

## On the Health Amendment Bill

16th December 2004

Speech by Liz O'Donnell

*Speech by Deputy Liz O'Donnell on the Health Amendment Bill, Dáil Éireann, 16 December 2004*

As a long-standing Member of the House, party Whip of the Progressive Democrats and former Opposition spokesperson on health, I regret that we must rush through this legislation on the last day of the session.

Patently, it will receive inadequate scrutiny. However, I accept the advice of the Attorney General and the political judgment of the Tánaiste and the Government that these are extenuating circumstances and that to protect the Exchequer from the loss of an income stream which has been accepted for the past 50 years by all parties in the House, it is appropriate to move quickly to regularise the situation with these charges.

**Mr. Sherlock:** *That is not being said.*

**Mr. Perry:** *Nobody said that.*

**Ms O'Donnell:** -----when Deputies from all parties have accepted these charges over the years. If people examine the substance of this issue, they will see that the Government is trying to the right thing. The issue of charging for people in full-time care, particularly the elderly, will have to be dealt with on a more long-term basis given the demographics. Every Deputy knows that.

I commend the Bill to the House. The Opposition should understand the situation in which the Government finds itself. I look forward to the results of the inquiry that has been established by the Tánaiste. It will be to the benefit of the Department that when mistakes are made, people take responsibility for them.

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For further information see:

- [Health Amendment Bill](#)