



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**

**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Transport and Resources Committee, Report**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Resources Committee's report No. 20 as the shadow minister for natural resources, mines and energy. I have expressed my frustration in this House before about the committee process. Estimates always provides its own challenges and this year was no different. Once again we saw evasive answers and filibustering from ministers, despite the fact that the committee chair is the member for Kurwongbah, Shane King, who I believe is one of the better committee chairs. I acknowledge the government members for Mundingburra and Stretton for not intervening all the time with frivolous points of order. I acknowledge the deputy chair, Lachlan Millar, for his work as well as Trevor Watts and Bryson Head. I also thank the assistant minister for natural resources and member for Lockyer, Jimmy McDonald, for his help in our preparation for the estimates process.

Despite energy being one of the most topical subjects in the state due to the mismanagement of the minister, opposition members only managed to get two full blocks of questions. What were we able to find out in that time? We found out that the minister still has not released an energy plan for delivering an affordable and reliable energy supply for this state. We are yet to see any plan on how the transition to 50 per cent renewable energy will be managed. I note that this morning the minister was very critical of Angus Taylor, but in the entire time he has been the minister he has produced no plan nor brought one piece of legislation into this House—not one in his role as energy minister. We continue to wait. We were told it will be soon, but we were told that last year.

Similarly, Queenslanders are still waiting for the promised \$175 energy rebate that the minister promised would be delivered by August. I asked Mr Duke, the CEO of Energy Queensland, why this had been delayed and his response reflects the ineptitude of the minister. Mr Duke stated—

The \$175 rebate per customer would be applied by retailers and, of course, that means in South-East Queensland retailers other than Ergon retail, who only are responsible for the selling of electricity to retail customers in regional Queensland, outside the south-east. As for the timing of the application of that rebate, we do not have any specific instructions on the timing of that and I would have to take some advice as to whether, in fact, it would be August or some other time.

The minister had not even notified his own government owned retailer.

We also heard of yet more budget blow-outs with the Digital Enterprise Building Blocks IT system. There was \$633 million budgeted for this program. We are now at \$814 million and still going. We had many more questions for the minister but ran out of time.

Turning to the Minister for Resources, the most disturbing thing we heard during the estimates hearing was how sidelined and irrelevant this minister has become. We now know that, despite being the minister of the industry being impacted, Minister Stewart was not included or consulted about the coal royalty increase until a number of days after QRC had been informed! We are already seeing the impact of these increases with BHP's announcement yesterday that it will not be proceeding with the Blackwater South mine due to the lack of certainty regarding this Queensland government. Instead of standing up for the industry, the minister simply parrots the lines handed to him by the Treasurer. The Treasurer stated this morning that coal producers such as BHP are making huge profits for their shareholders but omitted to mention that almost 17 million Australians benefit from these shares and dividends through their superannuation.

The minister also had to admit that he has been sidelined by his cabinet colleague the environment minister regarding the formation of the EPOLA Bill. Once again the minister has not stood up for industry regarding the outrageous condition that any industry bodies are not part of the consultation process unless they sign a confidentiality agreement.

I could not conclude without mentioning the ongoing debacle that is New Acland stage 3. This has been going for 14 years and is sitting on the minister's desk. The minister stated that he would have to read the thousands of pages of material before making a decision. If the minister is not across this issue by now, what on earth has he been doing?

I conclude by thanking Deborah Jeffrey for her role as research director. I have worked with Deb for many years and I wish her the best in retirement.

*(Time expired)*