



Speech by

**Jarrold Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

Hansard Tuesday, 31 August 2010

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## **MINIMUM WASTE COLLECTION CHARGE**

**Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (10.16 pm): I rise this evening to address the issue of the recent minimum waste collection charge increases that have been passed on to ratepayers in my electorate in the recent rate notifications by the Sunshine Coast Regional Council. The charge relates to those residents, many of them senior, who reside in community title schemes in the former Caloundra city council area. These residents have banded together to fight the charge because they have had enough of governments of all levels attacking their standard of living. The recent history of this charge can only be described as tumultuous at best.

For the financial year 2008-09, there was a modest levy of \$25 charged to each ratepayer in the complex. There was no charge in 2009-10 and now for this financial year the charge has been increased to \$151.30 per resident—an increase of some 600 per cent in just two years. Most astonishingly, that is more than the Labor state government's charges.

Currently many unit complexes have a shared bin system, whereby council is only required to collect on average 10 bins put out from a potential 40 bins per complex, saving the council valuable time and money. I have written to council, a copy of which letter I table, to highlight the inequity in this system which charges each resident for an individual service that they actually do not receive.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 15 July 2010, from the member for Kawana to the CEO, Sunshine Coast Regional Council regarding minimum waste collection charges [2858].

The response that I have received, which I also table, suggested that the council wanted to initiate a user-pays philosophy.

*Tabled paper:* Response, dated 29 July 2010, from the Manager Waste and Resources Management to the member for Kawana regarding minimum waste collection charges [2859].

It also suggested that, because no charge was imposed on ratepayers in 2009-10 in southern premises, council was out of pocket \$1.2 million and that the \$151.30 imposed on southern residents this year would still leave council out of pocket. Council's blunder and budget black hole imposition will be subsidised by the ratepayer.

People are already under an enormous strain from cost-of-living expenses. Under the mismanagement of this incompetent Labor state government we have seen electricity prices spiral out of control, registration go up, fuel prices go up and now water prices go up—just to name a few. Now rates and levies and charges are just another form of tax on residents who are struggling to make ends meet, and the people who are hardest hit are those on fixed incomes such as pensioners.

The Premier once said that council amalgamation was supposed to save ratepayers money. On 10 March the *Courier-Mail* reported in an article entitled 'Councils wallow in debt as forced amalgamations force rates hikes'—

Rates are soaring as Queensland councils struggle with rising debts two years after controversial amalgamations were pushed through by the State Government.

In the same article the Sunshine Coast Regional Council deputy mayor said that the advantages are not apparent at this point in time. He said that an additional \$14 million a year had to be found over the next few years to fix the council's financial woes.

We heard today the Premier of Queensland stand in this place and finally admit that the state Labor government has not been listening to Queenslanders for the past 12 years. But now it is sending all its Labor state members out to listen to people. The LNP has been listening to the people of Queensland. We will help reduce the cost burden that each and every Queenslanders has due to a state Labor government.

*(Time expired)*