



Speech by


**Jarrold Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; COMMUNITY AMBULANCE COVER LEVY REPEAL AND REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.58 am): Today, as the member for Kawana and shadow Attorney-General, I add my support to the contribution of the shadow Treasurer, a member of the can-do team, for his budget reply. It was a reply that sets an agenda for the future—an agenda that the shadow Treasurer has urged the Labor Party to copy, because our can-do plan, if implemented tomorrow, would provide immediate downward pressure on the cost-of-living expenses for Queenslanders. Costs-of-living pressures is one, if not the biggest, issue facing Queenslanders at present. For over 10 years Queenslanders have seen their car registration skyrocket, their fuel expenses skyrocket and their electricity prices skyrocket. They were faced with forced council amalgamations and told, 'You'll have a better regional body representing your interests.' The government took control of the water assets and now our water bills have increased so much that people simply cannot afford to pay them. This is the sad reality that is faced by so many Queenslanders and so many of my constituents living in the Kawana electorate.

This year's budget is yet another example of Labor's mismanagement of our state finances—taxes paid on the back of a hard day's work by Queenslanders. The government has gone bankrupt on the back of a massive mining boom. In fact, if a business was run like this state is run, the bank would send in the receivers. The government wasted the money in the good times and failed to invest in the future of our state. The government is absolutely addicted to spending and waste. It is addicted to debt. Like any drug junkie, the fire sale of some of Queensland's major assets gave the government a little hit, but, like drug addiction, debt will continue to rise. For the financial year 2011-12, state debt is expected to surpass \$65 billion and increase to almost \$85 billion by 2014-15. That increase is despite the assurances of the Treasurer that the proceeds of the asset sales were to retire state debt. This is the same asset sale that those members opposite failed to disclose to the electorate before the last election and then sneakily announced after the votes were cast. That was a deception of the highest order.

Queensland was once the low-tax state and the envy of all the other states in Australia, but now we are at the bottom of the ladder. People are hurting. People in electorates across the Sunshine Coast—

**Mr Ryan:** They are all cranky about what you're going to do to the hospital.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** People in the electorate of Morayfield are hurting, because of that member's vote over the past 2½ years to continually increase the cost-of-living pressures in the electorate of Morayfield and right around the Sunshine Coast. People are hurting because of the cost-of-living expenses for vital services such as electricity and water, which is eroding the discretionary spending capacity of Queensland consumers. That means a downturn in retail, which obviously affects the retail employment sector and also causes a dramatic collapse in GST revenue which, of course, flows back into state government coffers. This downturn then affects the government's ability to increase services and invest in capital infrastructure that maintains our standard of living as the population increases and infrastructure demand is put to the test.

Thankfully, it is not all doom and gloom. Queensland has an opportunity to change Queensland's economic prosperity and fortunes and make Queensland No. 1 again. The answer is simple: Campbell Newman and the can-do LNP team, which has a plan to restore Queensland to being Australia's No. 1. Queensland has a proud history—a time that Queenslanders have held dear to their hearts—of economic prosperity and wealth. That has gone under Labor, but it will come back under an LNP team. The next election will be a contest between a tired, stale, arrogant, long-term Labor government that has run Queensland into the ground and the vibrant energy of Campbell Newman and a can-do LNP team that will govern for all of Queenslanders and not for ourselves.

I say to the people of Queensland that if they want to reduce their cost-of-living expenses, they have to change the government. If they want to live in a state that leads the way in our national economy, they have to change the government. If they want to improve the justice system, restore order and put the sense back into sentencing, they have to change the government. If they want to improve our education services, they have to change the government. If they want to improve health services and reduce hospital waiting times, they have to change the government. The message is simple and the contrast between Labor and the LNP is stark: we will govern for Queensland and Queenslanders, not for ourselves and we will make Queensland No. 1 again.

The LNP has a can-do plan for Queensland and it is appropriate, as we continue to release the details of those plans in the lead-up to the next state election, to reiterate some of the key initiatives that the shadow Treasurer announced in his contribution and remind members opposite that their days of inaction and lack of planning for Queensland are numbered. The can-do team has a plan to slash the cost-of-living expenses and save average Queensland families around \$250 to \$330 a year.

**Mr Ryan:** What is it?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The member for Morayfield screeches from the back, 'What's the plan?' He should know a lot of the plan, because the government has copied most of it over the past 12 weeks. He should be well and truly on top of the LNP plans. We have already announced that in government the LNP will freeze the cost of car registration for the family car during the first term. Campbell Newman has also announced a four-point plan to address skyrocketing costs and put some accountability back into the system. The plan was so good that it forced the government to act and copy parts of it.

