




Speech By
Aaron Harper

MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA

Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2016

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (2.43 pm): I, too, acknowledge the member for Clayfield's interesting rise to the position of Leader of the Opposition. I rise to talk about asset sales and his plan. As the current member for Thuringowa, it is with a sense of irony that I have recently been asked by the media and constituents to talk on the recent announcement of the former LNP member Sam Cox's intention to run for LNP preselection again in a seat in Townsville. The irony is that Mr Cox put conditions on his return—an 'only if' clause, if you like—which was that, if the LNP won government, they would fund \$300 million for a stadium and convention centre in Townsville. I thought that was interesting and worth asking if the former LNP treasurer and member for Clayfield is going to bow to those conditions and say yes to Mr Cox's claim that he would run again only if he were to get that amount of full funding.

I did not have to ask the member for Clayfield, because the media kindly took the opportunity to do so during his recent visit during which he strolled around the North Queensland Field Day with a look that said, 'Look at my face only; I have nothing of substance to say.' He said to the media that he was only committed to the previous amount of funding of \$150 million for the Townsville stadium. However, we know that that was on the proviso of the Townsville voting public saying yes to his asset sales and the Campbell Newman Strong Choices plan, and that did not go too well for them. It is ironic because Mr Cox played that exact same ploy in his term of government with the constituents of Thuringowa. He went one step further; he built a billboard at the bottom of Riverway Drive with a large sign saying 'delivered \$22 million—guaranteed', but of course that was if the good voting folks of Thuringowa said yes to the Strong Choices sale of our port and rail line. Of course, they said no.

I welcome Mr Cox to come back and have another go. I got real funding in my first 14 months of standing up for the constituents of Thuringowa. I am getting on with the job of being a good local member and delivering real funds, and I am not selling our assets.

Yesterday, the member for Whitsunday accused the three Townsville members of being monkeys, and I took offence to that. I refer to a *Townsville Bulletin* article that I will table depicting three LNP members. All they did was sell the Townsville voting public down the tube in terms of asset sales. I table that article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Townsville Bulletin*, dated 5 September 2012, titled 'MPs deflect blame for health job cuts' [[797](#)].