**NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT (EXTENSION OF TERMS OF OFFICE) AMENDMENT BILL 2007**

**Legislative Assembly, 8 February 2007, pages 1755-6**

Second reading

Received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

**The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Health):** I move: That this bill be now read a second time. I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in Hansard without my reading it. Leave granted.

The Natural Resources Management Act 2004 has effectively been in full operation since July 2005 and has led to significant improvements in the way South Australia’s natural resources are viewed and managed.

There have certainly been improvements in developing and implementing natural resources management and a key to this change has been the integrated approach taken by the Natural Resources Management Council and the eight regional natural resources management boards.

The Governor appoints members to both the Council and to the boards for a term not exceeding three years.

Administratively, a policy has been adopted whereby approximately half the members of each body are appointed for a term of two years and the remainder for a term of the full three years. This negates the possibility that all members could potentially complete their first term on the same date but is particularly important at the completion of their second term – a member of the Natural Resources Management Council or a regional natural resources management board cannot serve as a member for more than six consecutive years.

Members of the Natural Resources Management Council were appointed for terms ranging from two years to three years from 30 April 2005. For each of the eight regional natural resources management boards members were also appointed for terms ranging from two years to three years from 14 April 2005.

This minor amendment provides that where the Governor has appointed a person as a member of the Natural Resources Management Council or a regional natural resources management board for a term that is less than the maximum three years under the Act, then the Governor can extend the term of appointment up to the maximum three year term, without having to go through the statutory appointment process.

Members of the Council and the boards are in their first term and both the Council and the boards are still in the process of completing their establishment. In addition, the boards will be reaching a critical phase in the development of their first comprehensive regional natural resources management plans during the middle of 2007.

The procedures set out in the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 for the appointment of members to the NRM Council and the regional NRM boards require significant periods to elapse in relation to the nomination of certain members. Due to the ongoing nature of the establishment process, along with the importance of the continued smooth implementation of the Act during 2007, it is felt that this continuity of Council and board membership is in the interest of all stakeholders.

The amendment provides for the membership to be extended only through this critical period without the potential for changed membership, while ensuring that the intent of the legislation is upheld. The policy of providing a staggered term for membership will be implemented during the terms of appointment commencing from 2008.

I commend the Bill to Members.

EXPLANATION OF CLAUSES

**Part 1—**

**Preliminary 1—**

Short title

**2—Amendment provisions**

These clauses are formal.

**Part 2—Amendment of Natural Resources Management Act 2004**

**3—Insertion of Schedule 4 clause 57**

This clause inserts a new clause 57 to Schedule 4 of the Natural Resources Management Act 2004, enabling the Governor to extend the term of office of certain members of the NRM Council or regional NRM boards (but not so the total term of office of the member exceeds 3 years) and makes related administrative provisions.

Ms CHAPMAN secured the adjournment of the debate.