




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 27 February 2019

MOTION

State Schools, Air Conditioning

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (5.36 pm): I rise tonight to support the motion as amended by the Minister for Education. The motion moved by the LNP is a classic example of the LNP talking a big game but failing to deliver. They have gone out and made this big promise without any idea of how it will be funded or how it will be delivered. They are not even sure what they promised, as we have heard from other speakers. They have flip-flopped, they have gone backwards, they have gone forwards and they still have not come up with a clear promise for what they say they will do.

The Leader of the Opposition in her budget reply speech said that the LNP would air-condition all schools in Queensland—all schools. Minutes later, the promise had changed when it was revealed that the promise only applied to state schools. Now all of a sudden they are saying that they do not care about those funded schools, the private schools. They do not care about them. They just care about the state schools now. They changed their mind within a minute.

The plan announced by the Leader of the Opposition in her budget reply just does not add up, as we know over here. She promised more spending, she promised lower debt and she promised no new taxes, but she cannot do that without cutting jobs or selling assets. We know that for a fact. In her budget reply speech, she committed to more than \$4 billion in new projects and spending. That figure includes the estimated \$2 billion cost to air-condition all state schools in Queensland, which the LNP education minister said was unaffordable when they were in government. They have also opposed our modest revenue measures, which leaves them with a further \$2 billion to find in their new spending. That all adds up to a massive \$6 billion black hole that the LNP have in their economic plan for Queensland.

I have heard speakers here tonight talk about getting some cheaper options and doing something different. We saw what happened with that when they ordered some trains from India. All we want from the LNP tonight is a straight answer on how they will pay for their promises. What services will they cut? Which workers will they sack in Queensland? Which assets will they sell in this state? We know on this side that they only have one plan. It is a plan that they keep in the top drawer just in case by chance one year they get elected. It is to cut, sack and sell.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Pause the clock. I seem to have very little difficulty hearing members to my left speak during their contributions due to limited interjections. I am hearing a lot more interjections when members to my right are speaking. I said I would start naming members and ask you to leave the chamber. If you cannot control your own behaviour and remove yourself, then I will remove you.

Mr BUTCHER: As the ministerial champion for the northern peninsula area, I have seen the \$23 million Cooler Schools program fixing the air-conditioning units that we currently have. These are a huge cost because they are old, dated and need replacing. That is not even in the LNP's planned spend on these new air conditioners. What is going to happen in the future?

I am not surprised that the Leader of the Opposition does not want to talk about the LNP's real plan tonight. When they were elected in 2012, Campbell Newman signed a contract with Queensland. We only have to look at a few of the elements of that plan to know that what the LNP promises and what they do when in government are two totally different things. Let's look at some highlights that they may have forgotten.

They promised to save families money on their electricity bills. Power prices went up by 44 per cent. They promised to reduce unemployment in Queensland to four per cent—remember that figure? In six years they took the unemployment rate from 5.5 per cent trend to a peak of 6.7 per cent. They promised to support an independent, strong Public Service and they sacked 14,000 of the public servants they purportedly wanted to support. They promised to give people a real say on issues affecting their local communities. They were the most arrogant government in memory who rode roughshod over the communities; they did not listen to anyone.

Here we have a promise to air-condition state schools. They are confused about what schools to include. There is no plan for how it is going to be rolled out. They have no idea how they are going to pay for it. We know that they have a secret plan—and this is a promise. What services are they going to cut? Which workers are they going to sack? Which assets are they going to sell? Tonight they need to be honest with themselves. They need to tell the people of Queensland the real truth about the LNP in Queensland.