



Speech by


**Michael Pucci**

**MEMBER FOR LOGAN**

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

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (5.11 pm): I am pleased today to rise to speak in support of the Treasury (Cost of Living) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2012. As promised, this bill will deliver a number of LNP promises made during the election campaign aimed at lowering the cost of living for families. Because the former Labor government could not get the basics right, Queenslanders are facing spiralling costs of living and family budgets are under severe strain. There was no forward planning; there was just growing government waste, such as the \$600 million on the failed Traveston Crossing Dam, over \$1 billion on the unused Tugun desalination plant and \$350 million on the Wyaralong Dam, which is not even connected to the South-East Queensland water grid! Let us not forget the \$7 billion spent on that water grid. Then there is the failed Queensland Health payroll system that will cost more than \$1.2 billion to fix and continues to be of financial and emotional distress for thousands of front-line Health staff. Of course, let us not forget accountability and how a fake prince can help himself to \$16 million of taxpayers' money from the Health system.

These blunders—this incompetence—are costing Queenslanders over \$100 million a week to pay back. In terms of my electorate, what could we do with \$100 million a week? Why are there suburbs in my electorate with little or no transportation at all? There are families and children in my electorate who cannot get to places to do things and, as a result, crime rates are spiralling out of control in some areas because people are locked up in communities built without proper infrastructure, without proper spending. Places like Flagstone, Greenbank and Logan Village have no transportation. There are places with no sporting facilities. How many sporting facilities could we build with \$100 million a week? How many could we have? How many multicultural centres could we have, given the cultural diversity in Logan? How many of those could we have with \$100 million? Where did the money go? Where is it? It is definitely not in Logan, I can tell members that! Why do people in Logan drive on roads like the Mount Lindesay Highway with promises on the never-never that it will be fixed, but it never comes? Why are they driving on roads like Camp Cable Road, which people are afraid to drive on for fear of being killed? The money was not coming to Logan. Where did the money go? What could we do with \$100 million a week?

Water bills and electricity bills have skyrocketed. Queensland is now the most expensive state in which to own a car, with the cost of vehicle registrations and drivers' licences practically doubled. Last year alone public transport costs increased by 20 per cent. Despite all of these increases in revenue the former Bligh Labor government still kept climbing further and further into debt. It is costing us \$100 million a week. I am sure everybody remembers the previous Labor government's electricity privatisation and the promise that no-one—no family—would be worse off. Since that promise, the average Queensland family has had approximately \$700 per annum added to their household power bill. I know a young mother in Park Ridge—Kylie—who has personally told me of her struggle to provide for her children because of the rising price of electricity. But true to our election promise, this bill will provide the ability for the government to freeze electricity tariff 11 at this year's prices, plus the cost of the federal government's carbon tax, for 2012-13. The bill also includes the government's commitment for retailers to display the cost of the federal government's carbon price and the renewable energy target on household electricity bills from 1 July 2012.

The tired former Labor government, in its desperate attempt to raise revenue to cover its wasteful blunders, abolished the principal place of residence concessional rate of stamp duty. I cannot tell members how many doors I knocked on during the election campaign where people asked me about this concession and how many people came up to me when I was standing by the roadside who asked me about this concession. They were telling me that they could not afford to buy a house. They could not afford to put a down payment on a house. Where has the money gone? This change slugged homebuyers with up to \$7,000—all to feed the coffers of the wasteful, inept previous Bligh government. No long-term good economic planning appeared to be involved in this decision. It devalued existing homeowners' properties and made home purchasing in Queensland less affordable. This bill reverses that decision and, again, delivers on our promise to lower the cost of living for families by saving up to \$7,000 for homebuyers. This assistance may be the extra boost for couples like Jermain and Sarena, a young couple I met in Browns Plains, to now be able to finally afford a deposit for a home.

This bill also removes the requirement to prepare and provide a sustainability declaration prior to the sale of residential dwellings. What a joke that was! Can members believe that members of the previous government actually tried to do this because they thought the people wanted it? They are not living in my world, I can tell members that. This is part of the government's commitment to reduce waste and red tape—in this case, green tape. The sustainability declaration was a pointless document which, in real life, was very rarely completed in full, and nor was it required to be. It was really just a waste of paper.

Encouraging businesses to grow and employ more people is part of the LNP government's proper economic management plan to get Queensland back on track. Small business is the backbone of our economy and needs less red tape and regulation to allow them to get on with the job of running their businesses. This bill delivers on another promise—to increase the payroll tax exemption from \$1 million to \$1.6 million, freeing more cash for employers to utilise in their business, which could include expansion and employing more staff or even just retaining staff. This part of the bill will aid in growing and strengthening our economy as well as aid in our target to lower the unemployment rate.

This bill also includes amendments to the Queensland Competition Authority Act, allowing the establishment of the Office of Best Practice Regulation under the Queensland Competition Authority. Under the direction of the minister, the authority will then be allowed to investigate and report on any matter relating to competition, industry, productivity or best practice regulation; to review and report on regulatory assessment statements; and to review and report on existing legislation. This is real support to grow our economy. This cost-of-living bill makes a number of amendments that will all have a positive impact on families struggling with the escalating costs of living. I am proud to support this bill and I commend it to the House.