




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Optional Preferential Voting; Closing the Gap

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (12.27 pm): We will not forget the dodgy dumping of the optional preferential voting system introduced by the Labor Party with less than 18 minutes notice. The hypocrisy of Labor to complain about preferences when it should be the choice of Queenslanders how they allocate their preferences! The right to choose not to allocate preferences if people do not want to was taken away in a dodgy, sneaky, dirty sleight of hand by this Labor government. The hypocrisy of those opposite when they want to do a preference deal with the extreme green movement, which is the greatest sovereign risk to Queenslanders! The Greens hate farmers and sustainable economic development in our state, including in rural and remote areas such as those under the control of Aboriginal farmers, who want to be able to develop their land. If this Labor government had its way, that opportunity would be locked up and that mainstream opportunity for jobs and true economic prosperity would have the door shut on it. The Labor-Greens alignment is the greatest threat to the jobs of Queenslanders from all backgrounds. Never forget that, every time Labor whines about preferences, they removed optional preferential voting in a sneaky, dirty move—

Mr Power interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! Member for Logan, I ask you to cease interjecting.

Ms SIMPSON: Labor did this with no consultation and no prior notice. If Labor is to have any credibility on this issue it will return an optional preferential voting system to Queensland.

I want to talk about the serious issue of closing the gap and the failure to measure what works in order to focus on what works, fix what does not and strive to effectively close that gap for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Do multimillion dollar government programs to close the gap measure up in Queensland? Who would know? Most government funded programs have no meaningful published measures to identify what works—to allow for that honesty, transparency and accountability to focus on those programs that are being more effective, to fix those that need help and to ensure the most vulnerable are in fact seeing outcomes from what has been assigned. Targets are important, but you first have to measure what is happening now and have those honest conversations in order to make a serious difference, because we all need to make sure that happens.

A recent article in the *Australian*, which I table, highlighted a report by the Centre for Independent Studies which showed that only one in 10 taxpayer dollars for Indigenous programs in Australia is actually evaluated on performance.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Australian* online, undated, titled '\$6bn a year fails to help Aborigines' [[1392](#)].

The Queensland government spends more than \$500 million on programs to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. There are some terrific aims and people of great will and effort who no doubt are doing their best. No doubt there will be many good outcomes, except unfortunately these programs are seldom properly evaluated. We need to have that clarity if services are to be delivered and coordinated on the ground with the most effect in making a difference in closing the gap.

As I am sure other members have, I have travelled to many areas of our state including many remote areas. Once again, I have seen many people of good will and intent working in those areas, but even local elected officials tell me that sometimes they are not told the services that will fly in and fly out or drive in and drive out. They might find that there is not just one but two parenting programs in a relatively small community. No doubt they are great programs, but when the left hand of government does not know what the right hand is doing, is it any wonder questions are being asked about whether there is opportunity to improve how things are done?

I want to talk about the report titled *Mapping the Indigenous program and funding maze* by Sara Hudson from the Centre for Independent Studies. There is a challenge for all of us when we have Aboriginals in this state dying 20 years earlier, having a higher incarceration rate and in themselves being more likely to be victims of crime, failing to see a true, effective change with regard to the disparity of advantage in our community. I table the report, which highlights a need for us to get serious about what works and then to start focusing on that so we can start to see that money work with some real outcomes.

Tabled paper: Document, dated August 2016, by the Centre for Independent Studies titled 'Mapping the Indigenous program and funding maze' [[1393](#)].

We also want to talk about the need for true prosperity through economic development for all Queenslanders, particularly our Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, to break the cycle of disadvantage.

(Time expired)