




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Record of Proceedings, 3 June 2015

**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1):
DISALLOWANCE OF STATUTORY INSTRUMENT**

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (7.51 pm): The former government had an economic plan wholly funded by asset sales—not wholly, but almost entirely. It would be disingenuous to use the word ‘wholly’. I thought I should use that word up-front given that that is the same word that was used time and time again by the member for Indooroopilly. Honourable members will probably hear it from me a little bit as well. Once the asset sales are taken away, as the opposition leader did within minutes of thinking he had a sniff at the top job, their numbers come crashing down like a house of cards.

The flagrant disregard shown by those opposite for their own budget processes is truly remarkable. Let me be crystal clear about what we are discussing here. We are discussing an LNP plan to strip hundreds of millions of dollars from the roads budget, the very same roads budget that members opposite had in place just four months ago. The LNP’s 2014-15 budget released in June last year by the member for Clayfield front-loaded the former treasurer’s indexation policy into the forward estimates. To be specific, I suggest the member for Indooroopilly take a look at table 3.3 on page 57 of Budget Paper No. 2. The member for Clayfield not only factored in the change to registration in his budget, but, just for good measure, he repeated it again in his midyear review released on 18 December last year, just weeks before the election.

Is the member for Indooroopilly really saying that the inflation rate had halved since the 18 December midyear review? What we know is that inflation in the midyear review went from 2.8 per cent in 2013-14 to 2.5 per cent in the MYFER. Then of course it is forecast to stay at 2.5 per cent in 2015-16. It shows how wrong their forecasts were. Again, for the benefit of the member for Indooroopilly, it is table 18 at page 25 of the midyear review—and I table that for the benefit of the House and certainly for the benefit of the member for Indooroopilly.

Tabled paper: Extract from State Budget 2014-15: Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review, Taxation and royalty revenue and assumptions, p. 25 [\[525\]](#).

It is absolutely alarming that the LNP would seek to take a razor to their own roads budget. To be clear, the vast majority of all registration collected—over 81 per cent—is provided to the Department of Transport and Main Roads for the state’s road program. Of course, we know that things go to the consolidated fund and then get distributed. If the LNP’s plan to break their own budget commitments was to be accepted, this would cost the state over \$580 million in lost revenue over the forward estimates. Let me break it down for those opposite, who claim that they were fiscally responsible and claimed they were undertaking some kind of fiscal repair task. Now they want to cost the state over \$580 million of lost revenue over the forward estimates, which were based on their own midyear review. I will break it down for those opposite. This disallowance motion of part 15, in its entirety, would mean that the LNP was responsible for overseeing: \$51.8 million less spent on roads, infrastructure and other services for Queenslanders in 2015-16; \$111.5 million less spent in 2016-17;

\$174.8 million less spent in 2017-18; and \$242.1 million less spent in 2018-19. This would result in a total of \$580 million less funding frozen out of spending on roads and infrastructure funding across Queensland. Queensland would return to the bad old days of the LNP's chronic underfunding of roads maintenance and a freeze on vital new regional roads projects.

I challenge the LNP tonight to explain to the people of Queensland what projects they would cut from their roads budget. Would they cut the \$80 million that they allocated in their budget this year for the Townsville ring road stage 4? Would they cut the \$47 million they allocated in their budget this year to continue works on the Bruce Highway across the Yeppen flood plain?

Mr Emerson: The Bruce Highway? You're the one who said it was misspending to spend money on the Bruce Highway.

Mr PITT: I will just go off on a tangent briefly because the member for Indooroopilly is still harping on about something that was in the newspaper. It was not even a direct quote, and we had a bit of a tit for tat at the estimates in 2013, from memory. It is absolutely shocking because he is being disingenuous yet again. If he wants to talk about how road funding goes under the LNP, it does not matter whether he is suggesting it is misspending, he is not even talking about spending; he is talking about cutting. That is exactly what you get from the LNP in terms of roads and roads maintenance. The member for Southern Downs apparently no longer supports the sale of assets in Queensland. He has no more magic pudding left to eat.

