




Speech By
Jarrod Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2016

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (3.57 pm): Who is the government trying to kid? This was the second Palaszczuk government budget, delivered by this Treasurer, that is full of raids, rip-offs and writedowns. Business confidence is at an all-time low. Unemployment is up above six per cent. Youth unemployment is over 13 per cent. Who is the Treasurer trying to kid? Queensland is not a happy place at the moment. Businesses are fleeing Queensland and, for goodness sake, they are fleeing to Victoria and New South Wales. We used to be the envy of every other state and territory in Australia. People came to Queensland to get a decent job. They came to Queensland to raise their families. Many people in this place are probably from the southern borders, as I was. My parents came to Queensland because they saw opportunities. Now we have people fleeing Queensland because of this government.

You might think that this has happened because of a long-term Labor government, but we have all of these issues in Queensland and they have managed to do all of it in 18 months. In 18 months, people are fleeing the state to go to Victoria of all places. I say to the Treasurer that that is no record to be proud of. More people are moving to Victoria than are coming to Queensland. The reason they are not coming to Queensland is because we have an employment minister who has taken her eye off the ball. Unemployment is up. She said nothing can be done about youth unemployment. 'It's just in the system', she said. 'Nothing can be done about it'. No policies or procedures—

Ms GRACE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member is misleading the House. I have explained this on numerous occasions. I take offence at what he is saying. He is quoting out of context. I ask that he withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): There is no point of order.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. Anticipating that point of order, I have a copy of the document where the minister is quoted. I again table for the benefit of the House where the minister is quoted as saying that nothing can be done about youth unemployment.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 15 January 2016, titled 'Employment Minister says youth employment "not new" and "not much you can change"' [[1250](#)].

Ms GRACE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. I was asked this question in estimates. The member is misleading the House. I was quoted out of context, and he knows that. I take offence and I ask that he withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask you to withdraw, member for Kawana.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. While we are talking about the Minister for Employment or, as I dubbed her in estimates, the 'Minister for Unemployment'—because all she has managed to achieve is an increase in unemployment under her short reign—let us look at the Back to Work policy.

The Back to Work policy is unravelling before their very eyes. It is a regional employment package that actually does not apply to Toowoomba. I note for the new member for Toowoomba South that their Back to Work package does not include Toowoomba. Apparently Toowoomba is not a region in Queensland. Apparently Ipswich is not a region in Queensland. Ipswich has nothing to do with the regions. In terms of jobs and opportunities, do not worry about Ipswich. The Sunshine Coast is part of greater Brisbane. It is not a region either that needs a jobs package. The package is falling apart before their eyes.

I note that the Premier is in the chamber. The Premier gets up in here and talks about accountability, transparency, openness and so on. Her Minister for Employment refused to tell estimates and members of parliament why she met with Michael Ravbar. It is not disclosed in her diary why she met with Michael Ravbar—a man under police investigation. She refuses to say.

She had the opportunity in this estimates committee to take the question on notice and explain why she met with Michael Ravbar. What did they discuss? She refused to do it. She is hiding behind the fact that she does not want people to know what she met with Michael Ravbar about. The department said in answer to an estimates question that they have had no industrial meetings with Michael Ravbar with respect to industrial relations. Yet in the estimates hearing they said that they have had a couple of meetings with Michael Ravbar about other matters.

If the department of industrial relations is not meeting the CFMEU president about industrial relations matters, what on earth is it meeting Michael Ravbar about? What other commitments has he given the government that would have the industrial relations department of Queensland not meeting Michael Ravbar about industrial relations matters? Maybe they were catching up for coffee. Maybe it was about the big do they had the other day where a few Labor members had a good picture with Michael Ravbar. They quickly tweeted it and then untweeted it because they did not want that photograph with the Deputy Premier out there.

The Minister for Employment has a big jobs package which she calls Back to Work. She confirmed to the estimates committee that she never discussed it with the CCIQ. The peak business body in Queensland was not even consulted about the government's key election commitment or policy for Back to Work. The CCIQ had nothing to do with it.

The minister is happy to hand out \$10,000 cheques to Coles and Woolies—multinationals—for their employment package. Coles and Woolies are about to get \$10,000 cheques. In a month if Coles and Woolies dropped five staff through natural attrition and employed another five staff they would get \$50,000 from the Queensland taxpayer. I am pretty sure Coles and Woolies can afford to take on staff without the taxpayer putting their hand in their pocket and handing money out to Coles and Woolies.

Where should the money go? It should go to small business. That is where it should go. It is not. The Minister for Employment or unemployment did not disclose why that was the case. I suspect they just did not know. They rushed the policy too much and they announced it without consultation. Coles and Woolies benefit with \$10,000 cheques.