The problem is that those members on that side of the House do not have the ability or the record to deliver any program competently or efficiently. We will reform electricity tariffs and abolish the ambulance tax, saving average Queensland families around \$234 per year. We will do this by immediately freezing the standard domestic tariff. We will abolish that ridiculous system that allows electricity retailers to charge Queenslanders more, even if they use less power. We have always supported the abolition of Labor's ambulance tax and we said so at the time it was introduced. That is another saving of \$114. We are also committed to working with the energy industry to provide consumers with incentives to reduce consumption. This is part of a plan and, under Campbell Newman, that is what we will deliver for the people of Queensland.

It is vital that Queensland gets moving again. We need to return to the days where investment was encouraged in Queensland—in fact, sought out by the state government—and Queensland is again the state of choice for private sector investment in Australia. As part of our plan, we will appropriately resource the Office of the Coordinator-General to ensure that it once again becomes the facilitator of major projects across the state—not another layer of bureaucracy as it is under the current government. Under a can-do LNP government, the role of the Coordinator-General is to get major projects moving and to streamline the process of capital investment.

The LNP will govern for Queensland and not for ourselves. We will stand up for the state first and not for our own political vested interests. We will fight to ensure that the mining royalties of resources that come from this state go back into investing in roads and infrastructure in this state and not on our southern counterparts, as will happen with the federal government's mining resource rent tax. A Campbell Newman government will stand up to the bullyboy tactics in Canberra and fight for our mining royalties to benefit Queensland and not marginal federal electorates in southern states. We will oppose the carbon tax, which is going to impact on every Queensland. In the debate on the carbon tax this week we saw every member opposite vote in support of a carbon tax—a carbon tax that I am sure will infiltrate throughout the electorates of the members opposite. The LNP will oppose the carbon tax, because it will increase the cost-of-living pressures on Queenslanders who can least afford it.

The ability for one to own their own home is still a goal that we want to foster and encourage. We want to address housing affordability issues by reducing unnecessary costs and charges that are so often buried as hidden costs of buying a house. In government, we will reintroduce the principal place of residence concession for stamp duty transfer. We believe that if you are selling your house and moving into another property, you deserve a principal place of residence concession. The government has taken that concession away from Queenslanders. That means that, in most cases, people will be paying more than \$7,000 extra in tax to the Queensland Treasurer.

Queenslanders should not be made to pay for Labor's incompetence. Queenslanders should not be made to pay for an incompetent Treasurer. Queenslanders are paying for the incompetence of every

member opposite. Our teachers need better resources and assistance to improve the educational outcomes for Queensland students. The LNP will provide greater opportunities for young Queenslanders to improve their NAPLAN results by easing the burden on teachers.

With respect to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General, there will come a time in estimates when we will hold the government to account. Labor's budget has all but walked away from the modernisation of the Queensland justice system. What we have seen in this gross economic mismanagement is a failure to plan for our future by robbing our justice system of new capital spending and a 16 per cent increase in wages. The capital expenditure in the budget is already announced and most of it goes to the completion of a new Supreme and District courts building which is nearly complete. If members have driven past it lately they will know that. The Justice budget predicts that Queenslanders will be paying an extra \$70 million in taxes, fees and fines. Despite the proposed increase of almost \$70 million, staffing to our courts has been cut. Regional Queenslanders are some of the greatest victims of this budget, with access to justice in rural areas totally abandoned by the Labor Party. For over 20 years Labor has overseen a legal system, not a justice system.

I hold grave concerns for Legal Aid because at the moment it is funded by the trust accounts of lawyers. Legal Aid will be heading into trouble as we go from the worst economic management to even poorer economic management in Queensland. I hold concerns for QCAT, set up to be free-for-all, easy access to justice. When QCAT has to deal with jurisdictional changes brought about by the Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill once it finally passes this place, it will have an additional burden which I am not sure it can cope with.

The Electoral Commission has been additionally funded in this budget. It has to be. We have a local government election and a state government election. It had to have increased funding to pay for Labor's dodgy public funding campaigns.

**Mr Rickuss:** How much are they going to tax the Queensland people for that?

**Mr BLEIJIE:** \$30 million to political parties that can walk to the Electoral Commission and get \$2 million in administration funding each year as Queenslanders go without. As Queenslanders are taxed more stamp duty, the Labor Party is filling its pockets. That is a beast created not by us; that is a beast created by the Labor Party.

We are serious about access to justice, so much so that Campbell Newman announced in Mackay that a can-do team would deliver a permanent coroner's office for regional Queensland. This will ease the burden on regional magistrates. This full-time coroner was in fact a recommendation of the State Coroner in his latest report. This new coroner will ease the burden from Caloundra to Proserpine. This is what Campbell Newman does: he understands, he listens and if there is a problem he acts practically.

