




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 30 October 2018

MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.00 pm): We are almost one year into this government's term, and the outlook for Queensland is getting worse by the week. Since parliament sat just 12 days ago we have seen a statewide strike by the racing industry—an entire industry taking a stand against a Labor government that is addicted to taxation. I applaud the 10,000-odd people in the racing industry and their supporters who stood up to the Palaszczuk government, to fight for their livelihoods. People interested in the racing industry are not members of the CFMEU; they do not strike just so they can have an afternoon at the pub. They took action because they were desperate to save their jobs and desperate to save an industry that is part of Queensland's heart and soul. A fair and competent government would have worked with the industry from day one to develop a long-term plan to revive racing, but the Palaszczuk government does not do competence. This government only does arrogance.

The past week has also seen even more evidence of Queensland's crime crisis. Wherever you look you see cuts to policing and more crime. It was the LNP that drove the bikies out of Queensland, but they are back in business under the Palaszczuk government. On the Sunshine Coast on 19 October a man was shot in the stomach in a car park at Currimundi Marketplace. Two members of the Rebels motorcycle gang have since been charged with attempted murder. The police minister assures us that there is no problem with our bokie laws. I beg to differ, and those on this side of the chamber beg to differ. When bullets are flying in broad daylight at a suburban shopping centre on the Sunshine Coast—or anywhere across Queensland—it is obvious there is a problem. The law-abiding residents of the Sunshine Coast also think there is a problem.

Just last week at Murgon in my electorate a police prosecutor was bashed in the head with a brick while he slept. On the same evening, the ATSIILS lawyer's house was broken into. On the same evening, the house of the deputy principal of the local state school was broken into. What did the police minister have to say about that? 'Nothing to see here, folks. It's all a success.' He should tell that to the good people of the South Burnett. It is an absolute joke that the police minister spends so much time denying there is a problem instead of fixing it.

I fear that our youth crime problem will get so much worse under the Palaszczuk government. The media has reported that police have been told not to arrest young offenders because the Palaszczuk government has run out of detention spaces. When the police are being told to let criminals go free, it is obvious that the government has lost control. We now have a full-blown crisis in the youth detention system. Labor's soft-on-crime stance is putting innocent Queenslanders at risk.

Last week I was in Far North Queensland, where voters told me that they want action on crime but they think this Palaszczuk Labor government always puts the south-east above the regions. Sadly, they are right. To see this we only need to look at the waste tax. Cairns residents are now being asked to pay a waste tax because it was Labor's Ipswich City Council that could not do its job. Now, Cairns

retirees, like those all across Queensland, are furious that Labor will not extend the waste tax rebate to retirement homes. These people were told that they would not be any worse off as a result of the waste tax. The Premier has said that Queenslanders would not be any worse off. The environment minister has said that Queenslanders would not be any worse off. What an absolute joke! They should tell that to each and every ratepayer across this great state of ours.

A government member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The minister can protest, but it is obvious that the good people of Queensland cannot be hoodwinked. The problem with Labor is that it has only one solution—well, in this term it has five: tax, tax, tax, tax and more tax. That leads me to speak about the economy. We know that no state in this nation has ever taxed its way to prosperity. Queensland is now learning that painful lesson because of this incompetent Labor government.

The evidence of economic mismanagement is mounting by the day. Only yesterday we saw Queensland slump again in CommSec's State of the States economic report. We have slipped from fifth—that was bad enough—to sixth place in the overall economic table. Queensland should be Australia's economic powerhouse but, under this Labor government even South Australia is beating us. The gap between Queensland and the top-performing states of New South Wales and Victoria is simply alarming.

After the report's release, what did we hear from this Labor Treasurer? She leapt into action, but she did not take any action to improve our economic performance; she decided to attack the CommSec report because it was not quite to her liking. When she was in opposition I am pretty sure she accepted the CommSec reports! If there is bad news on the economy, the Treasurer's tactic is always to blame someone else, and in this case she decided to blame the messenger.

CommSec's message is not wrong. Let us look at the facts. We now have the highest unemployment rate in the nation. Business confidence is at rock bottom. Growth in the last quarter was just 0.1 per cent.

Mr Mander: Flatlining.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection: it is flatlining. If we took Queensland's coal exports out of the equation we would be in a massive economic hole.

CommSec is not the only organisation that is ringing the alarm bells. Last week the Infrastructure Association of Queensland found that 80 per cent of investors believe that Queensland is being held back by a lack of new opportunities and overregulation by the government. Investors are simply taking their money south over the border, along with the jobs that Queensland needs. Two days later the *Australian infrastructure investment report* revealed that Queensland has suffered the biggest drop in investor confidence in the nation. New South Wales and Victoria are nearly three times more attractive to industry than Queensland.

If this Labor Treasurer wants any more proof of her government's failed policies, she should take a look at the ratings agencies. We are hanging on to our current credit rating by our fingernails.

An opposition member: We know who is responsible for this one.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I take that interjection. Labor lost Queensland's AAA credit rating when the Premier was sitting around the cabinet table as Anna Bligh's minister—at the height of the mining boom.

It is a bleak picture painted by CommSec, by the Infrastructure Association of Queensland and by Standard & Poor's and has real consequences for the people of Queensland. The Palaszczuk government's economic incompetence has a high cost. That cost is being paid through more taxes, more debt, more unemployment and lower wage rises. I want this state to be an economic powerhouse once again and it is the LNP that has the economic plan to achieve it. The contrast with this government could not be greater. This is a government that has no plan bar taxing, has no ideas and certainly does not have any energy, but it does have excuses by the bucketload. Queenslanders deserve better than this government's sorry record of failure.