




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2016

TRANSPORT (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1)

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy, Biofuels and Water Supply) (8.48 pm), in reply: What a dreary effort from opposition members! They seemed to have a little more passion last year. Having to repeat the same old speeches from last year, it was a little more flat—going through the motions: ‘We have no new ideas this year. We will just rehash what we did 12 months ago.’ That seems to be the temperament and the tone from the opposition. The words were the same but the energy was a lot lower.

Let us be clear about what we are talking about here. We are talking about something that was in the member for Clayfield’s last budget. It was in black and white. I tabled it in the previous debate, so I will not bother doing that again. This is a policy that was in the member for Clayfield’s last budget under the Newman government. It was in the member for Clayfield’s last midyear economic review. It was locked in there and we said very clearly that we would not introduce any new taxes into this term of government, and we are not. This is something that was already existent and it was admitted as such by the member for Glass House. He protested that it was not an LNP policy and then admitted that, yes, it actually was in the last budget and then went through some verbal gymnastics trying to defend why it was justified and why it was there. I think he doth protest too much.

The key issue here is that if this disallowance motion was agreed to we would see a huge black hole emerge in the budget—a \$26 million black hole in the budget this financial year. While there is not a direct relationship, it is clear that raising revenue is related to expenditure. In this budget under the Palaszczuk government we have made a \$42 million commitment to the merge upgrade on the M1—something that was needed for a long time, and I note that federal Labor would also like to work with us to get that job done to get the M1 flowing. There is \$160 million on the table going towards the Gold Coast in preparation for the Commonwealth Games. There is \$200 million for the Ipswich Motorway to get Ipswich Motorway congestion going with stage 1. There is the Bruce Highway starting this month and the Robert-Foster roads just south of Cairns. There is the Hervey Range Road upgrade. There is Riverway Drive coming up this financial year. There are the Bruce Highway upgrades. There are the roundabouts on the Sunshine Coast near the hospital—something that the member for Kawana could not achieve in three years. There is \$10 million for the Rocky beef roads to get road trains through Rocky with more direct access. There are the five bridges on the Dawson Highway being done. There is the Toowoomba second range. There is the Warrego Highway. There is the Gateway Arterial upgrade. There is the western roads package. There is Exit 54—something the opposition could not achieve during three years in government. It dithered but it could not get it done. It took the Palaszczuk Labor government to do so.

There is the Mackay Ring Road coming up and funded in this financial year as well as the Cape River bridge, the Gregory Development Road, the Hann Highway and the TIDS program working with local government. There is the Urraween intersection—something that we have funded and that is coming and another thing the Newman government could not achieve in three years. There is funding on the Minden intersection and the Rothwell roundabout where the federal government left us in the lurch, but the member for Murrumba and the member for Redcliffe certainly did not leave their communities in the lurch. There is the Caboolture River Bridge and the Vines Creek bridges in Mackay that the member for Mackay has achieved in her first term. There is the Eden Road upgrade—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I ask the minister to stop. It is actually not the interjections that I am terribly worried about. The volume of conversation is really quite significant and it is quite difficult for me to hear what the minister is saying. If members need to have a conversation, please take it outside.

Mr BAILEY: It is clear that the investment in the Queensland road system by the Palaszczuk government is extensive and we are being fiscally responsible to ensure that it is paid for by continuing a policy that was there before we were elected—a policy that the member for Clayfield instituted in his last budget and in his last midyear economic review.

The opposition waxed lyrical about the CPI in this motion, yet is that the sort of principle it applied when in government? When we look at electricity prices, did it stick to the CPI? I do not think so—43 per cent increases. When it came to bus fares in South-East Queensland, was that its guiding principle under the Newman government when it was in power making real decisions? No. We saw two 7½ per cent bus fare increases under the member for Indooroopilly. Let us not hear members wax lyrical about the principle of CPI, because when those opposite had power they certainly did not stick to it and that is one reason why they are in opposition because they did not look after people on the costs of living and they did not use it as their guiding principle. I certainly will not be lectured by those opposite given their record in that regard.

As the Minister for Main Roads, I have the great privilege to receive lobbying from MPs about roads in their electorates, and I get a few letters here and there from opposition members. They sometimes find me via other ministers. One would think the term 'main roads' might be a bit of a hint around what my responsibilities are, but I still get letters that are sent to the Minister for Transport about road issues very commonly from the opposition. One would think that they would be able to read a sheet of responsibilities and get that right. Last month I even got a letter that was addressed to Jackie Trad, the minister for transport, six months after the reshuffle—a sterling effort from that member whom I will be kind to and not mention specifically. The point is that we get a conga line of opposition MPs demanding that roads get done in their electorates. They want them funded, but what do they do here? They try to impair our ability to fund roads with their stunt. They want the roads but they want to defund them. It is a pretty contradictory kind of position and it does not make a lot of sense whatsoever. Let us look at what the projections would be for the budget if this motion was to be carried and extended over the years. It would mean a \$26½ million black hole in this year's budget that would have to come from somewhere. It would mean \$55 million over two years, \$85 million over three years and \$120 million by the time you get to the end of the forwards—a \$288 million black hole if applied for this year and in every year over the forwards.

