



Speech By  
**Tim Mander**


**MEMBER FOR EVERTON**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2018

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

**Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.30 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to talk about the estimates hearing of the Economics and Governance Committee. Mr Deputy Speaker, if you want a bit of a laugh, what you need to do is go to pages 48 and 49 of Budget Paper No. 2. What this government pretends to have is fiscal principles. These fiscal principles are fiscal principles in name only. They are simply for presentation value to make it look like they are doing the right thing. These fiscal principles do not need much examination to realise how they are failing their own principles miserably. The first principle states—

Target ongoing reductions in Queensland's relative debt burden, as measured by the General Government debt to revenue ratio. This is all about debt. The percentage in 2017-18 is 54 per cent. What is the figure in 2021-22? It is 68 per cent. Has that gone up or down? This is the first principle that they have failed with regard to the budget process. The second principle states—

Target net operating surpluses that ensure any new capital investment in the General Government Sector is funded primarily through recurrent revenues rather than borrowing.

We have already heard the Treasurer today proudly boast that they are borrowing—so-called borrowing to build. The Treasurer also said that we have an infrastructure crisis. That is why they had to borrow. That is one thing that I agree with the Deputy Premier on—we do have an infrastructure crisis—but who was the infrastructure minister for the previous three years? It was the member for South Brisbane. Next year Labor will have been in control of the treasury bench for 25 of the last 30 years. We only need to look to that side of this House to realise who is responsible for the infrastructure crisis that we have today. It is very easy to build infrastructure if you are borrowing on the government credit card. We all know that we are heading towards \$83 billion of debt that my children and grandchildren and the children and grandchildren of every other member in this House will be burdened with for decades to come. Another fiscal principle states—

Maintain a sustainable public service by ensuring that overall growth in full-time equivalents (FTE) employees, on average over the forward estimates, does not exceed population growth.

They tried to get away with this by saying that they are going to average it over the forward estimates. What have we seen so far? In 2015-16, we had a 1.3 per cent increase in population but a 3.1 per cent increase in the Public Service—nearly triple the rate of population growth. In 2016-17, we had a 1.5 per cent increase in population. What did we have in the Public Service? We had a 5.2 per cent increase—over triple the rate of population growth. Last year we had a 1.75 per cent increase in population and a 3.5 per cent increase in the Public Service. How can they have any credibility? How can anybody believe that they can meet that fiscal principle with their track record? I contend that the fiscal principles outlined on pages 48 and 49 of Budget Paper No. 2 are a complete and utter farce and nobody should be taking any notice of them. They have no credibility whatsoever.

We also heard through the budget process about the five new taxes. We found out that there was no modelling whatsoever of the impact that they would have on jobs. We first heard about the waste tax and that 30 per cent of that revenue will go into consolidated revenue. The government has admitted that \$400 million from this waste tax will not be used in the industry at all but will be going into consolidated revenue. If that is not a tax grab, I do not know what is. We also heard about the so-called luxury car tax, which they unashamedly say will catch the grey nomads, the thousands of hardworking Queenslanders all around the state who want to enjoy their retirement. We heard about the wagering tax, which is the highest in this country. There was no commitment about how much of that will go back to the racing industry. The budget was a farce. The estimates hearing was a farce. They have no idea about economic management.

*(Time expired)*