



Speech by

Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

Hansard Wednesday, 3 June 2009

MOTION: QUEENSLAND ECONOMY

Hon. CR DICK (Greenslopes—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Industrial Relations) (6.09 pm): As the Minister for Industrial Relations I am delighted to be able to support the Premier's amendment. There are a few things I want to put on the record straight up. As the Minister for Industrial Relations I would like to take this opportunity to reassure all Queensland families, particularly those who have members working in assets or business enterprises under consideration for sale. The Queensland government is committed to a fair process for dealing with employees of the enterprises under consideration for sale in the Renewing Queensland plan. The sale process will involve them and their representatives. All employees in affected government owned corporations will have the terms and conditions of their current enterprise bargain agreements honoured for the life of that agreement. This is similar to the arrangements that have been put in place in past asset sales. Also, employment guarantees will be in place for two years beyond the date of the sale. Employees transferring to the new businesses will experience no interruption to their continuity of service or accrued entitlements.

The government will establish an industrial relations working party to discuss the detail of transition arrangements with unions and their corporations. Through these and other measures, the government will ensure that we will protect workers' rights and provide for their families through both jobs and services. In terms of employment, the objective of the government is to protect jobs and create viable private enterprises with the prospect of long-term employment growth.

I now turn to the craven political opportunism of those opposite. We entered this government with a clear mandate from the people of Queensland. We went to the 2009 election promising jobs for the people of Queensland, securing Queensland jobs, stabilising Queensland jobs and supporting Queensland jobs.

Mr Watt: Not cutting them.

Mr DICK: As the member for Everton has said, not cutting jobs. That is the difference between Labor governments and whatever they want to call themselves on the other side—LNP governments, National Party governments, Liberal Party governments; it does not matter. We stand for jobs.

We are in unprecedented economic times. Members opposite would have us believe that the plummet in state revenue and the decline in GST revenue coming into this state is a fiction of their imagination that requires no action by government and no response. For those on this side of the House, these are pivotal times for our state. The fiscal lens for this state has changed and the way we look at our state through that fiscal lens has to change. That is why this government is acting. We will act with courage, we will act with boldness and, as some have said, Labor is at its best when it is bold. That is what we are doing. We will back schools, hospitals, public transport infrastructure, services for the vulnerable, community safety and safety for workers. That is the historic mission of Labor governments. That is what we will stand up for throughout this global financial and economic crisis.

What does that mean? What do capital works mean for the people of Queensland? For the people of Greenslopes it means a new world-class children's hospital. Since my election, people have said to me, 'Cam, I don't care, we just want the best for our kids.' That is what they want and that is what this government will deliver in building a new world-class children's hospital. We will back schools such as the

Mount Gravatt West Special School in my electorate. When you go to that school you see children struggling with disabilities, but struggling happily and doing the best they can. We are there to support them and families. That is what Labor governments do. We will build the eastern busway. As the member for Chatsworth has said today, we will build the eastern busway through Chatsworth, South Brisbane and Greenslopes. Public transport infrastructure is what this government will build.

We are facing the tough choices for this state. We will protect jobs, we will grow jobs, we will get through this crisis and we will be all the better for it. We will support workers in the affected enterprises. We will ensure that they are protected as we move forward. We will give them guarantees as part of the sale process. As a Labor government we are pleased to do that. We will ensure that the economy grows the best it can through this crisis. I am pleased to support the amendment proposed by the Premier and I urge all members of the House to do so.