




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Economic Performance

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (2.15 pm): As we come to the end of the year, it is very relevant as the shadow Treasurer to reflect on the economic performance of Queensland in 2019. When I was growing up in the seventies and eighties Queensland was the economic powerhouse of this country. Under Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's government, we now have an economy which is a basket case, not an economic powerhouse. We only need look at a few statistics to prove that point. The opposition leader has already mentioned that our unemployment rate at the moment is 6.5 per cent. That is the worst in the country. Those numbers mean nothing if we do not compare them with other jurisdictions in this country. The national unemployment rate is 5.3 per cent. The unemployment rate in New South Wales and Victoria is 4.8 per cent. In this state at the moment we have the highest number of people on the long-term unemployment list—not per capita but the highest number in the country. Our figure is greater than that of Victoria and New South Wales which have vastly larger populations.

We have the largest number of bankruptcies in the country—not per capita but the largest number. In fact, a third of all bankruptcies in this country occur in Queensland. The CommSec State of the States report—the economic indicator report that comes out every quarter—has us at fifth and over the last two years we have been fifth, sixth and even seventh on occasions. The CCIQ Pulse survey of small and medium sized business says that the confidence level of small and medium sized businesses in this state is at its lowest level since the GFC. One of the reasons it states for this—it states a number of reasons—is that they see this government as being anti small business by bringing in public holidays that are going to cruel their opportunity to stay open and cruel employment as well. Not only that, the union influence time and time again is anti business and anti development. Of course, they were absolutely insulted by the \$250 million bonus that went to public servants after a very generous pay increase in the first place.

The question we have to ask is this: why are all of these statistics so bad in our state? The reason is quite obvious. It is Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk's Labor government. It has done nothing but caused havoc economically here in the last five years. The opposition leader has already mentioned one of the reasons—that is, the nine new or increased taxes, taxes that whack businesses that employ people. Over \$3 billion over the forward estimates will be taken away from companies that employ people, punishing those people who make such a great contribution to our economy. The other reason we have a massive problem is the amount of waste we have in this state. Without even trying we have already identified a billion dollars worth of waste, whether it is over \$400 million in IT blowouts or \$300,000 to change the sign and change the name of the Lady Cilento hospital.

Of course, one of the major reasons Queensland is performing so badly economically is that the Premier of this state and the Treasurer of this state are distracted by the integrity issues that are occurring time and time again, so much so that we have legislation coming before this House that has

been brought in for one reason and one reason only. Actually, it is being brought in for two reasons. The first reason is the behaviour of the Deputy Premier and the second reason is we have a Premier who has no authority and was too weak to be able to take the action that was necessary at the time.

In contrast, we have a leader and a party that have a vision for the future—a vision that will secure the water supply in this state not for 10 years, not for 20 years, but for 50 years and 60 years into the future. It is a bold plan and it is a plan that we will deliver. What has this government announced today in that space? A feasibility study and a pipeline to Warwick. That is another announcement that will amount to absolutely nothing. Only an LNP government will get Queensland working again.