

Bill introduced on motion by Ms Clover Moore.

Agreement in Principle

Ms CLOVER MOORE (Sydney) [10.02 a.m.]: I move:

That this bill be now agreed to in principle.

Large numbers of overseas visitors use Victoria Street, Potts Point and Brougham Street, Woolloomooloo as car yards to sell their vehicles at the end of their holiday. Up to 35 vehicles are offered for sale on Victoria Street, with the problem at its peak in the warmer months. Inner city parking is already limited and this use of public road for what is essentially a commercial purpose prevents residents, business operators and other visitors parking on these streets. Unlike in community land such as parks and enclosed lands, councils have no power to stop people from selling their vehicles on public roads. The Minister for Local Government made a number of suggestions to the City of Sydney to assist council to manage the problem; however, unfortunately, none of the suggestions address the problem of vehicle sales and they are not supported by residents.

The Minister has suggested time restricted, residential and metered parking, as well as towing vehicles that are defective or obstructing streets or traffic and impounding abandoned vehicles. Time-restricted parking and resident parking already exist on these streets but campervan owners stay with their vehicles and move them when their timed parking is up in order to avoid infringement. The City of Sydney consulted with the local community about metered parking and this was vehemently opposed by both residents and businesses because of its impact on visitors.

Council rangers spend on average 80 hours per week with two full-time rangers patrolling Victoria and Brougham streets checking every parked vehicle, and joint council and Kings Cross police patrols target defective vehicles. Council tows vans when they obstruct streets or traffic, or are defective, but this is generally not the case and few of these vehicles have been abandoned. Significant ranger and police resources are being directed to ineffective enforcement operations and local residents and businesses continue to be impacted.

The Local Government Amendment (Roadside Vehicle Sales) Bill 2011 would give councils power to prohibit the parking of vehicles on certain public roads for the purpose of offering the vehicles for sale. Currently section 632 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1993 prevents councils enforcing a notice that prohibits or regulates the parking or use of a vehicle on a public road. The bill specifies that this section does not prevent councils putting up notices to ban the offer of vehicles for sale on a road.

Under the bill councils would have the authority to prohibit the sale of vehicles on roads where sales are causing a problem and enforce the ban. It would enable the City of Sydney to

stop backpackers in Victoria Street and Brougham Street from using the roads as car saleyards, freeing up limited road space for residents, businesses and their visitors. Similar powers existed under ordinance No. 66, introduced in 1991 under the then Local Government Act, which gave council the power to ban the offer of vehicles for sale on Victoria Street, Kings Cross. However, this was removed—inadvertently, I believe—when the Act was replaced in 1993.

The City of Los Angeles Council uses similar powers to prevent pop-up used car lots on particular roads. Backpackers provide a welcome contribution to our tourism industry, to the inner city and to the Kings Cross precinct and many services are provided for these young visitors. However, roads are public places. They should not be commandeered for private commercial activities like car sales and councils should have the power to stop this. This small change will make a big difference to the people of Victoria Street and Brougham Street. I commend the bill to the House.

Debate adjourned on motion by Mr Daryl Maguire and set down as an order of the day for a future day.