




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Cost of Living

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (5.20 pm): I am not sure what motion the member for Mount Ommaney was speaking about; I thought the motion was about cost of living. Let me talk about the double standards of this government when it comes to budgeting. Their approach to Queenslanders is to say that people just need to tighten their belts, they need to have a budget and they need to plan for the challenging economic times we are in, but let us look at their budget performance. Just a few weeks ago in this House we debated the appropriation bills where we approved tens of millions of dollars of over expenditure because of poor budgeting. What could we have done with that money to help Queenslanders?

Mr Lister: Build Emu Swamp Dam.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking that interjection from the member for Southern Downs. What could we have done with that money to provide relief for everyday Queensland families? Government members talk all the time about the battlers and how they are there for the battlers, yet we have seen them squander billions of dollars over the last seven years.

Queensland has never been so awash with extra money. Queensland has been receiving billions of dollars in royalties and profit dividends from the sale of electricity to the southern states. I remember sitting in estimates about four or five years ago when we asked where this \$400 million had come from. We were told, 'It's the surplus dividends we've generated from the sale of electricity to the southern states.' The issue was raised again in the following year and the dividend was about \$1.2 billion. I am not sure where the figure is at now, but it is somewhere in the order of \$2 billion a year of extra income that this government is receiving from the sale of electricity to the southern states. There are a whole lot of double standards in there, and we will not even get into an energy debate. Where is the real relief? I think it was the member for Springwood who said earlier that they had provided \$6.8 million of relief in savings against electricity costs for everyday Queensland families. That is \$6.8 million out of probably \$5 billion or \$6 billion of extra dividends from the sale of power to the southern states.

Then there is the billions of dollars we have received through mining royalties. Where is that money going? I will tell the House where it is going. It is being squandered. The government is asking everyday families in Queensland to tighten their belts and budget better while the Treasurer of this government just spends money at will. He just sprinkles it around all over the place. There is no accountability and no respect for the fact that a budget should be a budget.

We have touched on the issue of drivers' licences and vehicle registration fees that just keep going up. What about the way the SPER system operates? There are billions of dollars in outstanding and unpaid SPER. We talk about everyday Queenslanders who are doing it tough. I spoke to one of those everyday Queenslanders just last week who is struggling to pay off a SPER fine at \$10 a week. Can anyone tell me how much he gets penalised each week if he misses that \$10 payment?

Mr McDonald: How much?

Mr MOLHOEK: It is \$15. It is like a giant Ponzi scheme. Where does the money go? It just keeps feeding the coffers of the state government so they can squander more and more while they stand up here and try to tell us how much they care about the plight of everyday Queenslanders.

Let me talk about public housing for a moment. I have got the figures and I have checked the spreadsheets. The Gold Coast, with 15 per cent of the state's population, gets less than eight per cent of the total capital spend of this government on public and affordable housing, and then we wonder why we have a housing crisis on the Gold Coast. In today's *Courier-Mail* there was an article about smart money conversations. The article talked about some of the cost-of-living pressures on everyday families and raised concerns around the issue of domestic violence. Is there any wonder we are seeing an increase in family breakdown and domestic violence when so many Queensland families are under financial pressure. What is this government doing about it? Absolutely nothing.