



Speech By  
**Jarrold Bleijie**

**MEMBER FOR KAWANA**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2019


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation (Parliament) Bill**

**Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (11.20 am): That is the first time I have not been on that list for a while.

**Mrs D'Ath:** There's still time.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** It is early days. In speaking to the budget estimates committee report as far as it relates to the Legislative Assembly and the costings of that, I will raise a few issues as I did at the estimates committee hearing. The first is the member for Cook.

Usually when there is a redistribution and a member finds that their office is outside of their electorate, the member puts forward a proposition that they have their electorate office moved into their electorate. That makes sense because members want to be in their constituency dealing with matters and making themselves as accessible as they can for their constituents. Interestingly, the member for Cook takes a different view. The member for Cook takes the view that she wants to be away from her electorate. In fact, the member for Cook took the view that she wanted to move her office out of the electorate of Cook and into the electorate of Cairns. Now Cairns has two electorate offices—one serviced by the member for Cook and one serviced by the member for Cairns. It is odd that a member of parliament wants to be away from their constituents. It is odd that a member of parliament says no to their constituents and says, 'I want to be as far away from you as possible. I want to make your trip longer to get there.'

We saw through the estimates process the extraordinary amount of money that the member for Cook is wasting because she does not want to face up to her constituents. She wants to have her electorate office closer to her home so it is more convenient for her to get to the work, but not for her constituents to see their local member. It is a shame. In the time I have been here I have not seen a situation where a member of parliament does everything they can to move out of their electorate. Usually it is the opposite: they want to service their constituents within the bounds of their constituency. What we saw with the member for Cook's change of office—

**Ms LUI:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find everything that the member is saying offensive and I ask him to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana, the member finds what you have said offensive and has asked that it be withdrawn.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I withdraw. The cost of the fit-out of the new office is \$70,000 and the yearly rent will skyrocket to more than \$71,000 per year. Her new digs are not in the Cook electorate. The office is bigger, the rent is double and it is closer to her home. How convenient for the member for Cook, but not for her constituents.

The people of Cook deserve better than the member they have. They deserve a local member who actually works hard in the electorate. This is more Labor waste. The Mareeba Chamber of Commerce has taken the extraordinary step of writing to the Premier asking that the member for Cook not be allowed to move out of her electorate. As I said, it is extraordinary that a member wants to say no to their constituents and say, 'I want to be as far away from you as possible. I want to be close to home so I don't have far to drive to work.' That is disgraceful, member for Cook—absolutely disgraceful.

The other disgraceful thing we saw in this committee process was when I asked the Clerk of the Parliament when he first knew that the entire parliament would be uplifting to Townsville and he said when he read about it in the paper. What sort of collaboration, cooperation and discussion—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Relevance? It was raised in the estimates process and—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Kawana, resume your seat. Members, if you have a point of order then you need to rise and share it.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The fact is that the parliament will be going to Townsville only because of the federal election result—the great result for the coalition 'ScoMo' government. The Liberal National Party got over the line with a majority. The only reason the Premier has now found regional Queensland is the federal election result. As has been indicated, the Premier has spent more time overseas than she has stepping foot in regional Queensland which is a shame for the poor people of regional Queensland who do not get to see their Premier.

The other thing that the Clerk confirmed in the estimates process was that the ministers were not prevented from talking about the Woolloongabba purchase of the Deputy Premier and Treasurer because of a CCC assessment. I know that the government gets quite confused because there are a lot of things over on that side of the House that are currently before the CCC for assessment in terms of ministers' accountability and integrity. The reality is that they could have spoken about matters before the CCC but they chose not to throughout the entire estimates process. The Deputy Premier chose not to talk about her bizarre buying of an investment property around the corner from a Cross River Rail station and also a new school in her electorate. What a shambles it was.

*(Time expired)*