



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**THE SENATE**

**AUSTRALIA NEW ZEALAND  
FOOD AUTHORITY  
AMENDMENT BILL 1999 [NO. 2]**

**In Committee**

**SPEECH**

**Tuesday, 7 December 1999**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE SENATE

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# SPEECH

**Date** Tuesday, 7 December 1999  
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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Stott Despoja, Sen Natasha

**Source** Senate  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

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**Senator STOTT DESPOJA (SA)** (6.20 pm)—I move Democrat amendment No. 3:

(3) Schedule 1, item 16, page 8 (line 26) to page 9 (line 7), omit subsection (2), substitute:

(2) In developing food regulatory measures and variations of food regulatory measures, the Authority may also have regard to the following (in descending priority order):

- (a) the need for standards to be based on risk analysis using the best available scientific evidence;
- (b) the promotion of fair trading in food;
- (c) the desirability of an efficient and internationally competitive food industry.
- (d) the promotion of consistency between domestic and international food standards;

This amendment was referred to during the speeches in the second reading debate. The intention behind the amendment is to strengthen the bill's commitment to public health and safety and to reduce the possible conflict between consumer and industry interests. The amendment is to section 10, as amended by the Labor Party in the other place. The amendment is intended to concentrate consideration of the authority developing food regulatory measures to those matters stated in part 1 of the act. They include the protection of public health and safety, the provision of adequate information relating to food to enable consumers to make informed choices, and the prevention of misleading or deceptive conduct. We support those particular principles.

The Democrats amendment states in its current form that 'the Authority may'—but I am happy to adopt Senator Brown's suggestion of changing that to 'the Authority should'—have regard to a number of things, first and foremost 'the need for standards to be based on risk analysis using the best available scientific evidence'. That is followed by 'the promotion of fair trading in food', 'the desirability of an efficient and internationally competitive food industry', and lastly 'the promotion of consistency between domestic and international food standards'. I wish to amend my amendment so that instead of 'may' in the first sentence of the amendment—

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN (Senator Murphy)**—Are you going to take out 'may also' so that it reads 'the Authority should have regard'—

**Senator STOTT DESPOJA**—Yes.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN**—Are you leaving in 'also'?

**Senator STOTT DESPOJA**—I think 'also' was intended to remain in there—'should also have regard to the following'. And then the further addition is to part (a) of that. After 'available scientific evidence', it should read 'and the precautionary principle'. I thank Senator Brown for his indication that he would support the amendment with those additions, and I am quite happy to adopt them. Again, I think this amendment is quite clear.

**The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN**—Has everybody taken down the amendment changes? Senator Stott Despoja.

**Senator STOTT DESPOJA**—It sounds as though people are aware of the proposed changes, and I hope that people will support the proposed changes in the interests of public health and safety.