




Speech By  
**Steve Minnikin**

**MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH**

---

Record of Proceedings, 17 September 2019

**TRANSPORT LEGISLATION (FEES) AMENDMENT REGULATION**

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (5.29 pm): I move—

That section 43 of the Transport Legislation (Fees) Amendment Regulation 2019, subordinate legislation No. 74 of 2019, tabled in the House on 11 June 2019, be disallowed.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise this evening to speak on this motion. I made it very clear during my contribution to a couple of transport related bills we debated in Townsville that my role as the shadow minister is not to simply oppose for the sake of it. However, on behalf of the good burghers of Queensland, from Coolangatta to Cooktown and as far out west as Birdsville and beyond, car registration for six- and eight-cylinder vehicles affects every single Queenslanders.

A little bit of bedside reading was undertaken in relation to these regulations. I read with interest section 43, which we are seeking to disallow. When you read page 66—not so much the fine print—it goes through the prescribed fee increases for car rego. In preparing for my contribution tonight I did a bit of research and I watched an old Channel 9 news clip. I wish you could table video or Blu-ray and not just documents, because it made for some very interesting viewing. I am pretty sure that the actual interview on Channel 9 was taken at the Greek Paniyiri festival a few months ago literally over on the south side of Brisbane. It was in relation to a story that Channel 9 was running on increases to car registration that were well and truly above and beyond normal CPI.

There was a typical framed shot of the Premier and her erstwhile and as-loyal-as-ever deputy, the member for South Brisbane—one who, it seems, partakes in the odd bit of 'value capture' from time to time—and it went something like this. I will quote from the transcript. First it panned to the one and only Premier. She was asked about car rego increases and she said, 'It will just be in terms of CPI, is my understanding.' For the benefit of the former member for Greenslopes—now seat swapper in Woodridge and procurer of bells—I would point out that there is someone who learned the 'camera swivel' even more masterfully, because the camera then turned to the Deputy Premier, who made a sterling contribution. She said, 'Yeah, that's right.' Cue back to the Premier who said, 'Yeah, normal CPI.' Wow! Unfortunately, this particular news grab ran a bit longer, because we then cut to Paul Turner from the RACQ who, in the same news story on Channel 9 a matter of months ago, said, 'We believe that it is above the inflation rate and breaks the promise the state government made.'

**Mr Bleijie:** Another broken promise.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Another broken promise; I will take that interjection from the member for Kawana. It went on. Mr Turner went on to say, 'Queensland motorists are getting stung. They are being used as a cash cow by government.' In his final comment on this particular Channel 9 news grab he said, 'We have some of the highest charges for motoring in the country in this state.'

Why is this important? It goes to the very heart of framing the government's entire rationale for the second term when the Premier said that she would govern for all of Queensland. In fact, what she is doing is taxing all of Queensland. It is not just car rego increases that frame why this is so important. Under this particular government's watch car registration fees have gone up by 17.3 per cent, but that

is just the start of it. It all adds up: waste tax, \$1.3 billion; the grey nomad campervan tax—I will speak more of that in coming sessions of parliament—LNG royalties, up \$540 million; land tax; payroll tax; betting tax; and property investors tax. It just goes on and on and on. The key thing is that whenever you do a mobile office on a Saturday morning or a Thursday night, no matter which side of the chamber you are on, particularly in South-East Queensland—but I would argue throughout the rest of the state as well—there are two issues that always come back to bite: congestion and cost of living.

The reason this motion is important is that with this particular disallowance motion the LNP is fighting the government's latest hike in rego fees. We know that based on the numbers we will be pushing it uphill tonight, but it is important that we get this on the record—on the sticky paper—because no doubt there are members on the other side of the chamber in marginal seats where cost-of-living pressures are biting hard. If they want to support the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, the member for Miller—as I always say, because it is worthwhile repeating—the member who was called foolish by the CCC, the member who had a penchant for back channel private emails, it is very, very important to remember that under this minister's watch not only have taxes gone through the roof but the member for Miller, the Transport and Main Roads minister, simply does not know what to do with the revenue. We know one thing—as per audit report No. 4 from November of last year—it is certainly not being spent. Here is the dichotomy: on the one hand we have car rego fees well and truly above the level of CPI, yet where is the extra revenue going? Funnily enough, it is meant to go towards roadworks, infrastructure and maintenance. Where is the money going if it is being collected on the one hand and it is not being spent on the other?

