




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Ryan**

**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 May 2021

## **DEBT REDUCTION AND SAVINGS BILL**

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (11.44 am): I rise in support of the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill 2021. This is good policy. This is good policy which will deliver better services for Queenslanders. It will reduce red tape. It will streamline processes for government, which will lead to greater effectiveness and efficiencies when it comes to delivering services, which means better outcomes for Queenslanders. It is a plan for better services. It is a plan to support our economic recovery. It is a plan to support more jobs in our economy.

It is very different to the plan of those opposite. I cannot help but go back to the LNP's plan for Queensland. They actually published a number of reports about it. The first one was called the *Queensland Commission of Audit: final report* dated February 2013 signed off by Mr Costello. They could not bring themselves to say what they actually wanted to do in here, but let's interpret their words.

In that report they say they want to 'release capital locked up in mature assets'. That is code for privatise. What do they want to do? They want government to be 'an enabler, not necessarily the doer'. That is code for outsourcing, contracting out, privatising. Here we go, they had to say it more than once. They want to 'release capital currently tied up in government owned corporations'—privatisation.

They wanted to go further than that because then with their plan of cutting, sacking and selling they started on our frontline services—the police, the fire and emergency services, and the department of corrective services. They commissioned another review called the Keely Review—in other words the Queensland Police and Community Safety Review.

**Mr Stevens:** It was years ago.

**Mr RYAN:** It was August 2013. What was in their plan then? They actually admit in this report that their plan—this is their plan—will lead to 'significant reform in the portfolio and significant change for stakeholders'. What did it lead to? It led to sackings—sackings of police officers, sackings of those people who worked in the Police Service. It led to planning around privatising aspects of the emergency services, police and community safety portfolios. It led to planning around outsourcing and contracting out, underfunding of community safety organisations and not even providing enough money so that the Police Service could buy new police cars. That is what this plan led to—an outrageous attack on our community services and our police.

Their plan—they were actually planning to do this—was to privatise speed cameras. That is what they were planning to do. They wanted to outsource watch houses. They wanted to outsource prisoner transport. They had cuts to the Rural Fire Service, which led to Rural Fire Service volunteers protesting. Do honourable members know what they did—and even this is pretty ordinary. They cut the SES cadet program, which was an opportunity for young people to volunteer in their community to help their community. That was part of their plan.

The 'P' in 'LNP' stands for privatisation. That is what they were planning to do. It was very obvious what they wanted to do to the prisons in Queensland. In fact, the front page of the *Courier-Mail* contained an article headed 'Wheels in motion to privatise state jails'. It states—

THE State Government is embarking on a secret plan to privatise all Queensland prisons ...

The proposal is aimed at saving money, with privately managed prisons reportedly proving 10 per cent cheaper to operate on average than public prisons, mainly—

and this is the important point; this is why we support public prisons—

because of staffing ratios—meaning fewer staff per prisoner.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I raise a very important issue. The long title of the bill is very long but, again, it has nothing to do with what the minister is talking about. I ask him to be brought back to the long title, which is extensive but not as extensive as what he is talking about.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Minister, you have had a good go, regaling us with history. I ask you to relate your comments to the long title of the bill for the remainder of your contribution.

**Mr RYAN:** In talking about plans to reduce debt and to have savings, in particular bringing it to something very contemporary around prison operation, only a few months ago at the last election the LNP's policy document—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. 'Corrections Act' is not contained in the long title. 'Privatisation of corrections' is not contained in the long title. You have just given the minister a warning in terms of bringing him back to the bill. I ask that he be brought back to the bill for a second time.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister, I ask that you refrain from straying away from the long title of the bill and refer to items of legislation that are referred to in the bill.

**Mr WHITING:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The issues dealt with by the member for Morayfield are covered in transcripts of committee hearings on the bill. They are covered in the green paper as well. I certainly urge you to consider those things in making future rulings.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Bancroft, your point of order is relevant. Matters referred to in the committee report, under the standing orders and practice, are relevant to debate. However, Minister, I ask you to relate specifically to the committee report and to items in the long title of the bill.

