



Speech By  
**Ray Stevens**

**MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2022


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

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

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.27 pm): As the statement of reservation in this report clearly indicated, this particular appropriation bill was about waste, taxes and more debt. We saw the Treasurer running around through the COVID period, a little brochure tucked under his arm titled 'Unite and recover'. The reality is that it is 'unite and cover-up', because of their dodgy accounting figures. I will give an example in terms of the 'Claytons' privatisation of the Titles Office for \$7 billion. We found out that is over 50 years and it is not going to be privatised at all. What we have done is ripped \$7 billion off the budget figure to save this Treasurer getting a far more embarrassing outcome in terms of the ratings agencies downgrading this government—worse than Andrew Fraser. That is a big accolade for this Treasurer to claim: to be worse than Andrew Fraser, who achieved a downgrade to AA which preceded the removal of the Bligh government back in 2012.

We have more taxes, which the Treasurer denied would happen when he came in. We have three new and major taxes on important groups in our communities. Obviously, we know well and truly how the mining industry has reacted to the imposition of royalties without consultation. We talked about consultation earlier today. There was no consultation; they just whacked further impost onto an industry that is propping up Queensland's balance sheet.

And what of the poor Japanese relationship? Our largest trading partner was gobsmacked that major companies involved in investing in Queensland have been treated in the way that they were without consultation. We do not know what will happen from that, but I believe that the Japanese are looking at alternative suppliers for a lot of their requirements from the resources industries, which is a direct result of this Treasurer not consulting with the groups onto which he has put more taxes.

The racing and gambling industries have also copped a brand new tax, without consultation—thank you very much. They have wiped Queensland. We have seen the effects already—and the racing industry would be aware of this—in terms of investment from the players in the Queensland racing industry, which again will have a long-term effect on the sustainability of the racing industry in Queensland.

We heard about the \$22 billion record spend in health. We all know that every year, in the new government, there is a record spend on health. However, what we did not know is that in Queensland there will not be one new hospital bed until 2026. That is an absolute embarrassment for this government, which is hiding behind a record figure—which is a record figure every year, anyway—yet

there will not be one new bed until 2026. That is an absolute blight for people who are lining up at hospitals. Across Queensland we now have ambulance ramping at 45 per cent. Why is that? It is because this government has handled the health portfolio in an absolutely disgraceful manner meaning that people cannot get into hospitals. That is a major part of the failing of this particular Appropriation Bill.

We identified \$3 billion of government waste, which is an absolute shame on this government. Matters were well accounted for by the opposition in relation to Wellcamp and \$228 million. Numerous people from the community ask me: why don't they fill it with homeless people or mothers who are living in their cars with their children because the housing minister sold off properties that would otherwise be available to them? Rather than having people sleeping in their cars, why don't they use that facility for homeless people? Instead, they are letting it sit idle as a great white elephant at Wellcamp. This budget is a total disaster for Queensland.