




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 16 October 2014

QUEENSLAND PLAN BILL

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.38 pm): I rise to speak in relation to the Queensland Plan Bill. All governments have a duty to plan for the future of their city, state or nation and its people. Labor has always, does now and will always, recognise this need, and our record in office shows that to be true. In Queensland we must plan to meet the future demands of communities separated by large distances and in distinct regions each with their own unique needs.

Unfortunately, the promises made by the LNP government about the Queensland Plan appear to have been broken just like a long list of other promises. When the people of our state are consulted on their views and ideas in developing long-range future plans, they need to have confidence that their views have been heard and acted upon. They need to have confidence that the government is sincere when it says that it wants a bipartisan plan. Instead of that confidence on the part of those Queenslanders who took part, we see a confidence trick being played on them by the Newman government. Unfortunately, the spirit of the Queensland Plan is not reflected in this legislation. As a result, Queenslanders who contributed to the Queensland Plan will be very disappointed with the Newman government and the way that the government has misused and abused the Queensland Plan to promote its asset sales privatisation agenda.

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order. I would ask for a ruling on relevance. The Leader of the Opposition is referring to the government's response to the plan; not the Queensland Plan and not the bill before the House today. We are not debating the government's response to the Queensland Plan. We are debating the legislation which is about enshrining the Queensland Plan in Queensland legislation. I ask you to make a ruling on relevance.

Ms PALASZCZUK: It is the government's response.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! I am going to allow some latitude at this stage. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. People across Queensland went along to the summits in good faith because they believed the government was being genuine about listening to their concerns and ideas about shaping this state. I am passionate about Queensland and I am passionate about listening to people's ideas, but in the back of my mind I was always concerned whether there was a genuine attempt on behalf of the government to listen to Queenslanders. Queenslanders should be quite alarmed that that was not the genuine intent, because in the government's response to the Queensland Plan they are being tricky and deceitful to the people of Queensland. In the government's response—and you only have to look on the website, Minister—to see time and time again references to the 'Strong Choices campaign'. It is a trick and it is a con!

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Mr POWELL: The website and the government response that the Leader of the Opposition is referring to are not what we are debating today. We are debating the Queensland Plan Bill. As I made very clear in my second reading speech, there is a distinction between the Queensland Plan and the government's response. If the Leader of the Opposition has an issue with the government response, that is fine and we would ask the opposition to provide their response to the Queensland Plan. But this bill is not about the government's response. It is about the Queensland Plan itself, and I ask you to rule on relevance.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. It states very clearly here '*A plan for the future: the Queensland government response to the Queensland Plan*'. We are debating the Queensland Plan. It is relevant to what the government's response is to the Queensland Plan.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have entered into this today to allow a wide-ranging discussion on the Queensland Plan. I take some technical points of order; however, my sense of it is that it is a very broad and very important bipartisan plan that has been put forward to the people of Queensland, and I am going to allow a wide-ranging debate on the bill. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. Once again on the website is the big "Q", the symbol of the Queensland Plan that was used at the summits—Minister, you would agree with that—'*A plan for the future: the Queensland government response to the Queensland Plan*'. In this document we have a reference to the 'Strong Choices Investment Program', and I will table that document so all Queenslanders are aware of the manipulation that is going on here.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government: A plan for the future: the Queensland government response to the Queensland Plan, infrastructure [6288].

Here is another document on the Queensland government website 'The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders' 30-year vision'. There it is, Minister, and what do we have here? A reference to 'a suite of infrastructure packages totalling \$8.6 billion'—again a reference to Strong Choices. I table that reference for Queenslanders.

Tabled paper: Webpage titled 'The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders' 30-year vision' [6289].

'*A plan for the future: the Queensland government response to the Queensland Plan, regions*'. Then we have the big 'Q' again for the Queensland Plan, the symbol of the government. What do we have here? We have a reference to the 'Strong Choices Investment Program'. Your Queensland Plan is backed up with asset sales, pure and simple. I table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government: A plan for the future: the Queensland government response to the Queensland Plan, regions [6290].

While we are on the subject of the Queensland Plan let us talk about the use of taxpayers' funds for the advertising campaign of the Queensland government's Queensland Plan. Six months out from the election I witnessed another new ad on 'your' Queensland Plan that is backed up by asset sales. This has been the biggest con on Queensland, and everyone should have been very disappointed because we took the government at good faith. We went along to that Mackay summit, we sat there with our constituents and we listened to their ideas about the future of the state, but we were being manipulated from day one! Let us see if this government has the guts to go back to their communities and say, 'The Queensland Plan is all about asset sales.' If they were listening to Queenslanders, they would know that that is something Queenslanders do not want. Queenslanders do not want asset sales!

We have the twin pronged approach here: we have the government's final plan of no asset sales, which everybody knows is another con. An asset lease is an asset sale. This week the Premier said that it is selling off the family silverware. In the past the Treasurer has said that it is selling off the farm. If you think that Queenslanders cannot see through your deceptive misinformation, you have to be kidding. Did they not understand the result of the last election? For goodness sake, it was about asset sales!