**Mr RYAN:** In talking about plans to reduce debt and to create savings, it is important to look at alternatives that are very contemporary and that were canvassed in the committee. I take my role as a parliamentarian very seriously, and I review all of the available materials to make a contribution to the debate. If the member for Kawana has not taken the time to look at the relevant documents for this debate—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Bancroft mentioned that the issues the minister was talking about in this debate are contained in the bill and the committee report. I would like the member for Bancroft to authenticate, because I cannot see—

**Ms GRACE:** I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Minister for Education, please resume your seat. I am listening to a point of order.

**Mr BLEIJIE:** The member for Bancroft raised a point of order to assist with your ruling. I have just looked at the greens again and I cannot see privatisation of prisons in the green to which the member for Bancroft referred. I suspect that the member for Bancroft has misled you, Mr Deputy Speaker, in terms of your ruling.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you for your point of order, member for Kawana. I will listen to the member for Sandgate and then come back to the member for Kawana's point of order.

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** Mr Deputy Speaker, you will no doubt know that the Manager of Opposition Business knows the ways in which he can raise such concerns. He should be doing so in the appropriate manner. I am concerned that we are now getting to the point where we are seeing some very frivolous points of order.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Do you have a point of order to raise, member for Sandgate?

**Mr HINCHLIFFE:** I implore you, Mr Deputy Speaker, to provide guidance to the Manager of Opposition Business to ensure we can get back to debating the bill.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Sandgate, for your assistance. Member for Kawana, you realise that there is a process for raising alleged misleadings of the House with the Speaker. If you consider that the member for Bancroft has done so, I will ask you to follow that process. To come back to the initial point of order about relevance, the committee report and the long title of the bill, Minister, I ask you to please keep your comments to the long title of the bill and items that have been canvassed in the committee report, which we have determined do form part of relevance in the debate, and not stray outside of those matters.

**Mr RYAN:** Part of our plan to reduce debt and deliver savings is to keep prisons in public hands. We are very proud of that policy, and that is something we are committed to. Also part of our plan is to reverse a very bad decision of the previous government that was motivated around contestability, privatisation and outsourcing; that is, to repeal the Public Safety Business Agency Act and to restore those services that are provided by the Public Safety Business Agency to their home agency. The members of that agency are overjoyed that they are coming home to their home agency. They are also relieved that a vehicle set up to privatise, contract out and outsource their jobs is being demolished. Those jobs are protected because they now are in their home agency. They are now guaranteed Public Service agency jobs.

This will deliver better outcomes for government. It is always good to look at the perverseness that goes along with the motivation of those opposite around privatisation, contracting out and outsourcing, because the Public Safety Business Agency was set up to fail. It had duplication and extra red tape and it lacked efficiencies, all because those opposite were motivated by their ideology to outsource and privatise those jobs. What a disgrace. This government values the role of the Public Service. We want to protect and honour those jobs in Public Service agencies. That is why we are acting to get rid of the Public Safety Business Agency and return those jobs to government.

This bill will lead to better outcomes for Queenslanders because it is about supporting the better delivery of services, particularly in the emergency services space through the repeal of the Public Safety Business Agency Act. It is also about streamlining processes and ensuring we have efficiencies and effectiveness when it comes to delivering government services. It also speaks to our values around the Public Service and opposing privatisation, because we know what happens with privatisation: you get worse services and fewer jobs and you lose control over important aspects of government business, which is what of course happened with the Public Safety Business Agency.

I remind those opposite about our investment in the Public Service. This is about supporting and building our public safety agencies to make sure they are in the best position to deliver on behalf of the people of Queensland. It is important to acknowledge our investment in policing—of course, that will be enhanced through those Public Safety Business Agency resources coming back—in Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and in corrective services.

The Public Safety Business Agency is on track to fully transition back to home agencies by 30 June. I acknowledge that those staff members transitioning now and who will transition over the next five to six weeks have worked very hard as part of this transition. It is a reflection of their commitment to not only the people of Queensland but also their home agencies that they are working so hard to ensure this transition is successful. They are professionals. They are dedicated to their roles and they deserve the respect of all members of this House. They certainly do not deserve the threat that came with the establishment of the Public Safety Business Agency by those opposite in terms of their jobs being privatised, contracted out or outsourced.

We value our public servants. They are outstanding in terms of carrying out their roles. This is an important bill for Queenslanders. It is an important bill for the police and emergency services agencies. It will lead to better outcomes. It is my pleasure to support the bill, and I encourage all those in this House to do the same.