




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Finance and Administration Committee, Report

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (3.01 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the 2015-16 budget estimates, Appropriation Bill 2015. Report No. 11 has been tabled by the chair on behalf of the committee, and I would like to take my time to talk about the estimates process. We all acknowledge that it is a very important process. It is an opportunity to ask questions on notice and it is an opportunity to ask questions during a hearing process. The Leader of the Opposition alluded to this a short time ago when he talked about the reduced time that was available this year as compared to last year. The committee was able to sit from 9 am to 9.30 pm. We of course had to look after the appropriations for the parliament as well so we had Mr Speaker, the Premier and Minister for the Arts and the Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. It is an opportunity to ask questions. Let us have a look at last year. In 2014 the Premier spent five hours and 47 minutes in estimates and the Treasurer spent five hours and 49 minutes in estimates.

This year the government members of the committee proposed that we would speak to the Premier for two hours and 30 minutes and the Treasurer for three hours. We, on the other hand, said, 'No, that is not on. We are not going to be sitting for that period of time. We want to sit for the whole period right the way through until 9.30 pm.' The process went on backwards and forwards between the two sides. We moved a motion to have the hearing set for the entire time, nine o'clock in the morning until 9.30 in the evening. The government members defeated that motion. They moved a motion that they wanted that part-time hearing to proceed and they only wanted us to speak to the Premier and the Treasurer for a total of five hours and 30 minutes.

Last year the Premier sat for five hours and 47 minutes and the Treasurer sat for five hours and 49 minutes, and they wanted this side of the House to accept that the Treasurer and the Premier would be able to answer all questions in less time than each of our Premier and Treasurer sat—five hours and 30 minutes—which is less than half the time. In the end it had to come back to the House, and I was all for it. I wanted to debate this issue in the House. I wanted to send a clear message to the people of Queensland that this estimates process is flawed. This estimates process is one where the Premier gets to say, 'No. I will just sit and talk for a few hours,' the Treasurer gets to say the same thing, and through the chair and members of committee on that side they were able to try and push this through.

Eventually we ended up with a compromise. I was not entirely in favour of the compromise, but nevertheless I eventually agreed to it. What did we finish up with? Remember the five hours and 30 minutes in total? Our proposal was for a total of nine hours and 15 minutes. We ended up talking to the Premier for 3¾ hours and the Treasurer for four hours—7¾ hours. We could have had the opportunity to speak to the Premier and the Treasurer for a lot longer, but the members on that side of the House did not want to expose the Premier and the Treasurer to a full and frank estimates process.

I will conclude, because I know that some of the other members on this side want the opportunity to speak. I put the House on notice now that if I am a part of the estimates process next year I will be fighting to ensure that we have the Premier and the Treasurer for every minute that we are able to have them for. I put members on notice now that I will be moving a motion to sit from nine o'clock in the morning until 9.30 in the evening, and if it does not go that way we will be back in the House debating the reasons.