




Speech by

Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: STATE DEVELOPMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND INDUSTRY COMMITTEE

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (4.46 pm): The estimates hearing for the state development committee was quite revealing, because we learned a lot about the high-flying ways of the Deputy Premier, 'Jetset' Jeff. It was at estimates that we learned that the Deputy Premier—

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They do not like to hear it. We learned that the Deputy Premier has no qualms about using charter flights to go to and from his electorate, even if this jet-setting habit cost the taxpayers of Queensland \$64,000 in just three months—equivalent to an annual bill of almost a quarter of a million dollars. Initially the Deputy Premier—

A government member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That works out to be roughly \$5,000 a week. Where could you go for \$5,000 a week? I have done a bit of research. For \$3,989 you could go around the world. You could go from Brisbane to Singapore, London, Madrid, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, Auckland and Brisbane. Or you could go around the world twice—from Brisbane to Hong Kong, Zurich, London, Zurich, New York, Los Angeles and Brisbane—for \$2,550. It gets better: you could go to New York. For \$5,220 you could fly business class from Brisbane to New York. Unfortunately, this is no laughing matter.

Mr Choat interjected.

Mr Malone interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I am quite sure that members would love to speak in this debate. They have every opportunity to put their name on the list, stand here and actually put forward their views.

We put questions to the Deputy Premier about his use of charter flights. Now, I acknowledge that he is the Deputy Premier and that he needs to get around—some documents were tabled in relation to the use of the Government Air Wing—but I understand that he is also one of the most frequent users of the Government Air Wing. I do acknowledge that a Deputy Premier needs to get around this state but, instead of using charter flights, when there are commercial flights available to and from his electorate the Deputy Premier should use those commercial flights. I think any reasonable person would accept that situation.

We questioned the Deputy Premier in relation to some of this. The diary shows that when the Deputy Premier used a charter flight on Friday, 13 April 2012 there was a QantasLink flight available at virtually the same time but at a fraction of the cost. We must remember: these are taxpayers' funds.

The Deputy Premier tried to insist that there was a reason he could not make the QantasLink flight, but there were no conflicting diary entries for this time and the reason obviously still escapes the Deputy Premier as he did not furnish the committee with any further explanation. So the people of Queensland

were confronted with the spectacle of the Deputy Premier racking up expenditure of more than \$64,900 on charter flights from 26 March to 30 June this year. Despite the clear evidence that many of these charter flights could have been avoided through the use of commercial flights, did the Deputy Premier admit any wrongdoing? No, of course not! Rather than trying to find ways to save taxpayers' dollars, he has insisted that he will continue using the public purse to fund his own taxi service to and from his electorate. I remind the chamber that the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines manages to catch commercial flights and then take an hour-long drive to his home in North Queensland each week. But the Deputy Premier obviously feels as though he deserves special treatment, regardless of the impact. I note that the Minister for Health is in the chamber. He is a regional member and I do not think that there are commercial flights to and from his electorate. In fact, I have heard that he travels quite regularly by car. The Minister for Health also has a busy portfolio and we understand that his time is valuable, but yet he seems to be able to undertake that long drive to and from his electorate. The Deputy Premier revealed in estimates that—