




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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TRANSPORT (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION (NO. 1)

Disallowance of Statutory Instrument

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (8.32 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the disallowance motion introduced into this House by the member for Glass House and the shadow minister for transport and main roads, Andrew Powell. This motion opposes the proposed increase in vehicle registration by 35 per cent, which is double the rate of inflation. This flies in the face of oft-repeated promises by this Labor government that there will be no increases in fees, taxes and charges. This Labor government did not take the voters into their confidence before the election and tell them that they intended to once again make the cost of registration in this state the most expensive in the country.

The Labor Party has always treated the motorists of this state as a soft target to be slugged whenever the Treasurer needs a quick boost to the bottom line. This is not a new strategy by the Labor government: we all remember too well the previous Bligh government's record, under which car registration fees increased by 30 per cent over the last four years. In the first two years of this term we have seen a seven per cent increase by this Palaszczuk government, so motorists have every reason to be nervous. We have all seen it before. Let us not forget that the transport minister in the Bligh government was the former member for Inala and current Premier, Annastacia Palaszczuk. Given the Premier's past record on registration fees, motorists would not be holding out a lot of hope for a change of form now.

Contrary to what this Labor government may believe, motor vehicles are a necessity—not a luxury—and are expensive enough to run as it stands. Fuel, insurance, tyres and general maintenance, not to mention the initial outlay to purchase a vehicle in the first place, are among the largest expenses that any household faces. This is even more so for a young motorist purchasing their first car, who is already faced with high insurance costs. For a young apprentice who needs a vehicle to get to and from work this is especially so, as the cost of registration for them will rise at the same rate as every other motorist. On an apprentice's wage every cent is precious. This government does not seem to understand that not everyone has access to public transport and most families own at least one car, if not two. Many families need a second car, particularly if both parents work, to do the school and after-school activities run.

This is especially so in rural and regional areas of the state. In these areas a second vehicle is a must, and quite commonly a four-wheel drive is the preferred vehicle to handle the road and weather conditions—not the four-cylinder Corolla we have heard so much about from those opposite tonight. There are also the added hazards of kangaroos, pigs and wandering livestock. These vehicles incur a higher registration cost. Many drivers in Condamine would question the justification of this cost increase given the dreadful condition of some of the state roads in the district. The roads from Dalby to Cecil Plains, Oakey to Pittsworth and Nangwee to Pittsworth are in a very poor state. The road from

Bowenville to Norwin can only be described as dangerous. These roads and others are difficult enough to navigate in fine weather, but they are extremely difficult in times of wet weather and floods. Given the condition of these roads, one can imagine the reaction of motorists to any registration increase.

Heavy vehicle transport is vital to agriculture in the seat of Condamine. Most produce is transported by road in B-doubles and road trains, and this cost increase will be another blow to the trucking industry. The cost of running and maintaining their trucks already makes for slim profit margins, and this registration increase will be another financial impost upon an already struggling industry. The cost of registering a B-double is already in the vicinity of \$15,000. This 3.5 per cent increase will lead to an increase in registration costs for B-doubles of some \$472. The transport industry will have no option but to pass this cost increase on to the customer. This will be another cost increase for our agricultural producers which they will have no option but to absorb.

The LNP understands the impact of high registration costs, and that is why registration fees were frozen under the LNP government. Only the LNP supports motorists. I support the member for Glass House's motion. There is no justification for any increase above the CPI.