



Speech by

John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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FUEL SUBSIDY

Mr LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 am): This morning we have been hearing all sorts of words about the fuel tax and what it is supposed to pay for and be used for—things like carers' wages. Let us look at what the Premier said on 1 June 2008 when Bill Pincus QC brought down his report that said that the fuel subsidy should be abolished. The Premier said on 1 June 2008—

But I am not prepared to do that when Queensland households are under real financial pressure ...

I will not kick them when they are down.

That is what the Premier said a year ago. What was not coming then was an election. So the Premier, a year ago last Sunday, ruled out putting in a fuel tax. Clearly, Labor has been trying to implement this tax for a decade. To see this we only have to look at its record on this. The Premier is now trying to use the financial crisis as an excuse for it.

A fuel tax has always been part of Labor's plan for Queensland. It tried it in 2000. Then Premier Beattie backed down in a week. Not always was it so. In 1997, when Rob Borbidge was Premier, he negotiated with the federal government to make sure the rebate did get paid back to Queensland and that Queensland, which was the only state that did not have a fuel tax, would not have one.

I note that on 7 October 1997 the Labor Party moved a motion condemning the state government at the time for what it called the mismanagement of the tax arrangements. They called it an ultimate betrayal and a shonky failure. They said then that Queenslanders would have to find another \$400.

We had the Treasurer saying days before the last election, 'We'll be delivering a fuel subsidy scheme. It will stay in place.' Clearly, 10 weeks after the election that promise is in tatters. Queenslanders face a fuel tax for the first time in history. This is the ultimate betrayal from the Labor government. They are a shonky failure, as Labor members said in October 1997. That is the Premier. She is a liar. The Treasurer is a liar. This is something that Queenslanders will not forget.

Government members interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: I withdraw.

Mr FRASER: I rise to a point of order. I was seeking withdrawal of the unparliamentary language.

Mr LANGBROEK: I withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hoolihan): Order! Thank you, member for Surfers Paradise.