



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**


**MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee, Report**

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (11.20 pm): I stand today in support of the report tabled by the member for Kallangur. It was an honour to be involved in the estimates process here in the Queensland parliament and it is a vitally important part of the democratic processes here in this unicameral parliament. Not only were we able to scrutinise the proposed spending by the Palaszczuk government; I was able to discover some vital information about the political ideas and political ideology of the LNP opposition. I have discovered that they are out of touch with what Queenslanders want and need from a government. They remain fixated on political battles, not the political solutions that we in our state need. They believe that good government is more or less about cuts to spending and as little to do with governing as possible.

What I did find illuminating in the committee's hearings was the federal LNP government's renegeing on its commitments to fund main roads projects of national significance in Queensland. They have a very clear policy about funding national roads projects along an 80-20 split, but in the case of the Darra-Rocklea section of the Ipswich Motorway they are offering only fifty-fifty, and the LNP have renegeed on the Rothwell roundabout in my electorate of Murrumba. An upgrade is needed because of the construction of the rail link, a project of national significance. We learned in estimates that there was an in-principle agreement for this project and that there is a fully designed solution ready to go but that they renegeed on it. What is most frustrating is that the money is there. The federal government pulled \$159 million from this project and it is being held in a contingency fund, but they refuse to release it. We learned that the federal LNP is running away from its responsibilities and has a different set of rules when dealing with Queensland. Or it may be just another example of the LNP philosophy of cuts and more cuts.

I really found it illuminating that the LNP did not use estimates to scrutinise but to fight political battles in which the rest of Queensland has no interest. Over the two weeks of estimates, I assessed the questions from the LNP. According to my criteria, they asked 157 questions on the budget—that is, questions primarily focused on expenditure, funding and programs—but 137 questions relating to the police minister. Queenslanders can ask, 'What is the point? What did you achieve from this?' What is worse—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** I do not think the members have it. I find it most interesting that members opposite asked just eight questions on the Queensland economy and seven questions on Queensland jobs. We have a massive innovative program called Advance Queensland, which will diversify our economy and deliver the knowledge based jobs of tomorrow, yet there was barely a squeak about it. The members opposite just indulged in a bit of political bullying. Queenslanders can ask, 'Why are you not focusing

on the things that are really important to us?' We see that they really are not concerned about building a better Queensland; they are just interested in political gamesmanship and the pursuit of political power. It shows that they have not moved on from the Campbell Newman days. Those were the days—remember those?—when governing was about picking a fight and it did not really matter with whom one picked a fight.

From the government side, it was also beneficial to hear from Minister Enoch. It was interesting to hear from Minister Enoch about the Logan Renewal Initiative, the largest transfer of social housing in the country—4,900 properties—to a non-government manager. But we learned that the LNP government did not engage or consult with any of the affected tenants. Before the contract was signed there was no consultation; after the contract was signed one letter was sent out. We have instructed the department to engage in full engagement and consultation, extensive meetings with all levels of government and stakeholder information forums as well. Yet what is the concern of the LNP members when they ask questions of this in estimates? Their only comment was that we should simply not waste time, that we should simply go out and get it done. It shows that they cannot move past the Campbell Newman regime. They do not want to consult with the people of Queensland or give them the opportunity to ask questions. The Campbell Newman era is not over. We have seen it living on in the mindset of the LNP.

*(Time expired)*