




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

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MOTION

Non-Government Members, Resources

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.03 pm): I rise to support the motion and acknowledge the importance of resourcing for this parliament. It is important for the functioning of democracy that all parties are adequately resourced. I acknowledge the previous work that the motion is based on in terms of EARC, and I acknowledge the former member for my seat, Matt Foley, the former member for Yeronga, who was a great light when it came to the democratic reforms in the early 1990s. He was the chair of the parliamentary EARC at the time, which stemmed out of the Fitzgerald inquiry. I remember the Fitzgerald inquiry very well. As part of my early involvement in politics, I attended the Fitzgerald inquiry public gallery so I understand this issue quite well.

This is an appropriate motion to deal with something that has not been dealt with by a range of governments over time. I think it is a good thing that the government is supporting this motion. This deals with an issue around resourcing that has had a tortured history. We saw the previous Newman government's use of resourcing as a weapon on the opposition of the time, where the government booted the opposition out of parliament. In fact, it was so bad that, when they returned to opposition only three years later, Lawrence Springborg said that those resources were inadequate for him as an opposition leader. It is better if the resourcing issue is removed from political partisanship and removed from the political spectrum, and that is what this motion intends to do and I think that is appropriate, especially considering that record.

Let me look at that record. The previous government denied the Katter party official party status. They had three members but that government prevented them from getting resources after the 2012 election. The Deputy Premier at the time, Jeff Seeney, introduced special laws in 2012 to make sure that Katter's Australian Party did not get party status, even though their numbers increased from two to three. It is that sort of thing that this motion seeks to address, and I think that is a good thing.

This is not just a matter of the crossbench; it is also a matter of the opposition. Governments change at times, and it is important that this is settled and is done in an independent way. I think that will add to the improvements to our legislature and our parliament, whether it be for the crossbench or the opposition. Of course, the wise use of resources in opposition and on the crossbench is always a matter for those involved, and I certainly do not see the opposition using their resources well currently in this parliament. We will have to see whether that improves at all.

What we need here is a reasonable system. What we have seen through the Ethics Committee report is two issues conflated. We have seen the Premier's very deep and passionate commitment to equality. Everyone knows her family background and her strong stance against racism and fascism, just as I stand and everyone on this side stands against racism and fascism. We have seen her commitment there in terms of standing up for those things in relation to resources. I acknowledge the leadership of the Premier today and I support her very strongly in terms of her response to it. It shows

real leadership from the government that we are dealing with a much bigger issue that has been squibbed by many governments on both sides of the chamber, including the previous government and previous governments from this side, to be quite frank.

This is a true democratic reform. It is taking the circumstances of today and turning them into a win for this parliament and a win for this state. It is settling an issue that has been about now for a number of decades. To that extent, I think this is very positive. I am a very strong supporter of democracy and our democratic system and the improvement of it. We must always strive to continue to improve the functioning of our democracy and the faith of people in our democracy. We can never take that for granted. There have been some quite scary polls at times around the new generation being a bit ambivalent about support for our system. We have to make sure we continue to earn the faith of the public, and that means continuing to improve our legislature and our parliament. This motion does that. I think it is to everybody's credit who supports and votes for it today.