



Speech by


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**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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## **LNP GOVERNMENT BUDGET**

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.36 am): Today is a turning point in Queensland's history. Today is the day when, after just six months, the LNP government reveals its true colours.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, we will stop the clock. Will members please leave the chamber in an orderly and quiet way and others cease their conversations or else go outside.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Historically, state budgets are about creating jobs, they are about building a workforce, they are about investing in infrastructure and they are about investing in our state's future. Today the LNP has shown it has not a clue by doing the polar opposite: by slashing and burning, and by axing jobs and front-line services.

We only need look back at previous Labor government budgets to see the difference and to see how this government, after just six months in office, has got it so completely and utterly wrong. If we look back, we will see state budgets delivered by the former government that built Queensland with a \$17 billion infrastructure program that resulted in the creation of thousands and thousands of jobs through projects such as the Gateway Bridge duplication. The Gold Coast Rapid Transit project will create 6,300 jobs. I note that today the tracks are going down for the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project. Who signed off on the documents to create those projects and jobs? It was a Labor government! Other projects include the Ted Smout Bridge to Redcliffe. Who will forget hearing in this chamber today the health minister saying that Labor did not invest in infrastructure in Queensland hospitals? How much is the Gold Coast Hospital worth? Over \$1.7 billion! We created projects on the Gold Coast. Unlike this government, we value capital infrastructure and we value jobs. Those projects are the former government's job-building legacy, a legacy that the LNP government has totally and utterly failed to live up to.

As the LNP's first state budget is handed down today, what do we get? Do we see any remorse at the massive damage done to job security, at the slash of the axe against front-line jobs and front-line services? Do we see any hint of regret that they have cold-heartedly placed Queensland and Queenslanders on a backward slope, transporting us back to a time when we were looked upon as the nation's backwater? Do we hear a single voice of compassion? Do we see anyone prepared to stand up for Queensland jobs, services and families as they take a sword to its heart? No, we see quite the opposite! We see 78 LNP members of parliament who have betrayed Queensland. We see that not one member of this government is prepared to do the decent thing and stand up for jobs in their local communities.

We understand that around 14,000 jobs could go today. There should be no mistake made. There should be no misinterpretation of where we find ourselves in Queensland in 2012—and that is a lonely place where 14,000 promises have been cynically and deliberately broken and 14,000 families will by tonight find themselves—

**A government member** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is no laughing matter.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** So you are heckling now about the jobs that are going. Do you have any concept of what people are going through?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! I will ask members to cease their interjections across the chamber. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Today thousands of people have turned up at work and they are going to either receive an email or maybe a phone call to tell them that they no longer have a job with this government. How are they going to pay the bills? How are they going to make ends meet? They have mortgages to pay. They have to send their kids to school. What do we hear from all of the 78 members opposite? We hear total and utter silence about what is going to happen to those families throughout the state.

Among those people who are going today are some 1,500 front-line health workers who will disappear over the next three months. That is more than 1,500 doctors, nurses and allied health workers, pathologists, social workers, health educators and many, many others who have been cast to the wind. This brutal axing of these workers amounts to one of the most appalling examples of a broken promise that I can remember in any state in any era from any government.

The question I ask the Premier today could not have been clearer because here in their election document—here it is in black and white—is exactly what they said. Let me read it into the *Hansard* for the information of the House. They said—

We will always find a job within the public sector for hardworking public servants to contribute to a better Queensland. That's why an LNP Government will protect and revitalise front line service roles ...

That is what they said. It is clear. Did we see any compassion from the Premier here today in question time? Did we see any compassion whatsoever from any of the ministers about the jobs that are going to go from their respective departments? Did we hear anything? No, nothing at all.

**Mr Springborg:** What about the compassion from you for the 1,500 lost because of your payroll debacle?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I am glad the health minister is here because he said that he wants to shirk responsibility to the health boards. That is what he said: 'Let the health boards take responsibility.' I found an organisational chart and guess what? Who is responsible for the management of the health boards? Who is responsible? The health minister. I table that for the health minister so he can be reassured of his role. If the health minister does not want to accept that role, I am quite sure that the member for Stafford can gladly step into his role.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Health Organisational Structure, July 2012 [\[951\]](#).

Over the last week I have travelled around this state. I went to Townsville when they heard that some 45 nursing jobs were going, and they were shattered. They were absolutely shattered. What we see from this government is a changing of the goalposts. One minute it is a front-line job; then it is a front-line service. We see changing of the definitions. But what we do know is that this government should take full responsibility for the jobs that are going from the Public Service today.

It was this Premier who said that the Public Service had nothing to fear. Now they have everything to fear because thousands of people will find out their fate today. Imagine what it is going to be like for them to go home, sit down with their families and tell their families that they no longer have a job.

Jillian Flower came to see me yesterday. Jillian is in a wheelchair. She has been working for the department of education for 18 years in the diversity unit. She told me that the whole area has been axed. She said to me, 'Can you please ask the Premier whether he can find me another job?' She has been working there for 18 years and now she is terrified that her husband could lose his job today. If that is the situation, they will have to sell their house and they will have to move somewhere where they can find a job. These are real people.

I was also up in Cairns recently and I was talking to the health professionals there. A nurse educator came up to me and she said to me, 'Can you please ask the Premier whether a nurse educator is a front-line role or not?' This is a vital service in our hospitals and today they will find out whether or not they have a job.

Make no mistake: every single member of the LNP today will feel the hurt and the anger that is going to happen right across the Queensland community—and we know that it is not just going to be contained to the south-east. We know that this hurt is going to be felt in the regional communities—in Rockhampton, in Mackay, in Cairns, and out at Longreach and Emerald. I was out at Emerald and Longreach, and I saw the member for Gregory out there. People out there were concerned about their jobs—RoadTek jobs.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Members, there are too many interjections. I call the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** This is a heartless government. As I travel across the state people are coming up to me time and time again asking, 'Why do our jobs have to go?' I am hearing in Emerald that RoadTek jobs are going. After the floods who were the first people out there reconstructing our roads to make sure that the goods and services could travel around regional Queensland? It was our transport men and women out there doing that job. What you are saying to them is, 'You are no longer valued.' There is dignity in work and there is nothing more important for a family than to have a job. You are ripping that dignity out of them today. Every single one of you should share the blame and share the responsibility and take full responsibility for your actions.

*(Time expired)*