



STAMP DUTIES (SECURITIES CLEARING HOUSE) AMENDMENT BILL
12 April 1994

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): No other single issue has occupied my staff's or my time more since the election than the stamp duties concessions announced in the lead up to the election. This will mean that many of the older people in my electorate will be able to retire with dignity. Under the hardship provisions of the Social Security Act many will be able to qualify for a pension. Others will see the end in sight with perhaps only a five-year wait before they are eligible for a pension—a pension that I believe they have well and truly earned.

With the rural debt review details about to be made public, the anguish will be acute amongst the elderly in those areas hardest hit by the circumstances that have led to major debt problems. This legislation will allow them to bow out in favour of the younger generation. These young farmers, as title holders of the land, will have the youth, vitality and enthusiasm to go about recovering from this setback as the older generation recovered from the Great Depression.

In addition, farmers will be able to restructure their debts without massive stamp duty. This will allow them to shop around for better deals from banks. Considering what good customers many of these farmers have been in the past, it has been very discouraging to have penalty interest charged when things got tough, putting them even deeper in debt. Combined with the young farmers' incentive scheme, the stamp duties concession will help to put some confidence back into the rural sector in what in my electorate of Flinders is one of their darkest hours.

The former Government's interest rate subsidy, as with many of its schemes, was badly targeted and has caused considerable dissension within the rural community. It was paid, unbelievably, in advance on budget forecasts. This meant that a conservative budget that assumed a greater need than was realised meant a payment of subsidy greater than was actually expended. This was fortunate for a farmer who had his application in early, but it was a disaster for those farmers who came later with a similar or even greater need for the subsidy but who found that the funds had been spent. Fortunately, the new Liberal Government has a much greater understanding of business. This new initiative will be much fairer and equitable and will have significant long-term benefits. It is with great pleasure that I support the Bill.