




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

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

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (3.14 pm): I rise this afternoon to make a contribution on the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2). Firstly, I will touch on the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, which was a bill—along with the other two bills that we are debating in cognate this afternoon—that was referred to the Economics and Governance Committee. I would like to thank my fellow committee members and especially the secretariat for the hard work they did assisting in compiling the detailed report.

The ROLA Bill aims to make various and mostly minor amendments to a number of acts. The policy objectives are to support the expansion of electronic conveyancing; to ensure the charitable institution registration requirements in relation to the use of income and property operate as intended; to give retrospective legislative effect to a number of administrative arrangements; to update the rate used to calculate the exempt component of a motor vehicle allowance, ensuring that payroll tax can be correctly calculated; and to make minor administrative changes to the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority Act, including amendments to allow the board to appoint an interim chief executive operator, and to expressly confirm that compulsory land acquisition applications may be endorsed by the minister administering the Cross River Rail Delivery Authority Act.

The two issues I intend to expand on slightly in my short contribution in relation to this bill are the areas that relate to the reinstatement of the 'last man standing' provisions under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act and the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act prior to the Supreme Court handing down its ruling on *Nuga Nuga Aboriginal Corporation v Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships* and the validation of decisions made and actions taken where processes had already commenced under these acts.

I also want to discuss the legislation as it relates to alcohol restrictions in Queensland Indigenous communities in prohibiting substances like turbo yeast used for the making of homemade alcohol. I acknowledge the members of the committee who made the long trek up to Mornington Island for the public briefing. They saw firsthand the impact alcohol abuse has in these remote communities and heard firsthand accounts and information from community members, elders and other stakeholders on the best way to manage it. I acknowledge the contributions we just heard from the member for Bonney and the member for Redlands who attended Mornington Island and saw firsthand the devastating effect homemade alcohol has on the community.

The bill will also amend the JLOM act to better capture and prohibit the possession or supply of things such as turbo yeast that can be used to make homemade alcohol in nine discrete Indigenous communities. This is a measure aimed at addressing serious health issues from homemade alcohol. At the heart of this change is a decision in *Rockland & Ors v Queensland Police Service*, known as the Rockland decision, in which it was determined that yeast, such as turbo yeast, did not fall within the definition of home-brew concentrate, therefore highlighting a gap in the current legislation. The amendments will make it an offence to possess a substance or combination of substances with the

intention of using these substances to make homemade alcohol. As explained in the explanatory notes, these offence provisions are justified to contend with community specific problems and to reduce the harm caused by alcohol misuse.

We heard earlier from members of the committee who attended one of these communities and who have given firsthand accounts of their findings, but I do have some concerns around the legislation and the requirement for police to prove that the person found in possession of this yeast had it with the intent to produce alcohol. I know our QPS officers who police these communities are already overburdened, and, short of an offender admitting he or she had possession of the yeast to make alcohol, successfully prosecuting someone for possession of a thing that has other lawful purposes could make the surrounding investigation police would need to conduct to prove intent prohibitive.

The second area of the ROLA Bill I will cover briefly concerns the amendments to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act and the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003 that restores the 'last man standing' provision which seeks to clarify native title claims for an area of land. It was raised that these amendments could be interpreted as a breach of fundamental legislative principles under the Legislative Standards Act given their retrospective effect. The policy intent is that stakeholders who have commenced a process in order to comply with cultural heritage legislation before and after the Nuga Nuga decision should not be disadvantaged. Our committee did note and consider these concerns, but on balance the retrospective provisions in this bill had sufficient regard to Aboriginal traditions and island customs and the rights and liberties of Queenslanders. I note that there were 14 written submissions received by the committee for this bill, and the vast majority were in relation to this component. Some submissions had opposing views on these amendments and the resulting benefit or detriment they may cause.

I will move on to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2). The objective of these bills is to seek formal authorisation for the specified amounts in each bill that the Treasurer paid from the Consolidated Fund for unforeseen expenditure that occurred in the 2017-18 financial year. These bills are yet another example of the Palaszczuk Labor government's complete failure to manage the state's finances, on the back of a shocking unforeseen expenditure amount of almost \$2.3 billion last financial year.

Queensland's fiscal and economic position has continued to weaken under the Palaszczuk Labor government. This government has racked up \$3.16 billion in unforeseen expenditure from 2015-16 to 2017-18, displaying a complete inability to set limits on its use of taxpayer money. If you include 2014-15 from the LNP, the Palaszczuk Labor government has still spent \$2.67 billion more in unforeseen expenditure than the previous LNP government in a comparative three-year period. I have said it before, but we now have conclusive evidence that this government is not only arrogant and out of touch but also absolutely incompetent.

The latest economic barometers continue to highlight the dungeon of debt this government is imposing on taxpayers now and into the future. This is a legacy that Labor has chosen to leave to the next generation. Queensland's most renowned and respected former under treasurer, Sir Leo Hielscher, recently said during a speech in which he spoke of his concern about the state's debt and the lack of any plan to repay it, 'Sorry, kids. Sorry, grandkids.'

We also have the highest unemployment rate in the country, business confidence has bombed and we have also recorded the worst economic growth of any state. The latest October CommSec State of the States report puts Queensland in sixth place in the nation, in the bottom half of the economic ladder behind South Australia. On the same day as the October CommSec State of the States dropped Queensland from fifth to sixth place, Standard & Poor's confirmed that Queensland would not be retrieving its AAA credit rating any time soon. It is a damning indictment of just how far we have fallen, so is it really surprising that we are spiralling towards an \$83 billion debt crisis?

In typical Labor fashion, their answer to the debt crisis and their failure to manage the economy is to increase taxes. Not only do they create five new taxes, but they have also increased borrowings and stolen the superannuation funds from public servants in an attempt to fudge the figures. The figures in these bills are further evidence of just how far we have fallen. The time for fast-talking excuses, empty promises, passing the buck and deliberate deception is over. How long can the state's failing economy continue to sustain the constant blows it suffers from Labor's tax and spend mantra?

Unfortunately, this does not bode well for the hundreds of thousands of hardworking taxpayers across this state who dutifully tip their hard earned dollars into the state's black hole of debt. One of the highest priorities of any government is to provide an economic environment in which its citizens can prosper. If you cannot manage a budget, how can you expect to manage the economy, let alone the state? This government is failing Queenslanders miserably, and Queenslanders deserve better. Only the LNP has the plan, the motivation and the capacity to return our state to our economic glory days.