




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); AND APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (5.47 pm): Today I rise to speak on the cognate debate in relation to the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2018 and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2018. Here we are again addressing the ham-fisted manner in which this Palaszczuk Labor government goes about the business of administering Queensland's finances—a Labor government that has seen unforeseen expenditure amount to \$3.16 billion during the last three years, a Labor government that received a massive windfall from coal royalties, introduced five new taxes and borrows money hand over fist to plug its budget black hole.

In my past experience as an agribusiness manager assisting farmers and graziers with their budgeting and cash flow, any primary producer who failed so dismally to anticipate their expenses and obligations would find themselves under a considerable amount of pressure. Such failures are a warning sign of a business that is either mismanaged or struggling financially and at risk of failure. Indeed, such warning signs are used by banks and credit rating agencies to assess the credit risk of their clients.

It is no surprise that independent analysts consider Queensland is quickly becoming an economic backwater. The CommSec State of the States report has Queensland slipping to sixth out of the eight states and territories. Ratings agency Moody's has warned that the gap between growth and revenue in the state's economy and the growth in spending under this government over the next four years poses a challenge. Moody's state—

This imbalance would lead to a growth in debt over the forecast period, challenging the state's credit profile.

In October 2016, the then treasurer, Curtis Pitt, said that Queensland could regain its AAA credit rating within two years. Here we are, two years later in October 2018, and the only thing less likely to occur is that we see the member for South Brisbane running in her own seat at the next state election. It is a familiar refrain that Queenslanders have to endure with this lazy, incompetent, arrogant Palaszczuk Labor government. It simply mouths empty platitudes and gives lip-service to the facts.

Speaking of paying lip-service to the facts, earlier we heard from the insipid member for Stretton who, in his contribution, tried to suggest that—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Member for Buderim, those remarks are unparliamentary. I think you should withdraw them.

Mr MICKELBERG: I withdraw. Speaking of paying lip-service to the facts, earlier we heard from the member for Stretton who, in his contribution, tried to suggest that unforeseen expenditure under Labor was similar to that under the LNP government. During the three years of the LNP government, unforeseen expenditure averaged—

Government members interjected.

Mr MICKELBERG: Mr Deputy Speaker, clearly, they do not want to hear.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Buderim will speak through the chair. Those on my right will cease interjecting.

Mr MICKELBERG: That is all they have. During the three years of the LNP government, unforeseen expenditure averaged \$174.35 million per annum. Let me compare that figure to the record of the Palaszczuk Labor government over the following three-year period to now. Under this government, average unforeseen expenditure has amounted to \$1.054 billion per annum—six times more than that delivered by an LNP government. The facts are that this government is just the latest in a long line of incompetent Labor economic managers. Speaking of incompetent economic managers, earlier we heard from the assistant treasurer, the member for Gladstone, who proffered that the only alternative to raising taxes was to sell assets. If Queenslanders were ever in any doubt as to the capability of Labor to be an economic manager, they should not be in any doubt anymore.

There is an alternative. It is called better management. It is about holding ministers responsible for delivering for Queenslanders. It is about providing better front-line services for Queenslanders, not bigger government. Throwing money at a problem does not address the fundamental inefficiency of bureaucracy. That can only be rectified by making hard decisions and holding people to account. Unfortunately, time and time again we have seen this weak Premier and her incompetent government fail to do either.

It is a scary thing to know that Labor has form on selling assets: \$3 billion for Queensland motorways, \$1.8 billion for Abbot Point, \$4 billion for QR National—look at how well that is playing out right now—and \$2.1 billion for the Port of Brisbane, Brisbane Airport, Cairns Airport and Mackay Airport. The list goes on. They were all sold by Labor. I wonder what the plan will be when this incompetent government runs out of new taxes to dream up. Will it finally do the right thing and live within its means, or will it just sell the very assets that it loves to accuse the LNP of selling every question time? Frankly, I am not holding my breath.

Earlier, we heard from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, who said that the Palaszczuk Labor government took its economic platform to the electorate last November. He conveniently neglected to mention that Labor failed to tell Queenslanders that it was going to slug them with an extra \$1.2 billion waste tax. Perhaps the minister did not get that memo because it was sent to his ministerial email account.

Economic commentator Nick Behrens stated the following about this government's track record on the economy—

Queensland is quite simply not investing enough with our current capital spend as a percentage of the economy at 24.4% vs our long term 25 year average of 26.9%. Quite simply we are drawing down on our wealth & stealing from future generations.

This government is stealing from future generations with its new taxes and unsustainable debt. This government does not have a plan other than to spend money on pet projects such as Cross River Rail in the Deputy Premier's electorate. It is not good enough and Queenslanders deserve better.