



Speech By  
**Michael Hart**

**MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2019


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

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#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

##### **Appropriation Bill**

##### **State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development Committee, Report**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.31 pm): That is the quality of the members opposite: in the five-minute contribution from a member of the committee she used the last two or three minutes to talk about her electorate, chocolate factories, strawberries and whatever else.

**Ms PUGH:** I take personal offence. This was clearly written before I got up and spoke. It is personally offensive. I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr McArdle): Member, you have been asked to withdraw.

**Mr HART:** I withdraw. This is a government that tells us that it is transparent, accountable and open. We have continuously seen debates in this House guillotined and Question Time where questions are not answered so it is surprising to see the members get up here one after another today and tell us, as the minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Energy said earlier, that it is fundamentally important for the government to be held accountable at estimates. If the government is going to be held accountable at estimates I suggest that the best way to start that is to allow us to ask some questions. I had three opportunities at estimates to question ministers about energy. We got one hour to talk about something that earns this government over \$2 billion in dividends. Of that the opposition gets a piddling 30 minutes. The chair of the committee may think he gave us more time, and possibly he did, but 30 minutes is not enough to question the government about something as important as energy.

I asked the minister about using electricity as a hidden tax. Quite frankly, that is what this government has been doing. I asked him that at estimates and I will continue to ask it at every opportunity. In his speech the minister said he makes no apology for reinvesting the dividends that the government is ripping out of the people of Queensland as far as hidden taxes go. What he is doing is drawing more than \$2 billion a year out of the people of Queensland and giving a small part of that back in subsidies to some of the people in Queensland at the expense of everybody else in Queensland who is paying very high electricity bills—in fact, paying way higher than they should be.

The minister also talked about the transitional tariffs that are being made obsolete by this government. Deputy Chair, you would remember from the time that you were a minister that we were on a pathway to make transitional tariffs obsolete. As at 1 June next year it will have been happening for 10 years. For the minister to come in here and tell us that the people who are on transitional tariffs

need more time to arrange what tariffs they are going to go on in the future so the government has given them an extra year is an absolute load of bulldust. The Labor Party has pushed this back so it is off the agenda for the next election. Come 1 July next year many farmers would have been taken off these transitional tariffs and would have had to pay a lot more money for the tariff that involves pumping water onto their crops. Without that water crops do not grow. The government has shifted that back for a year which pushes it past the next election. The people of Queensland are not that silly. They know what the government is doing and they will punish it for that. I can tell the members opposite they will punish them for that because 12 months after that time they will make those tariffs obsolete and farmers will have to pay through the nose for their electricity once again.

I will finish where I started: this government has said it is transparent, accountable and open, but it is far from that. The people of Queensland are seeing that it is involved in a massive integrity crisis at the moment. Those opposite are tearing themselves apart. The best way to fix that would be to be what they actually say they are being which is open, accountable and transparent. I will not hold my breath because I do not see that happening any time soon.