




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Budget

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.20 am): Today the Treasurer and this government will bring down its third budget. We know that this will be a horror budget. This budget will show how out of touch and how arrogant the LNP government is in Queensland. I am very disturbed about revelations we are hearing reported in the papers right across this state that some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders, our pensioners, will be targeted in this budget. This just goes to show how out of touch Campbell Newman, the Premier, and Tim Nicholls, the Treasurer, really are when it comes to vulnerable Queenslanders. Why do I say that? Because out there pensioners are hurting. At the moment the pensioners out there are struggling to pay their electricity bills, and now this government, courtesy of Tony Abbott and Campbell Newman working hand in hand, working in tandem, is going to take away their pensioner concessions.

What does this mean? It means a few things. It means that their electricity prices will go up higher. It means that their gas prices will go up higher. It also means that their travel subsidies will be reduced. I know that pensioners in my electorate—and it would be the case in many electorates right across this state—have worked hard all of their lives. They have worked, they have paid their taxes and now they are being attacked by this heartless, cruel government. They are being attacked and they will suffer the pain from this year's budget.

We do not expect anything less from this government because we have seen the impact of the Tony Abbott federal government—the LNP. Once LNP, always LNP; it is in their blood. It is in their blood to inflict pain and suffering on our most vulnerable. We know that in the Tony Abbott budget people will now be charged over \$7 a visit to their local doctor. Now, the pensioners are going to have to pay more to travel to the doctor and they are going to have to pay even more on top of the higher electricity prices that they have been forced to pay under this government.

I refer Queenslanders to Campbell Newman's pledge. His pledge, his contract with Queensland, was very simple: to lower the cost of living. Today there will be a budget of more broken promises. Our pensioners will suffer, and we know other parts of Queensland will suffer as well. We expect this afternoon in this budget that there will be a massive asset sale. The Labor Party knows what Queenslanders think of asset sales. Honourable members have only to look around this House to know what Queenslanders think of asset sales. That is why we were reduced to seven at the last election. And now this government shows how out of touch and how they are not listening to Queenslanders, because what we will see in this horror budget is the sale of the Townsville port and the sale of the Gladstone port. I have been to Townsville. I have been to Gladstone. The people of Townsville and the people of Gladstone do not want their port sold—pure and simple. They do not want their port sold.

We also have heard that there is going to be private sector investment in our electricity sector. This will be, yet again, another broken promise. What this will mean for Queenslanders is, once again, higher power prices. You cannot expect the private industry to buy into the power industry and not make a profit. Where will the profit come from? The profit will come from families across Queensland. Over the weekend the government was hiding. The Premier and the Treasurer were hiding because of their massive blow-out in the budget deficit, a huge blow-out that happened on their watch. This government cannot manage the economy. This government does not understand people. This government does not understand the pain they will inflict on our pensioners come this afternoon.

The Labor Party will stand up for pensioners in this state. We will stand up for the people in Gladstone. We will stand up for the people in Townsville. We will stand up for the workers in the electricity industry and we will stand up for families, who have seen broken promise after broken promise after broken promise from this government. My message to Queenslanders today is: the Newman government is no different from Tony Abbott, and it is going to be a horror budget.

(Time expired)