




Speech by

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MEMBER FOR STRETTON

Hansard Tuesday, 19 June 2012


TREASURY (COST OF LIVING) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (12.57 pm): I rise to speak on an issue that was fundamental to my election to this place. That is our promise to introduce this bill and continue to fight to keep the cost-of-living pressures down for all Queenslanders. I would like to use my time to draw members' attention to my own electorate of Stretton and give members some personal examples I encountered as I discussed this issue with locals within my community.

The fact is that, prior to my election, under the previous Labor government the people of Stretton were struggling with the increases to costs of everyday living. Basics like paying for electricity or the cost of running a car seemed to be getting harder. The prospects of young adults being able to afford a home or start a small business were becoming more and more daunting. Last winter I remember meeting with a group of elderly pensioners who would not turn on the heater due to the impact on their rising power bills. We have elderly people who were so terrified of Labor power bills that they would sit in a cold house freezing because they were too scared to put on the heater. There was even a couple who would bring in their garden solar lights at night so they could avoid turning on the lights.

It was a very bad situation. Now electricity bills are not going up by \$20 or \$30 a quarter; they are going up by hundreds of dollars. It is these kinds of increases that are hurting our vulnerable people. These vulnerable people in our community—our elderly and our families—are on tight budgets. These budgets have been blown out by cost increases. To say that these people did not know what hit them would be an understatement. It is these vulnerable people who have been working hard making ends meet who are most affected. They have been budgeting carefully. For years they have set aside roughly the same amount of money each week for food, for transport, for petrol, for electricity and so forth. But over the last few years the increases have spiralled out of control. Some of these vulnerable people are going into debt just to keep the lights on.

Some members of my community just cannot keep up and they are now turning to alternative sources for assistance such as charities. I have done a great deal of charity and community work in my life, and I applaud charities for all their hard work, but I am concerned to hear that charities such as the Salvos, the Tribe of Judah and others have all been reporting more and more people coming to them for food parcels. Times are tough and we as a government should not let charities bear the burden of past failures if we can do something about it.

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (2.52 pm), continuing: The Labor Party across this country reminds me of the arrogant French monarchy just before the French Revolution when the people cried, 'We have no bread to eat,' and Queen Marie Antoinette said, 'Then let them eat cake.' Likewise, we have a Rolls Royce NBN but no relief for working families who earn just a little too much to get any assistance. So out of touch was that government and likewise our Labor governments past and still present in Canberra that they still have not heard the message from their people. People do not need handouts to pay for bad policy; they need a government that keeps everyday costs down for all Queenslanders. They do not need a government that throws money at people for votes; they need a government with solutions. They do not

need bandaid solutions that leave a generation of Queenslanders to pay the bill; they need a strong and resolute government.

Under Labor, Queenslanders just kept paying the higher cost of living, with no plan and no end to the cost rises in sight. Now, after the burden our state has been living with under state Labor, we will soon have the killer python—that is, federal Labor's toxic carbon tax. I know that our Treasurer is deeply concerned with this toxic carbon tax. His department believes that this carbon tax will cost Queensland \$148 million next financial year, and that figure could rise to almost \$200 million by 2015-16. Queensland Treasury modelling has also found that gross state product could take a hit of up to \$9.6 billion, up to 21,000 jobs could be lost and real wages could be reduced by \$2,900 by 2020. That means that Labor's toxic carbon tax will have a more pronounced effect in Queensland than in any other state in Australia. When will Labor learn? Mr Abbott was right when he said that it is going to be a python squeeze rather than a cobra strike. This Labor tax is absolutely going to put the squeeze on Queensland's economic growth, reduce standards of living for everyday Queenslanders, increase electricity prices and significantly harm our state budget. Labor knows it, Queenslanders know it and Australians know it.

That is why we have started straightaway to deliver on our commitments to reduce the cost of living for Queenslanders. We will show the full impact of federal Labor's toxic carbon tax on people's electricity bills. We will freeze electricity tariff 11, saving our community an average of \$120 a year. We will introduce stamp duty concessions, saving Queensland families up to \$7,000 on the price of their home. We will also deliver on our commitment to provide relief to small businesses across the state. This is the can-do policy team that took the steps that were absolutely crucial to reduce the cost of living for Queenslanders. All LNP candidates signed the pledge to decrease the cost of living for families by reducing waste. We promised to give families and the elderly some hope of relief, and now I am proud to be in the chamber to be delivering on those promises. I commend this bill to the House.