




Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 2 March 2017

**FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE: REPORT, MOTION TO TAKE
NOTE**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.02 pm): The Finance and Administration Committee is very good at looking into matters of finance and administration—surprise, surprise. One of the things that we are very concerned about is the use or misuse of taxpayers' funds on investigation into matters relevant to Queensland taxpayers and the Queensland public.

After the combat sports matter was referred to the committee by the Treasurer we followed that up with a call for submissions, as committees appropriately do. As the chairman has correctly pointed out, there was a considerable lack of submissions in relation to this matter. We then followed that up with a presentation by departmental officers—the fiddlers three and the whole crew. The lack of knowledge and the lack of input from the departmental officers was quite embarrassing for them. It was quite evident from the departmental officers that a demand for this inquiry was sadly lacking.

In relation to furthering large expenditure of taxpayer funds in going around the state and looking at this matter, the committee took the very wise decision, in my view, to not proceed with a wideranging inquiry into the combat sports industry. As the chairman has alluded to, there are other states with government bodies. We understand that. Instituting a government body for government body sake and recommending legislation be put through this House for no particular reason is not the ambit of the Finance and Administration Committee. I believe the committee has a duty to expend funds in a right and appropriate manner.

After that presentation and given the lack of submissions in relation to combat sports—even though some submitters said they did not want any government interference in their sports and wanted to be self-regulating; we certainly respect those requests—as a committee we decided that a further inquiry was not needed and not necessary. I understand that there are fight clubs and that these sports are full on in terms of the ability to harm, as I suppose playing a game of rugby league is or a game of AFL and other sports are.

In terms of setting up a big government department and expending a lot of parliamentary funds trying to justify the setting up of another big government department, the Finance and Administration Committee was clear in its majority that it was not necessary. I thank the member for Bundamba, Mrs Jo-Ann Miller, who demonstrated a very sensible and pragmatic approach in joining with members of the opposition in rejecting the idea that we should be traipsing all over the state spending taxpayers' funds. That is the sort of sensible decision-making we would like to see come from the government on more occasions rather than the very obvious expenditure of funds on the number of reviews and inquiries that we are currently seeing with this government. I congratulate the brave member for Bundamba in casting her vote with members of the opposition in relation to not proceeding with this expensive and wasteful investigation.

Mr POWER: I rise to a point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. I was not on the committee, but I believe that committee proceedings that are not published are not to be discussed outside of the committee, except with individual members.

Mr STEVENS: For the member's information, it has been published and tabled. He can see it before him. Now that the member has joined the committee, I am happy to give him some advice.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): I will respond to the member for Logan. I am going to take the word of the member for Mermaid Beach and ask him to proceed.

Mr STEVENS: This was a very good decision of the Finance and Administration Committee. I am sure the member for Logan will get with the process now that he has come onto this exclusive committee, will understand the workings of the committee and will enjoy his time saving the taxpayers of Queensland some money.