




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Correctional Facilities

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.16 pm): There is nothing that infuriates Queenslanders more than when taxpayers' money is wasted. There was no greater example of that than last week when the Minister for Corrective Services announced that they were going to close down the private control of prisons at the cost of \$111 million over the next four years. Let us talk about the problem they used as an excuse to do this.

Our prisons at the moment are at 136 per cent capacity. Is it any wonder that prison officers are being assaulted on a daily basis? Is it any wonder that prison officers are being treated like punching bags when they go to work? What was the response to prison officers being assaulted in prisons right across this state? This government has used the privately run prisons as an excuse to make sure that its union masters win once again.

Not one extra prison cell will be added due to this \$111 million commitment. Their response to overcrowding is to spend \$111 million and not get one extra cell. This once again shows the control that unions have on this government. The unions have been protesting for the last 12 to 18 months. It has been an orchestrated campaign. This is how they do it. Slowly, month by month, they leak stories, building the case that these privately run prisons are not efficient. Nothing could be further from the truth. The unions pulled out their big guns when they brought out Minister de Brenni, Chief Government Whip Don Brown, Deputy Government Whip Nikki Boyd and the member for Redlands to protest against a minister's decision. It is absolutely unheard of.

Here they are with protesters and banners saying that the minister has blood on his hands. The protesters are saying that the minister should be up for manslaughter if there is a death of a prison officer, but the ploy worked. Once again, we know where the loyalty of these members opposite is. Their first loyalty is to their union masters. The union secretary gets on the phone to Minister de Brenni, whip Brown, deputy whip Boyd and the member for Ipswich and says, 'Get down here now. You do what you're told or you will not be preselected at the next election.'

This is a classic example of how much unions cost Queensland taxpayers—\$111 million. They do have a policy with regard to increasing the number of cells. They are building a prison in the Capricornia area for \$241 million with an extra 290 cells—close to \$700,000 or \$800,000 per cell. Compare that to the LNP's commitment at the 2015 election, which was to build 650 extra beds at the price of \$61 million. That side of government wastes money. The LNP is cost effective in the way that it spends taxpayers' money.

Another message from this debacle is that, if you are a member of the Labor Party or the Labor government, if you are a minister and you are not happy with a decision that the government is making at the time, let us rally a couple of comrades, go outside William Street, get a couple of banners and protest because that is the union way. They are run by the unions.

(Time expired)