




Speech by

Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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SUSTAINABLE PLANNING (HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND INFRASTRUCTURE CHARGES REFORM) AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.56 pm): The Sustainable Planning (Housing Affordability and Infrastructure Charges Reform) Amendment Bill that is before us today would give members an expectation that we are going to see a real effort to cut the cost of housing—to make housing more affordable. Yet, as we have heard already, the experts in the field are saying that this bill will not achieve that aim. Today Queenslanders are facing some of the highest costs of living ever. A report by QCOSS released today indicates that the financial distress in our state is at record levels. The cost of accessing housing is a large component of that distress. We are sitting in a region where the housing crisis is particularly diabolical. Although there is opportunity with the mining boom and related industry for good jobs, the pressure on the local housing stock is huge and not everyone works in the mines.

In addressing this bill it is relevant to refer to conversations I have had with local agencies at the coalface of the housing crisis. They talk to me about people arriving in Mackay looking for work, not realising that housing is not easily available and they end up living in their car—if they have a car. There are many others who are already living in this area, or who are trying to live in this area, who face the same pressure. I have spoken to a boss who rents a house for \$650 a week for his workers in order to hold them. That is a big cost on a local business, but for a wage earner \$650 a week or more—in many cases it is a lot more for housing—is a huge hit. Not everyone is in a good job. And even if you are in a good job, it is still not that easy. The important question to ask is: will this bill before the House address the housing cost issue? We do not believe that it will. Every time Labor brings in a bill claiming that it will make housing more affordable, costs go up.

It was a somewhat cruel irony to this morning hear the minister for communities boasting about an Every Dollar Counts stall. This is the very government that has been counting the people's money as it takes it out of their pockets and forces up the cost of living with record water price rises, record increases in electricity prices and record increases in the cost of registration and running a car. This is the government that took away the fuel tax rebate, which now means we pay more for our fuel here in Queensland in a state where, by necessity, many people have to rely upon a car. This government has a piddling little Every Dollar Counts stall while it counts the money as it rips it out of people's pockets. It is an insult and, once again, this bill does not address those impacts.