




Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (6.12 pm): I am sure I will give no-one reason to interject during this speech. I would like to start by rebutting some of the statements made by the member for Clayfield, who is normally an august speaker that I take the time to listen to. I was somewhat disappointed tonight. He started off with an attack on the member for Maryborough. That was not the bit that disappointed me. That is to be expected. On occasion we attack each other here. It is below his oratorical skills, but it was not unexpected.

My point of disappointment with the member for Clayfield comes from the fact that on many occasions in this House I have made the appeal to the LNP speechwriters to please give us an A and a B version of the speech. All we hear over and over again is the A version. I will go further and throw that request out. All I want is an A and a B version of the humorous opening one-liner that we have heard on at least 30 occasions tonight. One can tell the comedians from the parliamentarians. One can pick the people who have comedic timing in the delivery of that very funny one-liner that has been delivered 30 times, exactly the same, over and over again, and it is nobody on the LNP side of the House.

I also take issue with the member for Clayfield's swipe at the assistant ministers. I went away and did a bit of research around the assistant ministers of the LNP. Not only did they have more of them; I think we should think about some of the eminently qualified assistant ministers. We had the renowned digital native, the member for Mermaid Beach, who was the assistant minister to the premier for e-government.

A government member: The chicken dance!

Mr KELLY: No, he was not an assistant minister for dancing, that is for sure. I will move on to talk about this bill, but like many other people in the debate I am going to delve into history. I am going to go a bit further back than the Newman government. I am going to talk about a man named Aristotle. Aristotle said, which I think is germane and relevant to this debate, that we are what we repeatedly do. That was very true when he said it a couple of thousand years ago and it remains very true in this debate.

This bill continues to do what Labor governments repeatedly do. At its core this bill is about responsible economic management. That is what Labor governments repeatedly do. Yes, member for Theodore, shake your head. You do not like it when you hear the truth. Labor governments repeatedly stick up for workers, create jobs, back small businesses, invest in infrastructure and undertake major social reform. That is what Labor governments repeatedly do.

I will tell members what else we repeatedly do: we repeatedly are honest with the people of Queensland. In 2020 our state faced some difficult economic times. We were honest with the people of Queensland about what it would take to keep Queenslanders safe and lead the recovery. This bill underpins that COVID recovery we are working on. It will enable the government to lead the community in our COVID recovery by investing in schools, public transport and sporting facilities. I am seeing that happen in my electorate.

Ms Grace: Hear, hear!

Mr KELLY: I thank the Minister for Education. It will allow us to back small businesses, like VMP and Variety Living in Greenslopes, so they continue to remain viable. We will continue to recharge the workforce through investing in skilling and training Queenslanders, just like we have done with free apprenticeships, TAFE and Skilling Queenslanders for Work. Vision Australia is taking people who have been unemployed for a long period of time and helping them to get back into the workforce through Skilling Queenslanders for Work. We have expanded our economic activity. We can do that as responsible economic managers. We have invested in the film and television industry. A film and television veteran came to see me the other day and he said he has never had so much work in his career. We are all about targeted assistance, particularly in the tourism industry.

As Aristotle said, we are what we repeatedly do. Let us look at what the LNP repeatedly do. Let us start with sacking. I was at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital when Campbell Newman was elected and the number crunchers, the clipboard carriers, came in. Did they come in with a good management plan? No, they simply came with a set of numbers and started slashing and burning. There was no thinking about what they were doing. I was in the rehab unit and the first team they slashed was the stroke outreach team. What did that team do? It helped Queenslanders from regional, rural and remote areas get back into their communities.

I do not think we should ever forget that amongst all of the cuts and all of the sackings that occurred, those opposite sacked all of the people who we have re-employed and who are keeping us safe during COVID. All of those workers were sacked and walked out the door under the Newman government. Previous health ministers and the current Minister for Health have continued the good work of rebuilding that section of Queensland Health.

When it comes to repeatedly doing something, the LNP are past masters of cutting. There was \$120 million ripped out of community groups in the health sector. The carnage was immense and we are still rebuilding. Those opposite did not want those pesky groups that would stand up and advocate on behalf of the health of Queenslanders. The LNP love to come in here and talk about crime—in particular, youth crime—but let us look at what they cut. They cut \$291,000 from the Triple P—Positive Parenting Program. Act for Kids had \$470,000 axed from its funding. Those opposite also cut \$240,000 from foster care. Every politician loves babies, but those opposite do not even like babies because they axed \$130,000 from Ready Readers Books for Bubs. When an LNP member was a board member, they axed \$64,000 worth of funding from Bravehearts.

Turning to my electorate, I have spoken about Vision Australia. They took \$200,000 away from that organisation, which supports people with visual impairment. The Brisbane Youth Service was not spared the rod either; they lost \$170,000. I get it when the LNP gets rid of funding for the arts and things such as the tenancy advisory service, because they do not like them and they certainly do not like Sisters Inside; however, I am really perplexed about some of the other cuts that went on.

The LNP cut assistance from small business. They cut \$2.6 million from small business training programs and \$14 million from business development grants. They are supposedly the champions of small business, but they were out there cutting and slashing small business funding. But wait, there's more. They cut funding to the biosecurity lab in North Queensland. They are supposed to like farmers, but the real farmers' friend is sitting over here. We all know that. The LNP slashed \$8 million from the biosecurity lab in North Queensland and they have the hide to lecture us on invasive weeds. I have read that list of cuts and I could keep going, but I have only one minute and 54 seconds left. If I was to put this into a song, instead of singing 'I've been everywhere, man' I would be singing 'I've cut everything, man'. I am not even going to get on to—

Ms Bates interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Member for Mudgeeraba!

Mr KELLY: Aristotle got it slightly wrong when he said that we are what we repeatedly do. If he had come to Greenslopes between 2012 and 2015, he would have seen what the LNP repeatedly did not do. I can tell the House what they did not do in the electorate of Greenslopes and pretty much everywhere else. They did not build a thing. They did not build a school or any public housing. They did not invest in any public transport. The only thing they built was a large tower for themselves in the middle of Brisbane, and they have the hide to come in here and lecture us about regional Queensland. They did announce one thing in Greenslopes. They announced a hall for Cavendish Road State High School, but poor old Ian Kaye could not get the hall built because Campbell Newman took the funding and gave it to The Gap State High School.

They are what they repeatedly do: they cut, they sack, they sell. Aristotle was right after all: they are what they repeatedly do. He was right about Labor as well because we are what we repeatedly do. We are repeatedly responsible economic managers. We repeatedly keep Queenslanders safe. We

repeatedly lead the economy. We repeatedly stick up for workers and jobs. We are what we repeatedly do and we are proud of what we repeatedly do. We are responsible economic managers, we create jobs and we are leading the recovery. I commend the bill to the House.