We on the Sunshine Coast have been neglected by this long-term Labor government for some time. Our regional investment needs are strong for the future but are underfunded by this government. We are one of the fastest growing regions in Australia. The Bligh Labor government continues the delay of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, a hospital that is desperately needed now to address urgent health services in our region.

**Mr Ryan** interjected.

**Mr Fraser** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** This hospital was delayed for two years by the Labor Party and every member opposite, not the LNP. The LNP has continually stood up for the public hospital in this area. The LNP has continually stood up for the Sunshine Coast residents in relation to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. Let me say to the Treasurer and those members opposite—like the member for Morayfield flashing a *Sunshine Coast Daily* article, thinking that they are all slick, that they have won the election based on a front-page *Sunshine Coast Daily* article—and to the people of the Sunshine Coast that the LNP will deliver the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. I have advocated for it for three years. I would not stand around and let any political party jeopardise that investment.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The LNP is committed to it, so much so that I will table a copy, for the screechers opposite, of a press release issued yesterday by Campbell Newman which states that a LNP Campbell Newman team confirmed—

a CanDo LNP Government would prioritise development of the desperately needed medical facility ...

The press release further states—

Sunshine Coast public hospital services are still more than five years away from being delivered ...

because of Labor incompetence and delay. The document further states—

An LNP government will build the new Sunshine Coast Hospital faster than Labor.

**Mr FRASER:** I rise to a point of order. The letter does not commit \$2 billion to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and the member for Kawana has not guaranteed any savings will stay on the Sunshine Coast.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kilburn): When the member tables the document there will be an opportunity to decide whether he has misled the House and if he has you can follow the normal procedure.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Indeed, I have already said that I am tabling it. I am referring to the tabled document. It is a press release, not a letter. I table the press release that I have just quoted from which gives a guarantee to Sunshine Coast residents.

*Tabled paper:* LNP media release, dated 16 June 2011, titled 'LNP Government commits to Sunshine Coast Hospital' [4710].

I can tell the Treasurer sitting opposite that the Sunshine Coast people have stopped believing him. They do not believe the Labor Party in relation to hospital services on the Sunshine Coast. They stopped believing the Treasurer and the Premier a long time ago. They will never, ever forgive the Labor Party for delaying the hospital in the first place. An LNP government will build the hospital and will build it faster than the Labor Party. That is the commitment given by Campbell Newman to Sunshine Coast residents. It cannot be any clearer than that. I will continue to lead the protest of 'hospital delay, no way'. We did not accept it at the time and we never will accept any form of delay instigated by the Labor Party, not the LNP.

I have been successful in this budget in getting some much needed funds for the Sippy Downs community. A little over two weeks ago, 700 people from the Sippy Downs community put before this parliament a petition calling on the government to invest in school safety, roads and infrastructure. I am pleased that the government has invested in the Claymore Road expansion project with council to fund and get that footpath in. If state governments build schools, they have to ensure people can get to them safely.

Public transport has always been neglected on the Sunshine Coast. We have had the CAMCOS corridor, the multimodal transport corridor, and now we have the Coast Connect program. The funding to plan is not even there. Those opposite talk a lot. They talked a lot yesterday. The Treasurer talked a lot this morning about the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, but the fact is that the Labor Party has never delivered any regional infrastructure for the Sunshine Coast. To see this, one only has to look at the precedent set over the past 20 years. The Premier has been there only a couple of times. Once was to say hello to Jessica Watson. She sat up in the gallery with the press. She could not even face the residents of the coast to talk about these issues. The people know that the LNP is on the side of residents of the Sunshine Coast and that the Labor Party is not.

I am also pleased that, after advocacy by me and the Kawana State College P&C, there will now be traffic lights on Nicklin Way at Thunderbird Drive. This is a great investment to make sure that those kids can come across from the eastern to the western side in a school safety zone. No other way gives them as much safety as a signalised crossing. I am pleased about those investments. I am pleased that we have put petitions into parliament about various issues and we have then received funding for them.

In conclusion, Campbell Newman and the LNP team realise the cost-of-living pressures that are being placed on Queenslanders by this Treasurer. People know that if they want to reduce their cost-of-living pressures they will not do it with the Labor Party. Certainly they will not do it with this Treasurer, who is the most unpopular member of the parliament based on the votes at the last election. They will not do it with that man and they will not do it with that Premier. They know that a can-do government under Campbell Newman has a plan to restore Queensland as the envy of all other states in Australia. The contrast between the two could not be any more profound.