




Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 18 September 2019

MOTION

Electricity Assets

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (2.29 pm): I rise to speak to the motion. Gladstone is a proud city and our region's economy is intrinsically linked to the port. The port of Gladstone is Queensland's largest multicommodity port, handling more than 30 different products. During the 2015 election I had the pleasure of having a candidate run against me who worked for the Gladstone Ports Corporation, and I table an article from the *Gladstone Observer*.

Tabled paper. Article from the *Gladstone Observer* online, undated, titled 'LNP candidate says he knows sense of leasing port' [\[1510\]](#).

The article, headlined 'LNP candidate says he knows sense of leasing port', states—

He said his experience as a sustainability specialist for Gladstone Port Corporation allowed him to understand what it would mean for Gladstone if the port was leased.

Not only did the LNP run a candidate against me who worked for the Gladstone Ports Corporation; it ran a candidate who wanted to sell it. It got to the point in the campaign where he said, 'We're not going to sell it anymore. We're going to lease it. It's going to be a 99-year lease.' However, over the months of the campaign the community of Gladstone saw right through him and they saw right through the LNP. What it had planned for the port of Gladstone was disgraceful and its planned asset sales were right on track to match the rest of its \$37 billion worth of commitments it had planned to sell during its next term in government, and it was just hoping like hell that it would get re-elected for the next three years so that it could continue selling the other assets that it had lined up ready to go, other than the \$10 billion worth of assets that it had already sold while in government.

I remind the House that Queensland Motorways was sold by QIC for \$7.1 billion, \$2.35 billion in Aurizon shares were sold and then there was the \$550 million for the ElectraNet business located in South Australia that was sold to a Chinese state corporation. Not only that, \$562 million from our wonderful assets that we had in buildings here was used by those opposite for their big elephant across the road that they all wanted to sit in, but they did not get the chance because they got booted out. They were booted out in that election. It was shameful that those opposite ran a candidate in Gladstone that they had planted at the Gladstone Ports Corporation to sell it in a private sale to a Chinese investor.

This government is spending millions and millions of dollars upgrading the Gladstone port. Wonderful cruise ships come into the Gladstone port now because of investment by government owned corporations, with the Queensland Treasurer supporting our Gladstone port, not setting it up for sale. None of these investments would be possible if the port was owned by a Chinese investor. I remember sitting on the foreshore in Gladstone when the Premier of Queensland came to visit. We looked over at the beautiful Spinnaker Park and I said to the Premier, 'Guess what, Premier? If they get their hands on this and sell it, those beautiful parklands where families are having their barbecues now will be big

coal piles. They'll be gone.' It would have been gone because they would have used up every asset that they had under the Gladstone Ports Corporation to ensure that they could get their investment going and utilise our assets to do that.

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Member for Southport!

Mr BUTCHER: The LNP was happy to put up a 'for sale' sign on the Gladstone port and the people of Gladstone definitely were not happy about that. If it was not for the 'for sale' sign, the LNP would have tried to pull the wool over the eyes of every Queenslander by putting up a 'for lease' sign with a 99-year lease. As the member for Clayfield has said, it was not an asset sale but a lease. Queenslanders are not—not then and not now—easily fooled.

Mr Molhoek interjected.

Mr BUTCHER: In 2015 we campaigned to keep that asset in public hands and we did it again in 2017 by our recommitment to the fact that we are not going to sell our assets again.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BUTCHER: We know. We went to an election and said, 'We know. We made a mistake. We're now on a journey to not sell those assets,' because we know the port is an economic powerhouse for the region and the state of Queensland. I am proud that as the member for Gladstone that port is continuing to give back to this state and provides schools, police stations, policemen, doctors and nurses. Do members know how we can do that? It is because the Port of Gladstone is in the hands of the Queensland public and we are giving back to those communities in Queensland through that port. We are not sacking people. We are not getting rid of nurses. We are not getting rid of doctors. We are employing people. We are getting more patients looked after in our hospitals and we are getting more police on the streets, as we heard in Townsville, protecting our communities. We will continue to do that because only the Palaszczuk government in Queensland will look after Queenslanders and our assets.