



Speech By  
**Hon. Anastacia Palaszcuk**

**MEMBER FOR INALA**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2014

## **COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY: REPORT NO. 12, MOTION TO TAKE NOTE**



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.02 am): I move—

That the House take note of Committee of the Legislative Assembly report No. 12: *Report on the 2014 budget estimates trial process*.

I rise to speak about the estimates process that Queenslanders witnessed this year. This was the key example of the arrogance of this Newman government. What the Newman government decided to do was a travesty. There has been a long-held convention, of nearly 20 years, of the estimates process running over a period of two weeks, but this arrogant Newman government decided that they knew better. This government consolidated all of the estimates hearings into two days. This was not about integrity and accountability in government—something the Labor Party and we in the opposition are passionate about.

During the Stafford by-election campaign I announced our policy, and our policy was to bring integrity and accountability back to this House by restoring the estimates hearings to the full two weeks, as has happened over many, many years. But this government thought they knew better. They wanted to hide not only from scrutiny from the opposition and the crossbenches but also from the media. What a failure! What an absolute, miserable failure we saw from government members.

Did the ministers answer the questions? No, they did not. One of the key issues I raised during estimates hearings and I am still raising in this House today relates to how much taxpayers' money is being spent—wasted—on the Strong Choices campaign. We are hearing that that figure is close to \$20 million. That is \$20 million that could be going to improve services across this state. But this arrogant Newman government knows better, doesn't it?

We are now six months out from the next state election, and this government must be held responsible for breaching their own advertising code of conduct. Their own advertising code of conduct states very clearly that there should be no advertising within six months of the scheduled date for an election unless there is an urgent, emerging issue.

**Mr STEVENS:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. We are considering the CLA report, which has no relevance whatsoever to advertising the government is spending its money on.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** These are issues I raised at the estimates hearing. Very clearly, I asked questions of the Premier and the Treasurer.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): I am going to allow some latitude in the debate in terms of that matter. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. We are now six months out from the election, and the massive taxpayer funded ads have started again. This is a political

campaign that the LNP should be paying for. The LNP should be paying for political advertising, not the taxpayers of Queensland. We have been trying to find out from this government how much is being spent. We know that the television advertising campaign is about to ramp up again. This is in breach of the government's own advertising guidelines.

I return to the estimates process. This government is arrogant. Make no mistake. That is why they came in here and changed the estimates process: to suit themselves. That is exactly what this government did. The people of Queensland will know better. The people of Queensland will know when they go to the polls in six months time that this government wanted to hide from scrutiny, that this government wanted to break long-held democratic conventions in this parliament to get their own way. That was absolute arrogance, because they did not want each of their ministers to face full scrutiny from the opposition and the crossbenches. That is what it was all about. If we want to talk about policies, here is the Labor policy in relation to estimates committees. I thank the LNP for adopting Labor policy. Thank you for adopting Labor policy.

Finally, the estimates process will revert to normality next year. We believe in transparency and accountability in government and Labor will always maintain it.