



NSW Legislative Assembly Hansard

World Youth Day Bill

Extract from NSW Legislative Assembly Hansard and Papers Tuesday 14 November 2006.

Second Reading

Mr PAUL McLEAY (Heathcote—Parliamentary Secretary) [1.02 a.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

It is my privilege to introduce the World Youth Day Bill. The World Youth Day Bill will establish a statutory corporation, the World Youth Day Co-ordination Authority, to plan, co-ordinate and provide for government services for World Youth Day 2008. World Youth Day is a six-day celebration aimed at young people aged from 16 to 35 years from all around the world. Initiated by His Holiness Pope John Paul II in 1984, it has become the largest single international mobilisation of young people in the world.

Last year Sydney proudly won the right to host World Youth Day 2008, which will be held from 14 to 20 July. The high-level delegation that secured this event was led by the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney, with the support of the New South Wales Government. World Youth Day 2008 is a wonderful opportunity for Sydney to showcase itself again to the world. It demonstrates our ability to continue to attract and host large-scale international events. Such events focus international attention on Sydney and New South Wales, and they show us at our best. They help to underscore Sydney's reputation as a world-class international city—a city whose people are highly skilled and hardworking, with an easygoing "can do" attitude and friendly manner. Previous World Youth Day host cities have included Rome, Paris, Buenos Aires, Manila, Toronto and Cologne.

It is anticipated that around 500,000 people will participate in World Youth Day 2008 events, including an expected 100,000 from overseas. The culmination of the event will be a final papal mass to be delivered by His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI at Randwick Racecourse on 29 July 2008. I can also advise the House that a chief executive officer for the authority has been selected. The current Director of Transport Operations at the New South Wales Ministry of Transport, Mr Roy Wakelin-King, will take on the role. Mr Wakelin-King will bring considerable experience to the position following a career as a commissioned officer in the Australian Army and detailed know-how from his time with the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority.

World Youth Day 2008 is bigger than the Rugby World Cup in terms of expected visitors. It is bigger than the Olympics, and it will take a similar level of co-ordination and services to make it happen. The success of World Youth Day, as with all major events of this nature, lies in proper planning. Planning is also key to ensuring public safety and security, as well as to ensuring that the everyday functioning of our city continues. The successful staging of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games demonstrated the need for overall planning and co-ordination at a strategic level as well as clear, centralised lines of reporting. In 2000 this role was performed successfully by the Olympic Co-ordination Authority and the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority. Both these agencies worked co-operatively with the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and the international and Australian Olympic committees to deliver "the best Games ever".

It is proposed to adopt the Olympic model for the planning and co-ordination of New South Wales Government services for World Youth Day 2008. In particular, the bill will establish a new special purpose authority dedicated solely to the function of planning, co-ordinating and providing for government services for World Youth Day 2008. Given its special-purpose role, the authority will have a limited life. The bill includes provision for winding up the authority after World Youth Day, and the legislation will expire automatically on 31 December 2008.

The bill establishes an advisory board for the authority, to be chaired by the Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, and Minister for Police, John Watkins, and including representatives—at chief executive officer level—from relevant government agencies. The board will also include a representative from the church to facilitate continued co-operation and co-ordination between the government agencies and the church in staging the actual events. Existing government agencies will have the expertise, staff and other resources and facilities to provide the services necessary for World Youth Day. The authority's role will be primarily to provide the high-level planning and co-ordination function to support the provision of those services. Government agencies will be required to co-operate with the authority, which will develop and implement strategies, plans and policies for the World Youth Day period.

Importantly, nothing in the legislation will affect the lawful exercise of powers by police, and the authority will not have any powers of direction in respect of police officers and police resources. NSW Police will, of course, be represented on the authority and will play a central role in planning for World Youth Day. The bill will confer on the authority powers to facilitate the conduct of World Youth Day events. These powers are similar to, but not as extensive as, those that were in place during the Olympics. They include provisions to allow for the

establishment of special-purpose traffic lanes, to enable the closure of roads and to allow for fast-tracked approval for events at prescribed World Youth Day venues. This bill draws on the models that were used with spectacular success during the Olympics to ensure that government services for World Youth Day will also be delivered effectively and efficiently. While responsibility for staging World Youth Day rests ultimately with the church, proper co-ordination and planning by relevant government agencies will be imperative for its success. I commend the bill to the House.