




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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TRANSPORT (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1)

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (7.57 pm): I rise to oppose the disallowance motion on the Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation. I note that I rose to speak on a disallowance motion about the same time last year. I heard the same arguments from the LNP then and I will counter them with the same arguments that I used then. I am looking forward to them bringing this back again next year. I can then say that I have delivered the same speech each June for the last three years. That surely must be a record for a first term MP.

Whether it be 2015, 2016 or 2017 their motion will have had the same effect, and that is nothing. What a waste of our time in this parliament. All they can do is bring up the same old ideas because they have nothing else. I have heard nothing new from the LNP in 2016. That emphasises that there is nothing new since the Campbell Newman era. They have not moved on. They will go on to the next election with a rehash of the Campbell Newman era policies.

A couple of issues were raised. It was said that only the LNP can keep down the cost of living. There is one figure that comes to mind: the 43 per cent rise in electricity prices during the Campbell Newman government. Another figure also comes to mind: 4.75 per cent, the rate of the increase in rates under the LNP Brisbane City Council. No-one said a word about that. Let me address the flimsy substance of this motion, as I did last year. Fact—if the LNP had won in 2015 they would have introduced a 3.5 per cent car registration increase from 1 July 2015. They factored that into their midyear review, released on 18 December 2014. Table 18 on page 25 of the LNP's last midyear review clearly shows the revenue from car registration increasing by 3.5 per cent along with the volume growth assumption for more cars on the road.

Under the LNP government, the forward estimates across all years reflects a 3.5 per cent increase in fees and charges post 30 June 2015. I will keep pointing this out. They planned a 3.5 per cent increase and they put it in two documents. They liked a 3.5 per cent increase so much that they spelled it out twice. Fact—their registration freeze was only ever intended for three years; the LNP had no plan to continue it. They said nothing in the election campaign about keeping the freeze on car registration. Another fact: Queensland families still have relatively low registration fees for the most popular selling cars, including compulsory third party insurance premiums. For a small four-cylinder car such as a Mazda2, Queensland is the fourth cheapest state in the country. For the most popular selling medium sized four-cylinder car such as a Toyota Corolla, Queensland is the second cheapest state in the country. All other jurisdictions excluding the Northern Territory will increase their fees from 1 July 2016 from one per cent to five per cent.

As I said last year, our opposition to this motion is responsible because we need to keep the funds to build the roads here in Queensland. If there is no price increase, it will cost the state over \$53 million in 2016-17 and more than \$563 million over the forward estimates. Tying this to CPI would also be fiscally irresponsible. Assuming a steady rate of 1.7 per cent, it would cost the state over \$26.5 million in 2016-17 and more than \$288 million over the forward estimates. What will that mean for our roads projects? Already our multibillion dollar investment in the roads network is under way. Does the LNP want to threaten that by stripping funds from our roads projects through this motion?

For example, in Albert there is more than \$32 million in this budget for the Pacific Motorway Coomera Exit 54 interchange upgrade. What would have happened to that project if this same motion succeeded last year? In Beaudesert there is \$1.6 million in the 2016-17 budget for pavement rehabilitation on the Cunningham Highway at Warrill View, or in Burdekin more than \$5.7 million for the Bruce Highway Sandy Gully bridge upgrade. How would they have felt if the funds for that had dried up and those projects were deferred? What about the North Brisbane Bikeway Stage Two along McDonald Road, which is expected to start in August 2017? Should the member for Clayfield dump that? What will this registration freeze mean for the approximately 28,000 workers on all our road building projects throughout Queensland? Then again, if one oversaw the loss of 14,000 jobs in one night as occurred under the former treasurer, the member for Clayfield, clearly generating or preserving jobs is not a priority.

The member for Indooroopilly has form when it comes to job losses due to cuts. As a former minister for transport, he presided over the loss of 2,000 jobs from his department; that was 22.4 per cent or one in five workers. He said the restructure of Road Tech would mean a reduction of 600 full-time-equivalent positions as the jobs were tendered out to the private sector. Let me emphasise that members cannot come to this House demanding road projects for their area if they oversee the stripping of funds and staff from Main Roads.

With this motion, potentially they want to strip from the budget \$563 million over the next four years. If members opposite were ever to get this motion passed, their next Labor opponent would say to their constituents that they voted to remove money from roads projects in those areas. Remember, road building is hideously expensive. Road building costs do not increase by CPI: it is usually a few per cent more than that. Wages growth is obviously more than inflation, and the cost of road building material increases by more than CPI. I learnt that in council. If we are not collecting enough from car registration, we are always falling behind in our capital works programs. Projects get put back year after year. It is even more expensive in Queensland due to the sheer size of our main roads network. I remind those opposite that we have 33,000 kilometres of main roads in Queensland, 1,800 bridges and 1,000 intersections. If we get behind in funding, it is hard to renew the cost at a reasonable rate. Then again, I said this all last year and will have to keep on saying it, because I think members opposite will continue pursuing this motion as they have nothing else to offer the people of Queensland.