




Speech By  
**Curtis Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Commission of Audit**

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (2.54 pm): This week we have seen a politically motivated response to the Premier's politically motivated Commission of Audit—a massive privatisation program before the next election, more direct attacks on the job security of government workers and the largest outsourcing of both social and economic infrastructure and services in this state's history. It is a horror show of economic mismanagement and deception that should strike fear into the hearts of workers and families across the state. It includes outsourcing passenger rail, selling off a raft of energy assets, outsourcing of things like mental health, aged care and pathology services, while at the same time opening the door to another round of mass job losses. It is more of the same from this Premier—slashing Queensland services, sacking Queensland workers and selling off Queensland assets.

But someone who will not suffer is Peter Costello, who was paid \$3,300 a day to deceive Queenslanders and effectively outsource the entire government to the private sector. It was a plan backed to the hilt by the Treasurer, who even said that, unless he privatises the entire electricity network, he would have to increase taxes and charges. We know how that turned out. The Premier and the backbench thought so highly of the Treasurer's economic plan that they rolled him in cabinet, they rolled him in caucus and then they leaked it to the media just to make him look even more inept. So instead of a debt reduction plan, he turned to the spin doctors who told him to trot out a plan to 'supercharge the economy'. I think most Queenslanders would just accept a 'mini-charged' economy at the moment or at least anything that has more life than the flatlining economy we have seen under the LNP.

The facts are that, under this Treasurer's watch, unemployment in Queensland has increased from 5.5 per cent to 5.9 per cent today. And when economic growth was running at four per cent at the end of Labor's last term, the Treasurer said the state was an 'economic basket case'. Deloitte Access Economics now forecasts growth to nearly halve to 2.3 per cent this financial year. The Treasurer now hypocritically describes this as 'solid'.

The fact is that the LNP has taken a sledgehammer to economic growth, and their latest plan only threatens to make it worse. And the Treasurer, as usual, trots out convenient growth figures, citing slower years like 2009-10 and 2010-11 under the former government, even though unemployment was lower then than it is now. Never mind the global financial crisis and the natural disasters that have hurt our state's economy. This Treasurer does not like letting facts get in the way of his spin. This has definitely been a week to forget for this Treasurer, but it is certainly one that Queensland workers and families will not forget.

It has also been a week to forget for the Premier, who did a massive backflip yesterday, announcing plans to access \$14 billion in private funding for Energex, Ergon and Powerlink. It is privatisation by stealth that will cost Queenslanders more over the long run. Under at least one of the options outlined in the Costello report, this is akin to telling private companies that they can lay-by electricity assets and then pay off in instalments. What the Premier will not tell you is this: when the

private sector borrows the funds, they will pay a higher interest rate on those borrowings. That means the only way they can make a profit is to slash jobs or massively increase power prices—something Queenslanders can get used to under this Premier.