




Speech by

**Hon. David Crisafulli**

**MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA**

Hansard Tuesday, 5 June 2012

## **TREASURY (COST OF LIVING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (9.36 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Treasury (Cost of Living) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 and outline why it will have a significant effect on Mundingburra families. I also commend the member for Mount Coot-tha on such a visionary and passionate performance. I am sure members in the House have waited a long time to hear those words be used with 'the member for Mount Coot-tha'. So I say well done to her.

Voters in my electorate come from all different walks of life. Some are quite wealthy, some are battlers, but all hate being ripped off to pay for waste and mismanagement. During my journey into this place and my eight years in local government I always prided myself on getting out from behind my desk and speaking to my community. What strikes me is how often I heard the same stories about people struggling to pay the bills—from truck drivers, to nurses, to double-income families with grown-up children, to families where one parent goes out to work while the other stays home with the small kids and, of course, there are the pensioners. Their stories were heartbreaking. I heard comments like, 'We don't make ends meet anymore,' 'We eat less meat to pay the electricity bills,' and, most memorably, there was the elderly widow who told me that she does not turn on her lights at night because of her electricity costs.

I, along with my LNP colleagues, have been sent into this place by voters who wanted and needed and deserved change, and that is what this bill delivers today. It will reintroduce the stamp duty concession to save families up to \$7,000 on the price of their homes. This saving will also put life back into the property sector. It will freeze electricity tariff 11, saving people on average \$120 per household. It will cut the red and green tape by removing the need for the crazy sustainability declarations and it will increase the payroll tax exemption from \$1 million to \$1.1 million, the first step in our commitment to increase it to \$1.6 million over six years. In 2012-13 that will save money for about 1,200 employers who will not be paying payroll tax. I want to expand on this point because not enough has been made about this fantastic announcement, including for the people of Noosa.

Payroll tax is an insidious tax. It is a tax on jobs, it is a tax on success, it is a tax that even those opposite who hate small business must realise is unfair. While I will not pretend that this will benefit all small business, it is a start. The Treasurer should be proud of the steps he has taken to ensure that business is again given an incentive to hire. What does it mean for Townsville? About 350 Townsville based businesses pay payroll tax. About 174 of these businesses will benefit from the changes to these thresholds. This is more of an incentive to put people on, to create employment, to give hope.

This bill will also allow us to open the Office of Best Practice Regulation, which will be set up to help us cut red tape by 20 per cent with a particular view to encouraging competition, industry, productivity and best practice regulation. This is one of the bills that the LNP will introduce to relieve pressure on the good people of Mundingburra and people throughout the state.

Why is it that in the middle of one of the biggest mining booms ever experienced in Australia we are forced to scrimp and save to try to reduce an unsustainable deficit? Why aren't Queenslanders richer than

ever before, with the best schools, hospitals, roads and the lowest cost of living? The answer is the miserable legacy of waste left by those sitting opposite us. Hang your head in shame, Labor, for every dollar that you wasted because you were too incompetent to understand that every cent you spent of taxpayers' money someone would have to pay for one day.

There was \$600 million wasted on the Traveston Crossing Dam, \$1.1 billion on the desalination plant that does not desalinate, \$400 million on a Health payroll system that does not pay health workers, \$350 million on a dam which they did not connect to the water grid—dams without pipes, pipes without dams. There was a blow-out on the new Children's Hospital, in the former Leader of the Opposition's electorate, which will now cost \$1.4 billion. And let us not forget about some of the smaller amounts like the \$16 million that our Tahitian prince managed to sneak underneath the radar. Maybe there are not enough zeros in that \$16 million to excite those opposite, but I tell you what: that would have made a world of difference to people in my part of the world who are just looking for a fair share after years of neglect.

Labor has left us with a debt that costs \$5 billion a year in interest repayments—\$100 million a week, \$600,000 an hour in interest. That is why the cost of living skyrocketed under its watch. That is why Queensland is the most expensive state to own and operate a vehicle. That is why families struggle to pay their electricity and water bills. That is why this bill is needed—to reduce the cost of living and cut red tape, to help Queenslanders survive this onslaught and not just survive but rise again.

I have the voices of the people of Mundingburra ringing in my ears, telling me that they cannot afford to put food on the table or turn their lights on at night—the voices of people like Jim, a truck driver from Cranbrook who told me over his front fence that he could no longer stump up for insurance; Sandra from Valencia Street, who struggles to make ends meet after paying expenses like electricity, rates and registration; Peter from Gulliver, a builder who has seen the results of Labor's disgraceful management of the economy on his way of life; Burt and Linda from Gulliver, a young couple just trying to pay off their house and provide for their family—life has been tough; small business owner Frank, for whom the drop in disposable income and the rising costs hit his bakery in a big way. But the most sobering assessment came from two neighbours in Charles Street, Heatley—the first a young family who have made a decision to reduce the amount of meat they eat because costs have just become too high; the other a lone pensioner who made a decision not to turn the lights on at night because her electricity bill delivered more pain than a few bumps into the furniture.

The Treasury (Cost of Living) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 will build a four-pillar economy, will tackle the cost of living and let us dare to dream of a better Queensland once again.