




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 27 February 2019

MOTION

Building and Construction Industry

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.51 pm): What a pathetic contribution from the previous speaker. Clearly she misunderstands how legislation in this state works. From the motion that the minister has moved, it is clear that he is divesting responsibility for what happens in this state, trying to shift the blame to the federal government, which is what this Labor Party does constantly. They shift the blame to somebody else. They try to blame somebody else.

The previous speaker said a couple of times that the changes made by the member for Everton prevented the regulator from asking contractors for financial information. That is not true. Quite clearly, the member does not understand anything about legislation. In fact, what was changed was that the reporting of the minimum financial requirements—

Ms Fentiman interjected.

Mr HART:—if the member would like to listen—was actually strengthened by the member for Everton. At the time, companies were required to report annually on their finances and say to the QBCC, the tough cop that the member for Everton put in place when the BSA did not work, ‘We’ve looked at our financial records this year and we comply.’ That is what they had to do. We said that that was a waste of time and money as contractors still had to comply with the minimum financial standards. In fact, the member for Everton changed it so that companies had to make sure that they met the minimum financial standards every quarter; not every year, but every quarter and I think something else happens every quarter.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members to my left. Leader of the Opposition, do you have a comment to make?

Mrs Frecklington: No.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. Members, please cease your interjections. I want to hear from the member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: These are financial companies. These companies turn over millions of dollars. Every quarter, they are required to put in their BAS statements. They have to know how much money is coming and going. It is a pretty simple thing. If they did not have in the bank as much money as they were spending, maybe they no longer met the financial requirements, and they had to report that to the QBCC. The member opposite should be aware that if anybody says to the QBCC, ‘I’m not sure these guys are going to be able to pay their bill when it is due,’ the QBCC can always ask for that financial information. That never stopped happening. Therefore, the member was trying to mislead the House on that issue, although maybe she was not misleading; maybe she just does not understand.

What has the Labor Party done in the past four years? The minister went to an election promising that all subbies would get paid. What has he done in the meantime?

Mr Mander: They brought back the small business commissioner.

Mr HART: They brought back the small business commissioner and they have advocated for people, but have they actually achieved anything? The project bank accounts trialled over the past year were due to come in on 1 January. Then all of sudden they were to come in on 1 March, which is coming up pretty soon.

Mr Bennett: That is Friday.

Mr HART: Yes, it is Friday. Now the minister's website says it will be 2019, which could be any time this year. Who knows? Maybe they will come in, maybe they will work and maybe they will not. When the member introduced the bill in 2017, the last thing that the previous government did before—

Mr Bennett: Which we supported.

Mr HART: We did support it. There were 144 amendments moved at the last minute, which shows how much of a mess that legislation was. They have not managed to achieve anything.

I have mentioned JM Kelly numerous times. The member should be aware of that issue. I have been talking about it for months. The government was warned about JM Kelly. The minister was warned about it. The Premier was warned about it. The members for Rockhampton and Keppel were warned about it. Nothing was done. The QBCC was there. We need a royal commission into this. We need a commission of inquiry to get to the bottom of the issue. That is what the people of Queensland need.

(Time expired)