



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (9.30 pm): Before I begin my speech I would like to thank the minister for education, her staff and departmental staff for the briefing given on the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2005. I neglected to do that in my contribution to the second reading debate.

On Tuesday I said that I want to join MAP—the Make Anna Premier—working group. Since I said that, the list of reasons for my membership has grown. At the start of the week when I gave my speech I was still a little wary as to whether the honourable member for South Brisbane had the attributes of her esteemed leader, Premier Peter Beattie, and thus the ability to do the job. But this week I have seen that the education minister—or premier in waiting—has taken a leaf out of the book of the current Premier in her ability to change her stance on an issue within a short period.

On Tuesday, in answering a question about capital grants funding, the minister described the Investing in Our Schools program as a good opportunity for Queensland schools and also encouraged principals to take full advantage of the benefits of this program. The member for South Brisbane went on to say that the Queensland government has consistently supported this program and that the head office of Queensland Education was issuing a reminder to schools across the state about the deadline for this program.

These all seem like glowing endorsements of the Investing in Our Schools program, do they not? In fact, one of the premises of the member for South Brisbane in denying that Education Queensland was bullying principals into not taking advantage of these grants was basically that these grants are so good that they cannot be passed up and that the education department would never pass up an opportunity to have schools supplement their state contributions. For once I agree with the honourable member for South Brisbane. This is a fantastic program and I commend all of the positive comments she made about the program in her answer on Tuesday, albeit that those elements of her answer were some of the few non-misleading statements in her response.

That is why I was more than surprised to hear the member for South Brisbane stand up this place this morning and say, with reference to the Investing in Our Schools program, that the program was 'ill conceived'. I could understand that that may have been said in the heat of the moment. After all, the minister was trying to defend herself against my claims that she misled the House and was trying to do so using specious reasoning broken up with a Cliff Notes interpretation of section 51 of the Constitution. However, such a large change—to flip then flop in such a convincing manner—shows clearly that the member for South Brisbane has been taking her notes carefully from the master of such a manoeuvre, the current Premier.

As much as I enjoy the unwarranted patronising lectures that come with little authority or substance from the honourable member's mouth, I can give her one piece of advice and that is the advice of Franklin D Roosevelt when he said in a radio address on 26 October 1939—

Repetition does not transform a lie into a truth.

I ask the minister for education and all of her colleagues who believe they are well renowned to heed those words and respect democracy by giving truthful, correct and consistent answers to questions and to be truthful in statements to this House.