It is time for the LNP to come clean. Would they cut? What would they cut? As honourable members will hear from a range of government members tonight, disallowing part 15 of the Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2015 will have a range of other serious impacts, particularly on national arrangements for heavy vehicle registrations. But the most significant impact of this stunt disallowance motion, a motion which sees the LNP arguing against themselves and their own budget—and that was done not just once, but twice; in the original budget last year and the midyear review—would be on the ability for the Queensland government to provide the roads funding that Queenslanders rightfully deserve and have budgeted for. Yesterday we saw the shadow Treasurer get the payroll tax rebate very wrong, confusing monthly figures with total figures. He confused \$600 per month with over \$7,000 per year. Previously we have seen him criticise his own government's midyear review thinking that it was Labor's document. He is clearly not getting any help from the member for Clayfield, who obviously wants to be the shadow Treasurer at the expense of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I guess he will have to get in line because we will have to see what happens with the member for Everton and whether the opposition leader decides to go to Maranoa. There is plenty on the books over there and we are certainly paying close attention.

The member for Clayfield's magic pudding of asset sales was a cruel hoax. They have no credibility on economic matters. They want to further undermine the budget by 'having another go' at their election costings and trying to rewrite their own history. They have no credibility on this area whatsoever, and now they want to shoot more holes in sources of funding for roads infrastructure across Queensland. They will happily starve projects of funding if it means scoring a cheap political point, as they are trying to do now. The former LNP government tried every trick in the book to worm its way out of funding for vital infrastructure. They have got form here.

So let's go through some of their sordid history. Those opposite were particularly good at wriggling out of jointly funded infrastructure projects such as roads and other key transport infrastructure. In 2013 the LNP government rejected over \$700 million in funding from the federal Labor government for Cross River Rail. They were holding out for more money, yet when the Abbott government was subsequently elected, predictably all of the money for public transport was taken off the table, and this happened under the former transport minister's watch. This came as no surprise to anyone except the member for Clayfield and the member for Indooroopilly. So Queensland ended up with nothing. Even when they did manage to come up with an agreement with the federal government, they still managed to muck it up.

In relation to the Ipswich Motorway, Darra to Rocklea section, the former LNP government backed out of a written national partnership agreement mere months after signing it in October of last year. The LNP government signed on the dotted line to a commitment of \$279 million and then pulled out without explanation. In fact, just last week the Secretary of the federal Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development, Mr Mike Mrdak, described this situation as such—

It is unusual. We generally find that, while there is a lot of negotiation, once the National Partnership Agreement is signed, with funding, we generally get on with the business of progressing the project. I am not aware of any other projects that are being held up in this way.

It is little wonder that the Prime Minister gave up on the Newman LNP government, not visiting Queensland once during the campaign. Their promises are not worth the paper they are written on. I have seen firsthand that you cannot take the member for Indooroopilly at his word. The member tried to verbal comments that I have made in the past to cover up his own lack of commitment to the Bruce Highway, and I touched on that earlier. I have corrected the record before on this matter and I am happy to do so again. The former LNP government talked a big game on the Bruce Highway in particular, but we found that they were wanting when it came to the crunch.

This disallowance motion tonight is another populist pledge from an opposition bereft of any real economic strategy who wants to grandstand about policies they did not themselves take to the election. Of course they jettisoned their asset sales plan two days after the election because the member for Southern Downs thought that he could get the top job. Sadly for him, it is another missed opportunity and we are going to be the ones who are talking to Queenslanders about that missed opportunity for the next couple of years.

They budgeted themselves the current policy settings for registration, and now they have dropped their own budget just like they dropped their former treasurer. What a sham; how disingenuous! We went to the election and said that we would be adopting the revenue policy settings of the previous government, looking at what was in the forward estimates and carrying that through—which is what we have done. For all the squawking that the member for Indooroopilly is doing, quite frankly he is shooting himself in the foot. He is having a go at the member for Clayfield; he is having a go at the former treasurer who prepared the document that was not only in the budget, but was then in the midyear review. This is absolutely disingenuous. This is a stunt motion from the 'hairdo from Indooroopilly', and we certainly know that when it comes to this there is form. We have given consideration beyond the forward estimates to looking at long run CPI. We are committed to that, but we are committed to making sure that we do not see any changes to the revenue policy settings here in Queensland because we are up-front with Queenslanders, unlike the LNP.