



Speech By  
**Melissa McMahon**


**MEMBER FOR MACALISTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2018

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, Report**

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (2.50 pm): I rise to speak about the deliberations of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee during the estimates hearings of 26 July 2018 and the subsequent report. I would like to thank the secretariat and acknowledge the work of the support staff in making logistics on the day run smoothly. It was much appreciated. I would also like to thank the ministers, their staff and the representatives of the various statutory bodies and government departments. I know firsthand the amount of work that goes into preparing for estimates and the behind-the-scenes efforts on the day to make sure that answers are given to questions in a timely manner.

There were a number of great initiatives contained in the Appropriation Bill. In the policing budget there is funding for body worn cameras and QLITe devices. In the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services budget, a number of new appliances and stations are rolling out. Of personal interest to me are the reforms made through the domestic and family violence courts and the rollouts in Beenleigh and Townsville.

Estimates hearings, as far as I was led to believe, are meant to be an examination of the appropriation bills. I was surprised—although in hindsight I probably should not have been—that the Manager of Opposition Business spent at least 30 minutes engaging in his one-man crusade against the CCC. By the first break the Manager of Opposition Business had made it quite clear what he thinks of Queensland's independent corruption watchdog. We then had the shadow Attorney-General, who has not yet quite established what the remit of the CCC is, continually asking questions about investigations outside the CCC's jurisdiction. Can I suggest [www.ccc.qld.gov.au](http://www.ccc.qld.gov.au) to save us a bit more time next year? We probably could have got to a few more questions.

There has been quite a bit of discussion here today about the manner in which questions were asked or not asked, answered or not answered. To tell the truth, it was quite embarrassing to sit in one room in front of almost the entire Queensland Police Service executive, with several hundreds of years worth of policing and investigative experience, and see members of parliament unable to assemble cohesive questions. Police recruits have 10 days worth of interviewing experience and in that time they are able to put together better questions off the cuff than some of the visiting members of the committee, particularly when you consider they apparently have legal training. I have trained hundreds of police in the art of asking questions. Luckily, few of them are as bad as what I saw on show last month.

As for government members running interference and obfuscating proceedings on the day, during the 8½ hours that our committee sat there were over 150 questions asked—82 by shadow ministers as guests of the committee. I would take comments by the member for Southern Downs more seriously if he had managed to ask more than seven questions on the day over the entire period. I note that, whilst he was critical of the chair, when the member for Southern Downs did have questions he

was given more than the allocated amount of time to ask his questions. I believe he said, 'I have 30 seconds more,' and then proceeded to ask three more questions. I believe the chair has given the member for Southern Downs sufficient time, and the accusations ring hollow.

Members opposite are quick to quote media when they have been critical of the process but have not done so when there have been positive comments made by the media. I recall that some attending media noted that the conduct during estimates for Corrective Services and Fire and Emergency Services was informative and interesting, but I guess that has something to do with the number of questions that can be put through when properly posed.

As I said, as a review of the Appropriation Bill, there was really good information there and I was really pleased with some of the information that our ministers provided us with about fantastic initiatives happening throughout Queensland. I am proud of many of the positive initiatives happening, particularly in the policing portfolio, and the responses given by senior members of the Queensland Police Service executive. I believe the report is an adequate and competent outline of the day. I commend the report to the House.