They will be brought in under the scheme. The Nationals agree that we do not need to go into detailed debate on these bills and are happy to support them.

HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.28 pm] — in reply: I thank the opposition, the Greens (WA) and the Nationals for their support of the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill 2012 and the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Safety Levies Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2012. In fact, I think this is the second time in a week that Hon Jon Ford has agreed with something that I have been doing, so I should probably quit while I am ahead!

Several members interjected.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Nevertheless, plainly the policy of these bills is sound. It expands on legislation that came into operation earlier this year. It reflects the government's policy for cost recovery in the regulation of safety requirements in our resource sector. Without further ado, I urge that the bills be read a second time.

Questions put and passed.

Bills read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

Bills read a third time, on motions by **Hon Michael Mischin (Parliamentary Secretary)**, and passed.