




Speech by

Hon. David Crisafulli

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

Hansard Wednesday, 11 July 2012

WASTE REDUCTION AND RECYCLING AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1): DISALLOWANCE

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government) (8.12 pm): I rise to speak against the disallowance motion that has been moved because it goes to the heart of two reasons I am in this place. Firstly, like many people in Queensland, I looked and saw a government that was completely incapable, incompetent, out of touch with the everyday person, out of control, arrogant and unable to conduct itself in a dignified fashion. Secondly, we had a government that continued to attack local government. It took every opportunity to belt local government.

I just cannot help but reflect on some of the comments made by the member for South Brisbane. There have been some absolute doozies. I like the one: 'This will not impact on households; it will only impact on small business.' It will only impact on small business? She just does not get it. Her problem is that she just does not get it. Let me explain how small business works.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members, there are too many interjections across the chamber. I am having difficulty hearing the member with the call. I call the minister.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I want to explain a little bit about small business. The only way the member for South Brisbane would ever be able to create a small business is if somebody gave her a big one. But let me just explain to her how small business works.

Ms TRAD: I rise to point of order, Madam Speaker. I find the comments made by the minister offensive and I ask that they be withdrawn.

Government members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right. Minister, I ask that you withdraw those comments under the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw. I not only withdraw them—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister—

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: I took your withdrawal. I am just drawing attention to the interjections across the chamber. Minister, you have the call.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I am sorry to have dented the small business credibility of the member opposite. There was the matter of—

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for South Brisbane, what is the point of order?

Ms TRAD: Madam Speaker, that was a withdrawal with qualification which I understand, under the standing orders—

Madam SPEAKER: Make your point of order, member for South Brisbane, not a speech. Are you making another point of order?

Ms TRAD: I ask the member to withdraw without qualification.

Madam SPEAKER: Take your seat. The minister did withdraw the first time. Another point of order has been made for the minister to withdraw. I ask the minister to withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw. What I was explaining is the way small business works. There is no magic funding for small business; it is money in and expenses out. That is how it works. What happens is that if a government is putting its hand in your pocket you need to get that money from somewhere. There is no magic pudding. What happens is that that money actually comes from customers—and more often than not the customers are people!

I will move on because I want to get to the real issue I wanted to speak about tonight, and that is local government. I love the quote from the member for South Brisbane: 'This would have helped the councils. It would have helped them.' I enjoyed the member for Gympie's interjection because the member for Gympie actually understands the process.

What the councils were hoping was that the money did not go to fund green ideology. That is what they were hoping for. They were hoping that it might go back to resources. So what happened with local government? I will talk about the process in a second. Local governments were asked to collect a levy they did not believe in, and the sting in the tail was that they also had to pay it. It had to pay it itself on its own business units. I love when I hear the enthusiasm of those opposite that somehow they are fighting for truth and justice in the Local Government Association of Queensland.

I have been doing a little bit of travel and speaking to a few councils. I am not sure whether the member for South Brisbane has spoken to many councils in the last few months, but I have. I am up to about 50 of the 73. As I go, I mention the removal of this levy.

Mr Cripps: Cheers.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Yes, cheers.

Mr Cripps: Celebration.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Celebration, happiness, joy—not one bit of condemnation. They are overjoyed. The cost to smaller councils in particular was a concern.

I am going to talk about another issue that might be a bit close to home, and that is the way that regional communities work—places like Belyando. It is not where the whales are. What happens in smaller local governments is that, because they have larger areas, they have a number of these facilities. There was this ridiculous one-size-fits-all approach and somehow each and every little outstation had to have all these grand facilities. It was a huge whack.

I listened with disbelief when I heard the phrase 'Labor's careful consultation with council'. I have to say that I was part of that 'careful consultation'. I would have to say the 'careful consultation'—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members, I know that everyone is in a very jovial mood for some reason, but there are too many interjections across the chamber. It is making it difficult to hear the minister. I ask people to cease interjecting. I call the minister.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I was just saying that, to me, 'careful consultation' with councils felt like a bit of a big battering brick. That is how it felt where I was standing and I can tell honourable members why. Councils were saying, 'Look, we really don't like it. We really don't think bringing it in on 1 December, which is not even midway through a financial year, is a good idea.' Councils were saying to the then government, 'Perhaps just give us a couple of months to see how this all unfolds,' which is code for 'we knew the position pretty clearly of the gentleman sitting to my left', and that was to get rid of it. Yet because that government was captive of DERM and because DERM was running the former government, it was rushed in.

Why was it rushed in? Because somehow they thought we would be in too deep. Somehow they thought that, once it was there, it would be there forever. No, nothing gave me more pleasure than to see that wound back. Even though that figure of \$35 a tonne for commercial waste was replaced with about \$20 a tonne in the form of Julia's carbon tax, even though we were giving with one hand and their mates in Canberra were taking with the other, there was still a feeling of satisfaction that just maybe we might have cut small business a break, that maybe for once we might have helped a local council rather than poking them in the eye.

I do not support this disallowance motion. It was a despised waste levy. It was removed on 1 July, and I say good riddance to bad rubbish!