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### **GRAFFITI VANDALISM**

Mr GRIFFITHS (Goyder) (12:41): It is my pleasure to rise in support of the member for Fisher and his motion in regard to graffiti vandalism. I was quite shocked to learn from his speech not only of the hundreds of thousands of dollars that are being expended by the councils and the electorate that he serves but also of the approximate value of between \$15 million and \$20 million per year to this state in ensuring that the graffiti vandalism is cleaned up and repaired.

Prior to coming to this place I worked in local government; so every day, seemingly, issues of graffiti vandalism were also brought to my attention in the communities that I served. It was a big problem, particularly in the coastal community of Ardrossan. Even with a dry zone declared in some areas where younger members of the community tended to congregate, the temptation was always, seemingly, to vandalise the public toilets by smashing things and also by using aerosol cans, and it just makes it disgusting. For communities that rely very strongly upon attracting people to improve their economic well being with tourism, seeing those sorts of things is really a turnoff. It makes people not want to come to those areas, and it is an important issue for all of society to deal with.

I know that the Yorke Peninsula District Council, out of complete frustration with the excessive amount of graffiti vandalism that is happening, has decided to issue a reward for information that will lead to the apprehension of these offenders. This council has decided to make \$1,000 available. The council does not want to have to make these funds available; it would prefer to use these dollars on providing services and infrastructure to its community, but it is costing them so much per year to repair the damage and to clean up the graffiti vandalism in that area, that it has made a last resort decision in the hope of actually trying to convince the young people who are doing it that the council is serious about it, and that it is about time that they stop doing it, because they will be caught and something will happen.

Too often, as I drive around I see examples of graffiti vandalism—on large advertising signs, where it amazes me how these young people manage to get up there and paint their particular inscriptions. This must cost a fortune to the people who are trying to advertise their businesses and services—

The Hon. R.B. Such: They get up with rope ladders.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Rope ladders, the member for Fisher confirms. But, all of a sudden, their efforts to make sure that they have a product out there that people can see are destroyed by vandalism, often wiping out all of the sign, or at least the half of it that they can reach. As you drive and walk around communities you see examples where fences, windows and walls are vandalised.

The Hon. R.B. Such: Trees.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Trees also. We see it on buses, trains and cars. Even in the community in which I live, there is a person who operates a sand and metal business. Three times he has suffered from young people—known to the police—who have broken in and stolen the yellow line marking paint from his business, and have proceeded to repaint his red utility yellow.

The second time it happened this man came to see me and I could see tears welling up in his eyes. He prides himself on the way he keeps all his vehicles and he had only just had this vehicle returned from being cleaned after the first time, and suddenly it happened again. It is just not good enough. He comes to see me and I talk to the police; we all get frustrated because we know the young people who are doing it, but they still get away with it.

Even while walking in Northgate (which is the suburb in Adelaide in which I stay when parliament is sitting)

early yesterday morning, I walked down a different street and came across a roller door on a house that had graffiti painted all over it. The young person who did that might have got their quick fix out of it and thought, 'I've had my 15 seconds of fun for the night,' but they do not think about what they are doing to the people who live in those homes. Those people suddenly might not feel safe in their homes any more. It is a bit like being broken into. When your property is damaged you start to have doubts about the safety of the community in which you live and you think, 'Do I really want to stay here?' That is not what we in South Australia want. We want people to live in their homes safely.

So, I think it is important that the government does whatever it can. I respect the fact that it is not government's role to be all things to all people—I know that—but the government does have a role in providing support and programs that are about educating people on the negatives attached to graffiti vandalism. Certainly the community has a very strong role to play in this regard, and it involves every parent. Parents have to be aware of where their child is. Let us get some controls and reintroduce attitudes to ensure that parents want to know where their kids are, that those kids are doing things that are legally permissible, and that they are not out there with spray paint cans ruining public and private property. What has been happening in this regard is not good enough.

These young people who are committing these crimes know what they are doing. It is a crime; they are making a conscious decision to do this. How society has allowed this to occur is a great frustration for me. Sometimes I think I am such a boring person I should have been born in the 1920s or 1930s when different attitudes to life existed. I am not sure that I am well suited to the modern age.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: I do not know about that. But it frustrates the life out of me—

Mr Pederick interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: The member for Hammond said a foreign word that he should never say again. It frustrates the life out of me to see vandalism occurring everywhere, and it should not be occurring. We all want to live in a safe place, so let us see something done about it. Offenders have to be held responsible. As a minimum, they should be made to clean up the results of their vandalism efforts. Let us get them out there scrubbing with the slowest reacting agent possible so they have to be there for a long time to clean it up. Let us ensure that the people who own these properties get some satisfaction from the fact that when an offender is caught the person concerned has to do something about it. I commend the member for Fisher for his motion, and I certainly hope the house supports it.