

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PHOTO CARD BILL 2013**

*Third Reading*

Resumed from 18 February.

**HON KEN TRAVERS (North Metropolitan)** [5.24 pm]: The Labor Party will still support the Western Australian Photo Card Bill 2013 in the form in which it has come out of the committee stage of the debate. We sought to move an amendment in this place as it is our very strong view that the cost of this card should never be greater than the cost of an equivalent driver's licence. It would have been nice to have it in the legislation to guarantee that and to protect those people from the regular cash grabs by the Barnett government. We accept the will of the house, as we always do, and acknowledge that, but I want to make it very clear that it is the Labor Party's view that the photo card should never cost more than it costs a person for a driver's licence. We will continue to campaign for that and I hope that when the government comes to finally set the fees after the third reading has passed, they will see the sense in that. We will certainly do all we can to ensure that the government sees sense. I know my colleague Hon Margaret Quirk is out there getting signatures on a petition. I have distributed that to people on her behalf and got very positive feedback.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** What is the petition?

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It calls for the government to ensure that age pensioners do not pay for the photo ID card, as they do not for their drivers' licences.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** Is that necessary, do you think? Has there been any indication —

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Yes, the government has continually said it intends to charge age pensioners \$35. Was Hon Simon O'Brien not listening to the debate yesterday?

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** I was listening all right.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** That is the whole problem. That is our concern. The government continually says that its expectation is that everyone will pay \$35 for the photo ID card. An age pensioner can get a driver's licence for free, but if they want this card, they will have to pay \$35.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** I was not aware that the government had arrived at such a position.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** If the honourable member had listened to the debate, he would have been aware of that. The photo ID card is a great initiative. I hope members such as Hon Simon O'Brien will talk to their government colleagues about this. If I am wrong and the government does not charge age pensioners for the photo ID card, I will be happy about it. I encourage Hon Simon O'Brien to work with his backbench to ensure that when this good initiative is brought to bear—hopefully, in the very near future that will be the case as we pass the third reading of this bill—we get the government to accept the position, which I think Hon Simon O'Brien is agreeing with me on, that an age pensioner should not pay for this card in the same way that they do not have to pay for a driver's licence. That is the key issue. I am not trying to be smart here; I hope that now Hon Simon O'Brien is aware of that, he and his colleagues can have those conversations with their ministerial colleagues.

During the debate everyone said that it is only \$7, which is not much. However, it is easier for the government to find that money to subsidise everybody than it is to expect pensioners to try to find that money. I will give the government some free political advice. For what it is worth, members opposite should get this message through to their ministers: the pain of charging pensioners \$35 for this card when they can get a driver's licence for free will take away the goodwill the government would otherwise receive from finally bringing through this measure. The government deserves the credit for bringing this in, but my view is that it will lose that credit if it keeps these fees. If the Liberal Party backbench is unsuccessful, can the National Party at least ensure that the Country Age Pension Fuel Card can be used to pay for this measure? They can get the card to pay for gas, so maybe they can also use it to pay for this. It is a bit like "pittances" or whatever word was used today by the Leader of the House. We redefine words in this chamber from time to time, much to the joy of Hansard reporters! If we cannot get it across the board, let us at least try to get it paid for through the Country Age Pension Fuel Card. I think the preferred option is to have the fees for the photo ID card mirror the fees for drivers' licences.

I congratulate the government on bringing this bill through and getting it to this stage. We will support it. I just make that final plea to the government backbench to try to make sure the fees match the fees for drivers' licences so that we do not lose the goodwill from this initiative.

**HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan)** [5.30 pm]: Hon Ken Travers raised a point—I recall that when this matter was dealt with late yesterday evening, I was out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business and that is why I am not familiar with the exchange that Hon Ken Travers said took place and I have not yet had an

opportunity to look at *Hansard*. As Hon Ken Travers said, he would like to stand corrected in due course if that is how it turns out; I hope that I do not.

I want to put some things on the record as well.

**Hon Ken Travers** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Adele Farina)**: Order! Hon Simon O'Brien has the call.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN**: I am not a representative or an apologist for this government but with respect, Hon Ken Travers, I do not think that it has been established that the Barnett government plans to charge aged pensioners more for an ID card than for a driver's licence. Whether or not they land there remains to be seen, but I do not believe with what I know of the processes of government that that would have been broadly contemplated. I think a department would have decided that everyone needs to be charged for reasons that we can all comprehend. The question of what fees, including the so-called \$35 for five years that has been bandied about, still has to go through the relevant processes of cabinet, including submissions regarding fees and charges. That is an annual, or in many cases, a six-monthly process. I hope we do not emerge with a political point from the third reading of this bill on what everyone knows is a good idea. I will say—I hope this gets through to the government—that I have always found it surprising that governments charge people for ACROD parking permits, but they give out Seniors Cards and provide all of the administrative support to do that for free.

**Hon Helen Morton**: ACROD parking permits are now free.

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN**: That is right, but I might add that various parts of the government had to be dragged kicking and screaming to do that. I do not see why Seniors Cards should be dispensed for free when other concessions are not made available to people who in many cases have a greater or equivalent need. I am sure that the government will contemplate those things in due course. I hope Hon Ken Travers and his friend the member for Girrawheen do not get too carried away and shove petitions under the noses of people prematurely, because I do not know whether any declarations have been made about fees. I will tell members that if the anomaly that he fears were to be contemplated, I shall take it up with the government and offer a contrary point of view. I do not know how far I will get, but I will take it up, and for good reasons. For now, we all need to support the third reading of this bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.