




Speech By
Hon. Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 25 November 2014

MOTION

Newman Government, Performance

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (5.45 pm): Madam Speaker, I must confess that I was not paying any attention whatsoever to the previous speaker because it was the usual litany of whinges, whines, complaints and grief peddling that we have come to expect from the ALP in this place. We see the lack of any effective policy, the lack of any effective solution, the lack of any effective new ideas, the lack of any effective work they have done themselves to address the problems and the issues that they created in this state.

Here we have again the most well-funded, laziest opposition in the nation going about their usual task. There is not one new idea. They could not even come up with their own headlines; they had to recycle them from the *Courier-Mail*. We saw the Leader of the Opposition in some sort of shallow university humour attempt to try to make fun out of someone sending a Christmas card to someone. That is the extent of the Labor opposition's policy framework here in Queensland. That is the extent of the member for Inala's policy work. She gets paid a lot of money. She has a big staff. What can they do? They can only come in and whinge and complain.

Let us have a look at what the story in fact is. The story of course is this. The Labor government left Queensland in a parlous state. Their own final midyear economic and fiscal review predicted that by the end of this financial year Queensland would be \$85.5 billion in debt. Queensland is not going to be \$85.5 billion in debt. In fact it will be much closer to the \$80 billion that we have been talking about. It is still too much, but it is \$5 billion better than Labor were ever going to leave us in.

What did we promise? We promised that we would change things around. I will move an amendment to the motion now so that we can understand exactly what is happening. I move—

That all words after 'House' be deleted and the following words inserted:

'notes:

- that the previous Labor government's own estimates showed Queensland's debt increasing to \$85.4 billion;
- that the previous Labor government lost Queensland's AAA credit rating and had no credible plan to return the budget to surplus;
- that the Newman LNP government will deliver Queensland's first fiscal surplus in a decade next financial year; and
- that since coming to office the Newman LNP government has cut waste and inefficiency, revitalised front-line services and restored accountability in government.

Those were our core commitments to the people of Queensland: we would cut waste and inefficiency; we would revitalise front-line services; and we would restore accountability to government. We also said we would deal with cost-of-living pressures and attack a number of other areas, such as proper planning for proper infrastructure, so we do not do things like waste \$9 billion

on a water grid that does not supply water, or do not spend \$1.2 million on a Health payroll system that does not pay people, pays them too much, pays them too little, pays dead people and costs us even more money to fix. We certainly would not be paying for a fake Tahitian prince to walk out the door with \$16 million.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: They groan because it is true. They have never addressed it. Did anyone ever hear someone from the Labor Party admit that they got it wrong when it comes to the Health payroll system? Did they ever do that? No, they did not. So what have we done? We have set about putting the state's finances on a more sustainable footing. We have implemented fiscal repair measures totalling \$7 billion and we have cut expenses. Under the Labor Party, growth in expenses was running out of control like a bushfire at nearly nine per cent a year. We have brought it back to 0.2 per cent a year. We have stopped waste and inefficiency and we have started investing in front-line services. Because of that, as I say, we have reduced the total debt by \$5 billion.

In terms of investment in front-line services, what have we done? We have increased education funding by seven per cent to \$11.8 billion in the 2014-15 budget. That was in addition to a 6.6 per cent increase in the 2013-14 budget. That is an additional 761 teachers and teacher aides and \$300 million to fix up the schools—the maintenance backlog. We have put 267 new police on this year and we will put 267 police on the year after that. We have added, and will continue to add, to front-line services as we add 1,100 extra police to the Police Service and deliver safer homes for Queenslanders.

We have increased Health funding by six per cent to \$13.6 billion. So the Health budget is now more than \$2 billion more than when the LNP came to government and, most importantly, now people are not waiting in ambulances trying to get services. They have a health service they can be proud of that will look after them when they get ill. Their record speaks for itself; so does ours.

(Time expired)