Mr POWELL: I rise to a point of order.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, what is the point of order?

Mr POWELL: Again I would ask you to rule on relevance. I would ask where in the legislation that we are debating today is there a reference to asset sales or leasing.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am listening very carefully to the—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Member for Nanango, I am trying to make a ruling and I do not appreciate your interjection. I am listening very carefully to the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. I am starting to get the sense that the speech is moving more and more

away from the bill. I have said that I will allow a wide-ranging debate, but I do ask the Leader of the Opposition to return to the bill.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I move to section 3, which states—

The main purposes of this Act are to—

- (a) provide for the development and ratification of a plan, known as the Queensland Plan, that—
 - (i) establishes a long-term vision for the future growth and prosperity of Queensland ...

Their future vision is about asset sales. That is how it is directly linked to the Queensland Plan. This government has been using millions of dollars of taxpayers' money to promote the Queensland Plan, and I want to know from the minister and from the Premier how much is being allocated for phase 2? There is an advertising code of conduct that says you will not advertise six months out from an election. This is about, leading up to the election, spinning your message to the people of Queensland that the Queensland Plan is in their best interests.

Today in the House we are debating the Queensland Plan Bill. The government's website 'The Queensland Plan: Queenslanders' 30-year vision' makes references time and time again to Strong Choices. Queenslanders should go to that website and have a good, long look at it, because the government's 30-year vision is about 30 years of asset sales—assets that the people of Queensland will not own into the future. There will be lost revenue of around \$2 billion a year. Over 30 years, lost revenue could be in excess of \$60 billion. I think my analysis is actually quite conservative. We will lose \$60 billion in revenue to the Queensland government.

So many people went along to the summit believing that the Premier and the government were genuine about listening to their ideas. For the last 2½ years this government has failed to listen to Queenslanders. It is a great disappointment that this government has used the Queensland Plan in a sneaky fashion to cover up its asset sales. That is what this was all about. From day one it was all about asset sales and how we got to it at the end through the 30-year plan. Minister, you may well go and look at your own department website—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition will cease using the direct term 'you' when speaking about the minister or whoever she is referring to and speak through the chair, please.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. When the people from my electorate went to Mackay they thought the government would be genuinely listening to them. They did not know that their response would be about selling off their assets.

Labor would support any genuine attempt at making bipartisan plans for the future, but we will not be supporting this bill for a number of important reasons: (1) it increases red tape; (2) it has absolutely no compliance measures, which means that organisations can simply ignore the plan; (3) the way in which it was originally drafted erodes the independence of important statutory bodies such as the Ombudsman, the Auditor-General and the Health Ombudsman; and (4), most importantly, it has been exposed as a sneaky and blatantly political way for the government to justify their asset sales agenda.

It is clear that the LNP is using this legislation in a thinly disguised attempt to legitimise its asset sales program and the multimillion dollar advertising campaign. I want details today. I want the minister to give me details today about how much taxpayers' money has been used to date and will be used to promote the Queensland Plan to the public.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, they are awake today!

Mr Berry interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Member for Ipswich, I would not be interjecting; I would be out doorknocking, if I were you.

Government members interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: They may well laugh now, but they will not be laughing in six months time! The arrogance is there. The arrogance is very disappointing.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I did not hear the exact words, but it would certainly help the House if we could conduct ourselves in an appropriate manner. Let us just be mindful of the standing orders, please. The Leader of the Opposition has the call.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. In summary, the opposition cannot support the Queensland Plan. We cannot support the Queensland Plan—

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Oh, the Attorney-General is awake as well! It is great to see you, Attorney. It is great to see that you are still there. We have not heard from you for such a long time, Attorney. We were just wondering whether you are one of the ministers that they are keeping at bay, that they are keeping quiet.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I again ask you not to speak directly to members but to speak through the chair.

Ms PALASZCZUK: I was merely taking an interjection from the Attorney. He has been so quiet lately. I have missed our interactions. I look forward to hearing from him in the not-too-distant future, perhaps.

I have made it very clear that the opposition, on behalf of Queenslanders, participated in the process of developing the Queensland Plan with the utmost hope that it was actually being carried out in a genuine, bipartisan manner. Unfortunately, from the government's response it is very clear that the whole 30-year plan of the Queensland Plan is linked to asset sales.

I also want to make it very clear that the opposition does not support any continued advertising of (a) the Queensland Plan or (b) the Strong Choices campaign six months out from an election. If the government wants to advertise those two measures then the LNP should pay for it. They have been fundraising. They have their slush funds out there—the half a million dollar dinner the other night at Gambaro's—

Mr POWELL: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I again draw your attention to relevance. What does this have to do with the legislation?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I again ask the Leader of the Opposition to return to the bill.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker. We will not be supporting this bill because it is a waste of taxpayers' money. Advertising should cease six months out from an election. If the government want to go ahead with their asset sales agenda, it is a political matter and the LNP must pay for it, not the taxpayers of Queensland.