The other sense we get from the opposition was that under its government there was a freeze. Did the freeze apply to all motor vehicles? No, it did not. Those opposite are quite happy for other vehicles to increase at 3½ per cent, but apparently not family vehicles. Their cost-of-living argument seems to have some holes in it. Under the Newman government, did it freeze compulsory third party? No, it did not. I have heard members in here keep repeating the line that we are the most expensive state in Australia, and that is simply not true. When it comes to the annual cost of motoring, we are not in any shape or form in that kind of category. We are simply not. That is not the case. For instance, when you look at a Toyota HiLux dual cab three litre, there are three other states that are more expensive than us when you take in all the compulsory annual costs of motoring. Other states charge on different bases, but they are the compulsory costs of motoring. When you look at a Holden Commodore with six—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Redlands, your interjections are excessive. Please allow the minister to speak. He is not taking your interjections.

Mr BAILEY: When you look at a six-cylinder Holden Commodore, New South Wales is nearly \$300 more expensive than Queensland. When you look at a Toyota LandCruiser, it is a similar case where New South Wales is more than \$300 more expensive than us when you take into account all of

the annual costs of motoring. When it comes to a Nissan Micra, an economical car, we rank fourth behind New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. When you look at a Mazda2, a 1.5-litre car, again we are the fourth ranked state compared to New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BAILEY: The opposition does not like to hear this because it is the truth. What we are talking about here is the cost to motorists and this idea that somehow Queensland is the most expensive is simply not true and I cannot go on in this debate without correcting that point. When we look at affordability, the Palaszczuk government has brought in the direct debit system for registration—again something that the Newman government could not achieve in three years—to enable people to pay their bills quarterly to allow them to manage their registration in a way that is sympathetic and allows them greater access. That was well overdue.

When we look at other jurisdictions we see that, with the exception of the Northern Territory, the increases in fees from 1 July 2016 range from about one per cent to five per cent. When we compare the fees in the other states we see that, in fact, Queensland's fees are midrange. Even with the increase in registration fees this year, when we take into account all fees, including compulsory third-party insurance premiums, we see that Queenslanders still have relatively low registration fees. In fact, around 50 per cent of Queensland's registered vehicles are charged a registration fee at the four-cylinder rate, which reflects a trend towards smaller vehicles. As I outlined specifically in my speech earlier, coupled with compulsory third-party insurance, that means that many Queenslanders are benefiting from having either the second or the fourth cheapest registration cost. In fact, the cost of owning and operating a car in Queensland has fallen to the cheapest level since 2010.

If the members of the opposition were really honest about supporting this motion, they would be bringing forward the road projects in their electorates—or anywhere in the state, for that matter—that they would like to see cut. Do we see them coming into this chamber and offering a sophisticated policy? No, we do not. It is the joy of opposition that you can take both sides of an argument, make no sense whatsoever and for that to not matter.

This disallowance motion is fiscally irresponsible. It is a rehash of last year's motion. I would have thought that, with a new opposition leader, we might have had some new ideas and some new tactics, but we see the same old LNP. The LNP members have not learned anything by being in opposition. This is their policy, from their budget, from their midyear economic forecast. They come into this place and pretend that it was not their policy when it was. In this fiscal environment, this is the responsible measure in terms of making sure that our road commitments, which I have outlined extensively in this place, are delivered in the next financial year.

I urge the House to vote down this disallowance motion. It is a cheap opposition stunt. It is a pathetic attempt by them to distance themselves from their last budget decision and their last midyear economic review, which happened less than two months before the last election. We are talking about before the 31 January election. The members opposite are trying to divorce themselves from it. They are seeking to be seen to be holier-than-thou when, in fact, this was their policy.

I would have expected better from the member for Clayfield. I have known him since I shared a chamber with him in the Brisbane City Council. I would have thought that he would have been a bit more original and had something with a little more pizzazz than this. We have the opposition members dusting off the old speeches and rereading them. That is the new opposition under the member for Clayfield. It is a pretty woeful effort. If they think they are going to get back into government with that low level of creativity, they have another think coming.