




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

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (5.09 pm): I too rise to make a brief contribution to the cognate debate this afternoon in relation to the Revenue and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2). From the outset, I say that, whilst I am very proud to be the shadow minister for transport and main roads, one of the previous roles I had that brought me a lot of personal satisfaction and something that was very dear to my heart was that of shadow minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships and multicultural affairs. I will say one thing at the start of this small contribution to the cognate debate. I applaud anything that can be done to combat and capture prohibited substances—in other words, the turbo yeast et cetera. I know from reading the committee report that more work probably needs to be done, but I will not be that churlish. A start is indeed a start. For the greater betterment of those local Indigenous communities I support wholeheartedly any work the government can do to combat and address this alarming area of social policy.

It never ceases to amaze me that we all have something that we really like to zero in on as politicians. I have said this in the past, but having many years ago—when I had a lot more hair on my head—studied economics at master's level at QUT, literally next door, I find this to be a simple case of *deja vu*. When we explain to people the nuances of modern Queensland politics and the way that it pans out, it is pretty simple. We actually had a great opportunity—did too much too quickly—a few years ago and we paid a political price. Why did we pay that political price? We tried to fix up an intergenerational debt, a mess, that we now find we are confronted with yet again. I would like to take a leaf from the Deputy Premier's playbook: she often says, 'Let me be perfectly clear.' I, too, will be perfectly clear with some of the facts.

The one thing that I would like to impress above all other things before talking about some of the specifics is that the modern Queensland economy is confronted with a couple of very fundamental precepts that always need to top and tail this sort of debate. One of the things that I need to explain yet again is the essential difference in accounting and economic terms between efficiency and effectiveness. It came as absolutely no surprise to anyone on this side of the chamber when the Treasurer and Deputy Premier gave her very short budget speech earlier this year—from memory, and I stand to be corrected, 24 or 26 minutes comes to mind.

Mr Crisafulli: Twenty-nine.

Mr MINNIKIN: Was it 29? I take that interjection from the member for Broadwater. We have the Deputy Premier and Treasurer of the state who did not even spend the full hour—she spent less than half an hour—giving the good people of Queensland the financial blueprint for the next four years including the four-year forward estimates. At the end of the day there were terms that are often used, to be frank, by all treasurers when producing and presenting their budget speech. I speak of terms like 'record budget spend'—insert the relevant department, whether it be police, transport and main roads, health, education et cetera.

The problem that we have now fundamentally as a society in modern Queensland is that ministers will rise to speak during ministerial statements about what she or he has done but find that, because they do not understand that basic difference between efficiency and effectiveness, very little is to be shown for it. The example is stark and it is very, very plain to see. They can come into this chamber, rise to their feet and say, 'We're going to spend a record amount on X, Y and Z,' but the simple facts do not support this. We have a record underspend over the four-year forward estimates when it comes to the Capital Works Program. I will go through and highlight a few things in detail now. I was going to make a brief contribution, but I think my time is not done.

Let's have a look at some of the things that the economic tyros across the chamber have actually done. They seem to think that the more resources they throw at a particular department or program, guess what? Things are all sorted; it is all done; it is all dusted; it is very simple.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: Unfortunately, Deputy Premier, we do not seem to be able to find the money tree that you and your lefty friends can find each and every time. The reality is this—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Once again, I remind parties to my left and my right to make comments through the chair.

Mr MINNIKIN: We have a fox in charge of the henhouse when it comes to looking after the economic wellbeing of this state. I will put out a challenge to the Deputy Premier and also her erstwhile assistant minister. Would they be able to define for the House whether the books of account for the fine people of Queensland are produced on a cash basis, an accrual basis or a combination of the two, or is there a fourth option? I would love them to get up and address that. Do they also understand the basic accounting equation? This is all undergraduate stuff.

The reality is this: from the performance of the Deputy Premier and from the contribution she gets from her assistant minister—and I am not sure whether she hand-picked the assistant minister; perhaps factionally she did—between the two of them we have reached the point where, despite the introduction of five new taxes—and somewhere in the recesses of my mind I remember hearing in the lead-up to the last state election around this time last year, 'No. No new taxes. Nothing to worry about here. It's all tickety-boo. Things will be fine.' I can distinctly recall the footage, 'No, nothing to see.' Do honourable members know what happened then? They just snuck it in through the back door when they needed to because we do not have one motor synapse on the other side of the chamber that knows anything about the way the economy runs.

If it were not for that word that we dare not hear from the Deputy Premier—and it begins with 'c' and ends in 'l' and all of us on this side of the chamber know what it is—if it were not for coal, the marbles would be totally dry. When it comes to this part of the state, we do not mention coal. When we go north of say—let's pick a nice geographic marker—the fair seat of Rockhampton, it is absolutely front and centre of debate because, without it, this particular economy would be absolutely gone. Despite the fact that we have had five new taxes, we see from CommSec—and isn't it amazing to hear the revisionist theory of the democratic socialists on the other side of the chamber?

What was the powwow that the Deputy Premier might have had last night or the night before or maybe even this morning over her latte? It would have been, 'Alright, the game plan will be that it's forward looking, onward, forward march, let's go. We just do not mention the war. We don't mention Campbell Newman, don't mention the LNP and the past. No! It's all forward progress.' We saw how long that lasted. I think we were only into the third or fourth question in question time this morning when that strategy came a complete cropper because the Deputy Premier simply could not resist it. When it suits her particular side of the argument, she is only too happy to disband what she had said to the House she would not do. However, the moment she needs to resort to it she will do it. I will tell honourable members why. The record that she is presiding over—record deficit—is absolutely scandalous.

Let's talk a bit about marketing 101 here as well. Marketers define a generation as 25 years. When my colleagues rise to talk about intergenerational debt, the reality will be this—and the member for Toowoomba North put it very succinctly: even if we can pare a billion dollars in savings each consecutive year—simple straightforward mathematics—for 83 years, that is in excess of, from a marketing perspective, three generations of taxpayers.

There is nothing wrong with assets that will last 100 years. Here is an example for the Deputy Premier. There may be a bridge or a bit of kit that will last 100 years, but as long as you can wash four generations of taxpayers through it it is money well spent. When we are consigning to the scrap heap of history the financial futures of our kids and our kids' kids, it is simply outrageous and it is a woeful performance. It is not good enough!