



Speech by

## Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

Hansard Wednesday, 3 August 2011

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### MOTION: ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, RESOURCES AND ENERGY COMMITTEE, REPORTING DATE

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (4.04 pm): There are 303 pages of reasons why this bill should not be rammed through by this government. What we have seen is a tax policy rather than an environmental policy presented to this House. It is appropriate that the new committees, which have only just come into being, should have the amount of time necessary to consider this legislation right throughout Queensland. In fact, it has a misleading title. The bill says that it is a waste reduction and recycling bill, but there are also other acts which are being amended by this bill. It is more of a SLMP bill but with a centrally important piece of legislation which will add significant costs to average Queenslanders. Those costs will flow through to the industry and to the stakeholder groups, but it is Queenslanders who are already struggling with high costs of living who will ultimately pay.

So why is this government breaking its promise and trying to rush legislation through without appropriate scrutiny and without consideration of the impact on Queenslanders? One has to ask: why the rush? We have had no compelling answer from the minister to justify why this legislation is now going to avoid full and appropriate scrutiny, without appropriate time through the committee structure. There are significant cost implications for all Queenslanders and for a number of businesses. This is quite a significant piece of legislation which has significant cost implications. Yet we have heard the government say that it has done the consultation. Well, the feedback a number of us have already had from concerned businesses, small businesses, is that they have not been heard. So why is the government trying to cover up in regard to the consultation process by limiting the number of hearings that can be held throughout Queensland, by limiting the amount of time for scrutiny, because that is essentially what it will do? We need to see this bill taken before the people and the businesses throughout Queensland, throughout all of the regions, so that those people can have their say.

Consultation is not real consultation unless people can impact the outcome. What we are hearing from a number of businesses and small stakeholders is that they have not been heard and that certainly they have not seen a significant change in what has been mooted by the government. So why is the government rushing this? Because it cannot justify the consultation and it cannot justify the cost in the way it is implemented. It is all very well to have a theory about how to address the environment but you also need to be practical about how you do it. We have seen how the government handled the infrastructure program of Queensland when it rushed a certain amount of infrastructure into South-East Queensland—the water policy and the water grid—and how Queenslanders now are paying billions of dollars extra out of their pay packets to make up for the waste.

It does matter how legislation and policy is framed. It does matter how it is implemented, and that is why we must listen and have appropriate scrutiny and consultation in public hearings throughout the state which the time frame that the government is attempting to ram through this House will not allow. We are opposed to the way the government is subverting the new committee structure with this piece of legislation—one of the largest pieces of legislation that we have seen this term—and it is not even going to give it the appropriate time for scrutiny. That is why we are opposed to this bill being inappropriately gagged.