



Speech by

David Kempton

MEMBER FOR COOK

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; FISCAL REPAIR AMENDMENT BILL

Mr KEMPTON (Cook—LNP) (4.26 pm): I offer my response to the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2012, the Appropriation Bill 2012 and the Fiscal Repair Amendment Bill 2012. Can we for a moment consider the title of the Fiscal Repair Amendment Bill? The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines 'fiscal' to mean government finances. 'Repair', on the other hand, is defined as 'to fix or mend a thing suffering from damage'. So this bill is to fix or mend government finances suffering from damage. That would have to be the biggest understatement in the history of this parliament! I am not suggesting the House has been misled. However, Queensland was completely misled by Labor for over a decade with gross mismanagement and incompetence. On the subject of understatement, when we took power we knew the state was in bad shape, but every biscuit tin we opened was empty. All we found was a big, fat rat and no money. In the case of the health department, the rat had a distinct Tahitian appearance. What an absolute disgrace! Members of this House in their reply speeches have run out of adjectives to describe the contempt and condemnation we have for the former government and its policies.

I have two daughters. They are both hardworking, self-reliant, honest and valuable members of our community. Labor has left a legacy of social uncertainty and economic instability for my children and the next generation across Queensland, and I find that abhorrent. So good on the Treasurer, Tim Nicholls; good on the Premier, Campbell Newman, and the leadership team; good on this government, of which I am proud to be a part, for not squibbing it on the hard decisions. Hard decisions are never easy, nor are they taken lightly, and there is always a societal downside. Nobody likes workforce reductions. Good on this government for not laying down to the banshee unions, for not doing dirty deals with the Greens, for not caving in to big business and miners. Most of all, good on this government for putting its people before its political future. This is a concept completely foreign to those opposite. I wonder if those opposite might at some juncture pause to reflect upon what they have done to Queensland and replace their strategy of trying to bore us into submission with inane interjections and unintelligible debate with a genuine effort to join in and support us on our journey to bring about the most significant social and economic reform in the history of our state. Mr Deputy Speaker, I apologise. I seem to have lapsed into fantasy land for a moment!

In my maiden speech I claimed to have the best electorate in Queensland. If the recent number of visits by ministers, members and committees is any measure, I am maintaining the lead with ease. However, unfortunately, the electorate of Cook poses a huge challenge in terms of budgetary constraint and economic reform. Labor has systematically destroyed opportunity for economic growth in my electorate, directly in relation to Indigenous communities and, by implication, the rest of the region. Over the past 20 years Labor has made an entire peoples welfare dependent—I suggest quite deliberately. Labor turned an entire region into a playground for a bunch of idealistic Greens to impose a plethora of failed environmental management schemes and follies just to shore up a few seats in the south-east.

As a government we must as a matter of priority and great urgency right these wrongs. This enormous task may take years to correct and it is a bittersweet pill to swallow that we have to continue to pour resources into the Cook electorate for the time being to support and correct Labor's mistakes of the past. I acknowledge that we must continue to support some of these extravagant and doubtful processes

whilst we allow all communities, towns and the residents of the electorate of Cook to have a far greater say in their future. This situation posed a particular challenge to the Treasurer and his team, which he managed to balance in very difficult circumstances.

I have provided details of the budget to all the newspaper and media outlets in my electorate. As there are over 170 items of expenditure, I will not deal with the specifics here today, except to say that the \$15,000 to new home buyers, the freezing of car registration, the grants to the P&Cs for backlogged maintenance and the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme are all examples of the positive steps taken by this government.

My electorate has received a significant proportion of the budget allocation, which is gratefully acknowledged in these difficult times. In fact, over 70 per cent of the available funds have been applied outside of Brisbane. My constituents recognise the enormous task we face in restoring our AAA credit rating and getting this great state back on track. They understand that, although not all electoral promises could be delivered in the first six months of our term, these promises remain a priority and I will work hard to ensure that they are given consideration as the state's finances improve. I can assure my constituents that I have not dropped the ball and that I will continue to work hard to revitalise the Far North.

This is a strong, responsible budget that not only aligns to our electoral promises but also ensures all that can be done is being done to secure our future as the greatest state in Australia. I commend the bills to the House.