




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.47 pm): Breaking the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage is difficult and complex. This has to be the focus of the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships with its leading role of coordinating service delivery across government. I just heard the word ‘silos’ mentioned by the previous speaker. There is a criticism of government service delivery that in these very complex areas with multiple agencies delivering services the failure can be not only at the local leadership level but also right through those silos right to the top where there is a lack of coordination. That was certainly, in my view, evident in respect to the lack of key indicators where this government is able to measure what they are doing and what the outcomes of those measurements are. These are complex issues and no-one is naive enough to say there are simple solutions because there are not. We must always strive for better solutions. Look at what does not work, fix it, strengthen what does and work alongside people at the local level.

I want to briefly reflect on a recent visit to Aurukun with my colleagues the shadow education minister Tracy Davis and Broadwater MP Verity Barton before I go on and talk about issues in relation to estimates. I wish to thank the Treasurer and minister for his assistance and his director-general Clare O’Connor in regard to that visit, as well as the Family Responsibilities Commissioner David Glasgow and Senior Sergeant Brendon McMahon, the senior government coordinator.

I also wish to acknowledge the women of the Aurukun community, Mayor Dereck Walpo and councillors. The school, police, health workers and those from many other agencies are seeking to do their best and certainly the community is seeking to do its best. I would feed back to the Treasurer and minister for DATSIP that, by all observations and reports, putting the senior government coordinator, Senior Sergeant Brendon McMahon, into the community was a very smart move. We know that there was a crisis with issues happening around violence and that there was a local meltdown. That has been a very positive example of what can happen when there is a need for local coordination and when somebody with the leadership ability to read and work with the local community, and who has the respect of that community, is doing an excellent job. I also acknowledge some of the educational officers who are providing mentoring in the community. We acknowledge that this is a complex issue.

I come back to the issue of coordination, because it is a fact that, with many services—not just in this community but also in other communities—there is a need to be pretty robust and rigorous in how we look at what we are doing and what government is doing, to say what works and then measure that. There should be some key indicators that more clearly give leads on what is happening and ensure that breaking the cycle of disadvantage is more effectively achieved. There are some very good people working in this area. There are some people with great intent and great passion; however, in having transparency of information, we need to have discussions about how we can do it better. Certainly what we see across the three tiers of government—federal, state and local—is that often agencies do not know what other agencies are doing. Sometimes it is not until you are in a community that you will see that, while there is evidence that people are delivering services on the ground, they are not always

talking to each other. That has to stop. There has to be better coordination, not only at the top but also flowing through to the local level.

I wish to talk about the issue of multicultural affairs. Once again, while there are some nice programs, if we are talking about social cohesion and giving money to groups to deliver that then it is about time that we get some meaningful indicators in regard to what those programs are delivering. I raised an issue about some of the Community Action for a Multicultural Society or CAMS programs being run throughout Queensland and the training that is provided so that people are effectively referred, for example, into domestic violence services or other mainstream services where, through their connections, it can be identified that there are issues. We need to make sure that people are effectively serviced and that those things are measured.