

### Agreement in Principle

**Mr BARRY COLLIER** (Miranda—Parliamentary Secretary) [10.05 a.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now agreed to in principle.

The Bible Society NSW (Corporate Conversion) Bill 2008 will authorise the transfer of the Bible Society NSW from a statutory corporation to incorporation under the Commonwealth's Corporations Act 2001. It will change the official name of the society from "The New South Wales Auxiliary of The British and Foreign Bible Society" to the "Bible Society New South Wales" and amend the objects of the Society. The New South Wales Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, trading as "Bible Society New South Wales" is a statutory corporation. As its name suggests, it was originally established under "The Bible Society's Act of 1878" as the New South Wales auxiliary of its parent in the United Kingdom, the British and Foreign Bible Society. This Act was replaced by the New South Wales Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society Incorporation Act 1927.

The major aim and function of the Bible Society NSW is the distribution and promotion of the Holy Scriptures in every language and dialect throughout the world. The Bible Society's present status as a body corporate under a New South Wales Act poses some significant governance deficiencies. For example, the objects and the procedures for convening meetings and for adopting new rules that are governed by the 1927 legislation are outdated, unduly onerous and difficult to amend. A statutory corporation established by a New South Wales Act can apply to be registered as a company under the Corporations Act 2001 using the provisions of part 5B.1 of the Act, provided that the New South Wales law authorises the transfer of incorporation. This same process was agreed in this place for the corporate conversion of the Royal Blind Society and the Australian Gas Light Company.

The Bible Society NSW held two extraordinary general meetings of members and approved the transfer of incorporation and the change of name and objects. Members unanimously agreed to request the New South Wales Attorney General to promote enabling legislation and to amend the New South Wales Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society Incorporation Act 1927. The bill before the House authorises and facilitates the transfer of incorporation. Following the introduction of this bill, the Bible Society NSW will be able to apply to the Australian Securities and Investment Commission [ASIC] for registration as a Corporations Act company limited by guarantee. I commend the bill to the House.