




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Federal Budget

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (11.34 am): The hypocrisy of this deceitful LNP government has reached a new peak. It has been said that this Premier could start a blue in an empty hall, and as his popularity sags in the polls he is at it again—putting actual governing to one side to pick a fight and have a whinge, all the while taking no responsibility for his own actions.

Yet again federal LNP member Warren Entsch has called the Newman government out. First it was their shambolic Bruce Highway plan. He has got it right again, saying this mock outrage has everything to do with boosting the Premier's electoral fortunes and nothing to do with representing the genuine concerns of Queenslanders. Meanwhile, the Treasurer is now pretending that he does not support changing the GST, after last year saying that imposing it on food would have been a 'sensible reform'. The Treasurer is saying that it is up to the feds on GST, and his federal mates are saying it is up to the Treasurer. To think the LNP said that buck passing would stop! This is taking buck passing to a whole new level.

This Treasurer has clearly been asleep at the wheel ahead of Abbott's 'budget of broken promises'. So meek has he been that Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey were unable to remember who he was. In a letter from Mr Abbott the Treasurer is reportedly referred to as 'Tom' Nicholls while Mr Hockey has let it slip that the Treasurer is not in fact representing Queensland, referring to him as the Treasurer of his home state of Victoria. The Treasurer's media release after the federal budget was delivered failed to mention a \$351 million cut in payments for specific purposes to Queensland next financial year. Instead, they are making out that most of the cuts are over the horizon and pretending that they are doing something to stop them. This is offensive to Queenslanders when there is little doubt about who benefits the most from the Abbott budget: the LNP's wealthy mates.

A study by the Crawford School of Public Policy at the ANU has concluded that 'people on benefits do the heaviest lifting'. The study found that an unemployed single parent loses \$54 per week, while a high-income couple on up to \$360,000 per year may not end up contributing an extra cent. This analysis does not even factor in the fuel tax hike, the new GP tax and the scrapping of the Schoolkids Bonus. Yesterday the Treasurer refused to comment on the \$50 billion being ripped out of hospitals across the country or the \$30 billion being torn away from schools. He defended Tony Abbott, saying he 'attempted to keep his fundamental promise'—whatever that is. It certainly was not his fundamental promise to keep his promises, reminiscent of the Premier saying he would not use a commission of audit to break his promise on selling assets.

Of course, in Queensland we have already seen two budgets of broken promises. Before this federal budget was handed down, the Premier was calling on Tony Abbott to copy his budget of broken promises model. Now that Abbott has adopted it, the Premier is pretending to oppose it! Under

the Newman LNP government's first budget, which Tim Nicholls outsourced to his Liberal mate Peter Costello, 20,000 workers were sacked after being promised that they had nothing to fear. The Queensland economy slowed and unemployment has increased. Under the second Newman LNP government budget they increased taxes on insurance and the emergency services levy, lifting the tax burden for the average family by \$1,000 per year. So much for their promise to lower the cost of living by up to \$330 per year—another castaway in their budget of broken promises. Now on the eve on the LNP's third budget we have another budget of broken promises, this time on asset sales.

On the eve of their third budget, the Newman government still refuses to take responsibility for their actions. They are still pretending that the debt level at a future point in time belongs to the previous government. They will still not take any responsibility for increasing state debt by \$14.6 billion in just two years, or \$830,000 per hour. They are so determined to take no responsibility that they are spending \$6 million of taxpayers' money on political propaganda, including blatant mistruths about the state's debt and fiscal position.

The Premier talks of adult and grown-up governments, clearly focus group tested and handed over to Tony Abbott to use at will, but when will this Treasurer grow up? When will all of those opposite grow up and take responsibility for their own actions and their own decisions instead of blaming the previous government for everything? When will the Premier take responsibility for record power prices this financial year, after breaking their promise to lower power bills by \$120 per year? When will this Treasurer unveil a plan to pay down \$25 billion to \$30 billion in debt, as they committed, from the level of debt they were left of \$62 billion? To speak of \$80 billion of Labor debt is mistruth after mistruth. Peter Costello was paid \$2 million to tell us that Queensland had to pay down \$25 billion to \$30 billion on the \$64 billion debt at that time, not \$80 billion.

If the Newman government does not unveil a plan in this budget, then they will have broken their promise on debt while simultaneously breaking almost every other promise that they made to Queenslanders. On the eve of their third budget, they are still unwilling to take responsibility for decisions they have made during their time in office. Queenslanders are tired of it. On the eve of Queensland's third budget of broken promises under the Newman LNP government, it is time for this Premier and this Treasurer to finally take responsibility for their own actions and for their own decisions. Queenslanders should expect nothing less.