



Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**

**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2022


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.46 am). The process that the member before me refers to is one of great importance, and if estimates is to function the way that it should—and I will conclude my remarks at the end by talking about the process—it needs to be one that allows genuine scrutiny. This process does not allow that. This process highlighted waste and poor priorities of the government. There is no poorer priority of this government than the matter of integrity. The fact that the former integrity commissioner was not able to come forward to answer questions, despite her request to do so, despite her willingness to be able to continue in her role so she could face the scrutiny and inform the public in that process shows everything you need to know about this government. Indeed, that remains unanswered. It was also a process that prevented revelations from the Premier on the appointment of the former under treasurer, the indemnity provided to former deputy premier Jackie Trad and indeed the process of RTIs in this state and what it is doing to prevent public scrutiny of the way that the government operates.

However, it is in the area of waste where the public truly saw how badly this government respects its money because, in the end, it is the money that belongs to the people who pay tax. It is not the money of the Premier or her ministers; it is the money of Queenslanders. This estimates highlights how badly this government wastes money; in fact, more than \$3 billion in new wasted expenditure. That is over and above the \$1 billion blowout on just two projects on the Gold Coast alone, but \$3 billion was uncovered during this estimates process.

I refer, of course, to the blowout of the Cross River Rail where the minister can continue to attempt to hide money in different buckets, but in the end it is a project which was touted as costing a little over \$5 billion but that will now cost \$8 billion. I talk about \$2 million to attract two tradies, I talk about money for koala conservation that quietly gets spent on delivering a roller-coaster rather than providing an essential bit of environmental work, but, above all, I talk about Wellcamp. It was in this hearing where the complete and utter disrespect for this process was exposed. The waste on Wellcamp we know is north of \$220 million. The reasons why Queenslanders feel so passionate about that waste is because they saw it from the get-go as a bit of political brinkmanship, a bit of gamesmanship—one level of government trying to have one up on another.

When governments put politics ahead of people, that is when we get bad outcomes; that is when taxpayers' money gets flushed down the drain, and that is what we saw here. Make no mistake, the revelations of Wellcamp would never have come to light without this estimates process. It would never

have happened unless a brave acting Auditor-General was prepared to reveal that she was putting the microscope over the dodgy process that led to this debacle. Then it cascaded one after another to the point that within 48 hours we had the Deputy Premier, who until that moment had stonewalled in a boycott-like fashion. Then all of a sudden under the glare of estimates we watched the government give up on 12 months of spurious defiance, clinging to some form of commercial in confidence that never existed. It exposed everything that people need to know about this government. This is a government that has given up on integrity, it has given up on transparency and it has given up on treating taxpayers' money in the special way it deserves.

I am going to conclude my remarks by talking about this estimates process. The irony that I follow the member for Logan in making this contribution is not lost on me. I start with the need for less time wasting because the member for Logan in deliberately looking for ways to wind down the clock, to call the same speaker on multiple occasions—

**Mr POWER:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. This is, firstly, untrue. Secondly, I find it personally offensive and a reflection on the chair. I ask that the member withdraw.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I withdraw. Let it be clear that the time wasting in the estimates process must stop. We need more time for non-government questions.

Finally, let me reiterate to the House that the circus that is government members chairing estimates must end. The best process would be for the Speaker or the Deputy Speaker to chair the process or, indeed, someone who is a non-government member because the farce that we have seen cannot continue.

*(Time expired)*