




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2016

TRANSPORT (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1)

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (7.38 pm): I move—

That part 15 of the Transport (Fees) Amendment Regulation (No. 1) 2016, subordinate legislation No. 49 of 2016, tabled in the House on 24 May 2016, be disallowed.

It is disappointing that tonight we are yet again debating a motion of this nature. We have given those opposite, the Palaszczuk Labor government, ample opportunity to take a very sensible and a very simple but a very significant step towards reducing the cost-of-living burden on families throughout Queensland. However, on each occasion the Labor government has failed to take those opportunities and so once more we are stepping in, in an attempt to prevent families in Queensland having to pay more because of the Labor government's inability to manage its budget. Once again the LNP is moving to stop the Palaszczuk Labor government's unfair car registration hike on the family car. Last year we moved to stop it and we are giving Labor one more chance to give Queensland families a fair go.

Labor is increasing car registration by 3.5 per cent or double the rate of inflation. Just to be clear, the inflation rate, that is, the consumer price index or CPI, for the March quarter was 1.7 per cent. A doubling of that rate to 3.5 per cent will see the cost of vehicle registration in Queensland skyrocket. Under the frozen LNP car registration policy of 2014-15, the registration cost for a four-cylinder vehicle was \$280.05, for a six-cylinder vehicle it was \$433.45 and for an eight-cylinder car it was \$620.95. After the Palaszczuk Labor government came in and last year increased that by 3.5 per cent, those figures went to \$289.95, \$458.95 and \$642.70 respectively. Should this regulation pass, and we hope that following tonight's debate it will not, those figures will jump to the following: \$300 for a four-cylinder vehicle, \$475 for a six-cylinder vehicle and \$665.20 for an eight-cylinder vehicle. I point out that none of those costs include CTP or the traffic improvement levy, which are added to car registration bills.

I note that at least once the minister has attempted to interject that it was in our budget. Let me dispel a myth that is being perpetrated by the minister. Yes, 3.5 per cent was the increase at that time, but why was that set? It was set because at the time the inflation rate was over three per cent. How was it set? It was set by the government of the day in accordance with increases in CPI. In the same way that it was done in the LNP's term of government, this government has the ability to adjust the CPI increase of vehicle registration to a figure that they determine and we are proposing that that figure should be the CPI, consistent with what the LNP did following freezing it for the length of our term. Any suggestion otherwise demonstrates that the minister and the government are incapable of adjusting a regulation such as the one we are seeking to disallow this evening.

The increases that I have spoken of are an unfair price slug and a broken promise by the Premier, who promised not to increase fees, charges or taxes. After what we have seen over the past couple of days with the 2016 budget, why are we surprised? The Palaszczuk Labor government is clearly asleep

at the wheel. They have no plan, let alone a plan to get the cost of living under control. Their only plan is to squeeze more money out of Queenslanders and, in this case, they continue to treat motorists as cash cows.

However, it really should not be that surprising, because the Labor side of politics has form. They have history when it comes to sneaky taxes and increasing things such as registration by far more than the CPI rate. Under the last four years of the Bligh Labor government, a period in which the now Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk, the member for Inala, served as the minister for transport, car registration increased by 30 per cent. I repeat: 30 per cent. That is not unlike public transport fares under the same term of then Minister Palaszczuk, which increased by 15 per cent year upon year upon year. Again, we should not really be surprised.

It has been a while since we have heard from the old Mythbusters #1 fact sheet, put out by the member for Mulgrave and now Treasurer. One of the myths that the now Treasurer was trying to dispel several years back stated—

MYTH: All the Government had to do was increase taxes across the board because Queensland is a low tax state anyhow.

FACT: In the last three Budgets, the government has taken significant steps across the board to fund new services.

Already we have:

- raised land tax and stamp duty at the top end—

It is already starting to sound familiar; it sounds a bit like the budget we heard yesterday and some of the activities undertaken last year.

- increased taxes on casinos and introduced new liquor licensing fees—to help meet the cost of alcohol abuse
- increased coal royalties—

And importantly—

- increased motor vehicle stamp duty and we have recently introduced a rise to car registration.

That is a quote from the member for Mulgrave. Let me remind the House: that rise culminated in a 30 per cent increase over the four years of the Bligh Labor government. Labor has form when it comes to sneaky cost-of-living increases. This attack on the registration costs of the family vehicle is the latest in that long line of historical increases.

Only the LNP has a track record of keeping costs low for Queensland families. That is why in 2012, in accordance with our election commitment, we froze registration of the family vehicle for our entire term of office. We did not increase it by CPI and we certainly did not increase it by double the rate of inflation; we froze it. That is why after three years of an LNP government the cost of registering a four-cylinder vehicle was only \$280.05, before CTP and the traffic improvement levy. We know that those kinds of costs and expenses do hit the hip pockets of mums and dads, families and, indeed, small and large businesses throughout this state. That is why the LNP has committed to keeping registration increases for the family vehicle to the inflation rate, so that Queenslanders can get a fair go.

At the end of the day, that is exactly what we are asking the Palaszczuk Labor government to do: peg the rate of registration for the family vehicle to CPI. As I said earlier, currently CPI is 1.7 per cent. We say: do not increase registration by 3.5 per cent; do not make the cost of registering a four-cylinder family vehicle \$300 or a six-cylinder vehicle \$475. Tonight the Palaszczuk Labor government and members of the Labor benches have an opportunity to vote with the LNP to disallow this part of the regulation of the subordinate legislation, to prevent an unfair and sneaky tax from being imposed on Queensland families. I implore those opposite to stand with the LNP and vote down this piece of regulation.