

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday 30 May 2007

MOTOR VEHICLES (DRUG TESTING OF LEARNER DRIVERS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. A.M. BRESSINGTON obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Summary Offences Act 1953. Read a first time.

The Hon. A.M. BRESSINGTON: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

This is a bill to drug-test learner drivers. Basically, it will prevent people from getting their learner's permit if they test positive to illicit drugs. This will deal with the target group of people who are missed in the process. They will be required, at their own expense, to get a certified blood test to show that they do not have drugs in their system. It is a requirement of the legislation that the blood test must be taken no more than two weeks prior to them accessing their learner's permit, so they will need to show proof positive that they are not positive to illicit drugs in their system to be able to go through the process of obtaining their learner driver's permit.

While they are moving through the learner driver stage they will be required to give a blood test every eight weeks and no less than 12 weeks during that period to show that they have, in fact, stayed drug-free throughout the period of their learner driver program. There are no legal ramifications for them if they have drugs in their system; it simply means they cannot pass through the learner driver stage. This will send a clear message to young people that, if they want to drive, they cannot take drugs because they will not even get to first base with a learner's permit if they do.

This is another way of also preventing people from getting away with driving with drugs in their system and is also another clear message to our youth, and a prevention strategy as well. As I said, I will keep this really short, but there is plenty of evidence and research that I will present further on in the debate and probably at the summing-up stage. I commend the bill to the council and look forward to the debate.

The Hon. J. GAZZOLA secured the adjournment of the debate.