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** It is not; I will take the interjection from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. He carps across the chamber in his way that it is going towards maintenance. Well, member for Miller, that seems to contradict page 13 or 14 of the audit report from November last year, because the honourable member fails—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Whiting): Order, members! There is a lot of noise and a bit of cross-chamber chatter. Can we just focus on what we are doing?

**Mr MINNIKIN:** The Minister for Transport and Main Roads was asked a very simple question a matter of weeks ago at estimates about the \$4 billion backlog in maintenance that these increases in car rego are meant to overcome. Why is it that now, 12 months later, that figure is up to about \$5 billion? Mr Deputy Speaker, it gets worse for the good burghers of Queensland—not just in South-East Queensland—because it does not matter where you live: we all pay this particular tax. It is not being spent on road maintenance, so where is the money going? Where is it going?

The fact of the matter is this. In the last term and three-quarters, we have seen a procession of Transport and Main Roads ministers who have actually got their paws on revenue—it has been an absolute tax grab—but what are they doing with it? We know it is not being used to administer a very good public transport system. The member opposite me, the genius member for Miller, the Transport and Main Roads minister, will be known as the minister who actually had his own hashtag devised after his maladministration. He cannot run buses, trains or ferries. He certainly cannot patch up Queensland's over 33,000 kilometres of state controlled roads.

This goes to the heart of why the LNP believes very much in this disallowance motion. The money is being raised at record levels. People are being gouged in a whole range of cost-of-living issues. At the end of the day, I believe that fair-minded Queenslanders will accept that on the very same caveat that it be spent wisely. Through the chair, across the chamber, the member for Miller, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, has got a fist full of money but he is simply squandering it. There is a lack of accountability, but the House should not take my word for it because it is all written in the Auditor's report. In the interests of time, I will wrap up my—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The noise level is getting up again on both sides. Let us keep it down.

**Mr Butcher** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Gladstone!

**Mr MINNIKIN:** Car registration is one of those costs that pretty much all Queenslanders cannot avoid. If they are having CPI increases of X and it is X-plus-plus-plus with how they are actually increasing it, it is simply unjust over the long term. A 17.3 per cent increase over the last couple of terms is outrageous. Let me compare and contrast that with when the LNP was last in government. We froze rego. We froze the increase on car registration.

We should understand the pedigree. No wonder the member for Miller is laughing because the member for Miller's concept of basic economic precepts is nowhere to be seen, but then again the ALP have had a few cracks at this portfolio. They had the Deputy Premier. The member for South Brisbane and the mistress of value capture had a couple of goes at TMR. Then we had the failed member for Sandgate who actually fell on his own sword. Now we have the member for Miller, who has been described as foolish, who is trying to actually occupy the role. None of them are delivering for the people of Queensland. At the end of the day, the revenue is at record levels but where is the money going? They are so broke, they have actually got all of their eggs tied up in one major infrastructure project. They say it is \$5.4 billion. Yes, as if it is \$5.4 billion! There is a little thing you have to add to that Hornby train set that is called carriages and trains, but we will get back to that on another day.

The fact of the matter is that all of the money this government have tried to save is being put into one particular project, and the problem with that is they are simply out of money. When it comes to the federal government trying to do the heavy lifting for them, despite the car rego hikes that are well and truly above the CPI, they simply have not even got their fair share. The minister will get up no doubt and try to have a crack about the fact that there is a record spend—blah, blah, blah. Do you know what? Tell that to the people of Queensland. They know the real truth. The money is not being spent wisely. It is coming in on one hand but it is not going out on the other.

I absolutely urge the members opposite in those marginal seats to think long and hard. No doubt they will comply as good democratic socialists and they will actually do what their socialist masters have told them to do. That is fine. It will be in *Hansard* so that is not a problem at all. At the end of the day, we are urging members that enough is enough. This phrase has been used all the time on this side of the chamber: you cannot tax your way to prosperity. There have been so many charges, fees and taxes and there is so little to show for it.

Rather than the member for Miller—the foolish transport and main roads minister, as described by the CCC—trying to look for the next snide remark across the chamber, which is truly water off a duck's back, he needs to understand a couple of basic economic precepts. It is simply the whole notion that under his particular watch he will be known as the minister who had his own rail fail hashtag named after him. More damning than that, every time he tries to steal the member for Woodridge's mirror and look at it, he will know that he will go down in history as probably the greatest failure of a TMR minister this state has seen.