




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 3 April 2019

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Waste

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.46 pm): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. He is one to speak about waste. The people of Ipswich might have a different perspective on that after those opposites dropped the Queensland waste levy and made this state the dumping ground for New South Wales. The notice of motion tabled by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is about government waste. Therefore, it is useful to shine a light on what happened when the member for Everton was a minister in the Newman government.

I believe at one time he was the minister for racing, among other things, in the Newman government. That government gave us a case study of procurement failure in the bungling of the Eagle Farm raceway redevelopment. After the member for Nanango and the CBRC descope the project, it was so poorly resourced that when we came to government it was apparent that it was not fit for purpose. Frankly, all of the work started by the LNP was a waste. It was a waste of government resources and caused delays to Queensland's great racing industry.

What about the other Jeff Seeney special—Royalties for the Regions, a slush fund of the dodgiest order to pump money into their then government held seats? We know that in that program Mr Seeney personally made decisions to fund programs against departmental recommendations. He funded programs that did not align with program guidelines and projects where no departmental assessment was undertaken and value for money was not considered. Jeff Seeney funded three airports in his own electorate. That is right—three! Grants were made to councils that never applied, so those grants were just gifted, and grants were made to the south-east corner instead of to the regions where it was needed.

The Auditor-General noted that many councils 'unnecessarily invested their time, resources and money to demonstrate the value of their applications against criteria that were apparently irrelevant'. They did not follow them. It was just a waste of time. Mr Speaker, I will share with you a quote from the Auditor-General's report, which states—

Lack of documentation of the reasons for such decisions means it remains unclear what actual criteria were used to decide which projects were to be funded.

A minister is not compelled to accept the advice of their department and is entitled to allocate funds in line with executive authority granted through the Constitution. However, the department had no records of the reasons for funding many projects over much higher rated projects. This absence of documentation reduces transparency and weakens accountability.

What about the fire sale release of seven government owned CBD buildings for \$237 million less than their 2012 valuations? It is shameful and an act of economic vandalism by the LNP government. They lumbered Queensland taxpayers with an exorbitant rent at 1 William Street.

Mr Millar interjected.

Mrs GILBERT: Can you imagine if they had the chance to implement Strong Choices how badly they would rip the Queensland community off?

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Gregory, that is uncalled for, particularly not putting your comments through the chair as I have given very clear guidance. You are warned under the standing orders.

Mrs GILBERT: Queenslanders know a hoax when they see one. They were so impressed with those opposite when they were in government, what did they say when they got a chance to go to the ballot box? They said, 'No thanks.' They did not do it once; they have done it twice. They know a hoax when they see one. They saw it with the Newman government when it wasted \$100 million on its Strong Choices. They see it in the Morrison budget and they see it in the member for Everton. If the LNP want to talk about government waste they should start with their own time in government.