



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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LAND TAX AMENDMENT BILL

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—Lib) (12.23 pm): I am very pleased to rise to speak in the debate on the Land Tax Amendment Bill as I am always pleased to rise to support any measure that will deliver a tax cut to the people of Queensland already burdened with a huge amount of tax and a number of levies applied by this government. It seems to me as a new member in this place coming from small business that the government seems desensitised to the fact that collecting the levies and taxes in the amounts it does actually has a big effect on small businesses and small-time investors around Queensland. These small-time participants in the property market are being slugged with massive bills from this government. It is sad that this change has come so late, because there are many instances where the burden of these taxes has taken a long-term toll on these small-time participants.

I have received letters on this from a number of constituents. I will quote from one specifically who outlines the following problem. Mr Ken Roach operates a support accommodation facility in Ashmore. He provides for people with psychiatric illnesses and intellectual disabilities. The main source of income is the rent from these residents. This rent tends to come from the disability pension and rental assistance that the residents receive. The letter states—

We are faced with a land tax bill of over \$13,600 ... in my situation I have no alternative but to pass on this additional cost to the residents.

Remember the residents of this facility are intellectually disabled Queenslanders and members of the community with psychiatric illness. Mr Roach and his partner, Ms Annette McNamara, are playing a very important role in the local community. However, as is outlined, they are working under a huge financial burden. He goes on to state—

Faced with these increased costs I have had no option but to increase my rental from \$243.50 per week to \$265.95 per week, an increase of \$22.45 per week. This substantial increase will take effect from 3 June 2005. Our residents have the option of finding additional rent or finding alternative accommodation.

This is a very sad by-product of the delay in delivering tax cuts. There have been calls for these tax cuts for a long time and it has taken to the last minute, as late as they could be left, for the government to deliver on these. In the time that has elapsed we have had facilities like the one run by Mr Roach burdened to the point of increasing costs and reducing services. As Mr Roach rightly goes on to point out—

I am sure you are aware that there is a lack of such supported accommodation facilities, especially on the Gold Coast.

I can understand that the Labor government will naturally hesitate and balk at delivering tax cuts. This is because it is human nature to balk at something that does not come naturally and hesitate to do things that are against one's normal thinking. However, policy hopscotch on tax cuts affects real people and real service providers in our community.

I rose in this House earlier this year to comment on the lack of tax reform, in the form of tax cuts, coming from this government. It is across the board and it is a devastating indictment on this government that the federal government has had to act like a dog owner giving their pet a heart worm tablet by dragging the Beattie Labor government kicking and screaming to the tax vet to deliver tax cuts. Tax cuts are something that should come naturally. While the Liberal Party welcomes the moves here today, there is much more that can be done.

The Treasurer is on the public record as saying he does not feel pressured to reduce taxes. That is going to change. I am committed to starting from this day—day one after the alleged best budget ever—to campaign for the next burdensome tax to be reduced, that is, payroll tax. Treasurers of any persuasion at any level of government should always feel the need to look for ways to put money back into people's pockets and do it as promptly as possible. The Treasurer cannot sit back on this good start to tax cuts and say that this is all that will be done as the Queensland people deserve more. With those comments, I commend the bill to the House.