



Speech By
Tim Mander


MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 23 June 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (10.35 pm): This is a budget of broken promises. This is a budget where any semblance of trust that this government had, which was very small, has totally and utterly been smashed. This is a budget that has confirmed that, when it comes to keeping their word, their integrity is in tatters. The Treasurer Cameron Dick, who has just delivered the most unimaginative budget probably in the history of Queensland, was asked on countless occasions if there would be any new taxes.

Mr BROWN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on proper titles. The member referred to the Treasurer as his name and not as the Treasurer or the member for Woodridge.

Mr MANDER: I said 'the Treasurer'.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order, members! I will take the point of order in silence. I did not hear that, but I would ask the member to continue and use proper titles.

Mr MANDER: On every occasion when the Treasurer was asked this question, he emphatically stated there would be no new taxes. On one occasion he was asked directly, 'Will there be any new taxes on businesses?'

Mr Minnikin: What did he say?

Mr MANDER: He replied, 'There will be no new taxes.' We now know that that promise was not kept with the introduction of three additional taxes.

Mrs Gerber: How many?

Mr MANDER: Three additional taxes.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock! Member for Currumbin, there will be no interjection from outside your seat. That is the last warning.

Mr MANDER: We now know that that promise was not kept with the introduction of three new taxes. When challenged by the media he said, 'I never mentioned business in my replies.' A couple of media interviews after that can only be described as absolute train wrecks. They were entertaining to watch. The Treasurer said the reason he did not mention businesses was absolutely 100 per cent clear because 'our promise was to the people of Queensland'. These are the conclusions you can make from his statements: either the Treasurer broke his promise and introduced new taxes, or the Treasurer was deliberately deceptive and underhanded by being tricky with his words.

The Treasurer also offended tens of thousands of Queenslanders because he does not believe that tens of thousands of Queenslanders who work for mining companies, who work for Coles or Myer or anybody in the retail industry or those who work in the gaming industry are Queenslanders. Every one of those workers is at risk because of these extra taxes.

We all know that this Treasurer has a fascination—some would say an unhealthy obsession—with American presidents. He has taken those black-and-white photos mimicking his Democrat heroes, JFK and Obama. Who would have ever thought that he had a similar desire to be identified with Republican presidents? When it comes to telling the truth, this week the Treasurer has been described by the *Courier-Mail* as 'Trumpian'. When it comes to telling the truth and breaking promises, he is earning the new nickname of 'Tricky Dicky'. Yes, Richard Nixon once said, 'I was not lying. I just said things that later on seemed to be untrue.' That is what he said.

Mr POWER: This is the second time the member has ignored correct titles. This time it was written in his speech; it was clearly intentional and he should withdraw.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take some advice. I was consulting with the Clerk about something else. Again, I was taking advice. I did not hear that. I would ask you to refrain from using anything other than correct titles.

Mr MANDER: This Treasurer has a record of misrepresenting the facts. Who could ever forget the tweet and the photo of him emerging from those blackened bushfires looking pristine with not a stain on him claiming that he found the Binna Burra bell? Who could ever forget that? With this record who could believe his recent statement that, 'I have zero interest in becoming Premier'? Absolutely unbelievable!

Ms LAUGA: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Which SDS does this have relevance to?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have already given an indication to the House that I will take points of order in silence. Member for Keppel, I gave a ruling earlier today or advice to the House. The latitude of relevance for the budget is extremely wide, so there is no point of order.

Mr MANDER: Unfortunately, the deception of the Treasurer has leaked to other members of the cabinet. The housing minister has said relentlessly this week and for the last 12 months that they have invested \$2.9 billion in social housing. This statement is a total hoax because a billion dollars of that \$2.9 billion is not going directly into housing; it is the so-called return on investment of \$1 billion. However, there is a problem with that. Despite the Treasurer promising in last year's estimates that \$40 million a year would come from that fund, for the next four years it said zero, zero, zero, zero—nothing, absolutely zero. In this year's budget it does not even appear; the funds disappeared altogether.

Secondly, the hoax with social housing is that in this year's budget there has not been one extra cent added that will contribute to the construction of new housing. There was another example of that deception on Monday when the Treasurer came out with the housing minister and talked about 1,200 new affordable houses as if this was a new thing. Guess what? The announcement was made 12 months ago. It was in last year's budget. The deception of this government is to continue to reannounce and reannounce and make out as if this is some new initiative.

Let me say that again that when it comes to housing there has not been one extra cent added to this year's budget which will contribute to a new house. This is despite this state suffering the most severe housing crisis in our history. At a time when working Queenslanders and Queensland families are living in tents or in their cars, this lack of investment is completely unfathomable.

Let's have a look at the facts when it comes to housing. Last year they promised that this year they would spend \$537 million on social housing. What is the amount they have in this year's budget? It is \$441 million, nearly \$100 million less. This government cannot be trusted. They are continually peddling false hope to our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Yes, they care about the glossy brochure. The Treasurer is very—

Mr Minnikin: Fixated.

Mr MANDER:—fixated—thank you for that interjection—on having that brochure to show everybody, but guess what? There is nothing of substance in that brochure, absolutely nothing at all.

Let's have a look at what else they announced. Five years ago, in the 2017 budget, they announced a housing strategy. This was a \$1.7 billion injection of funds. In 2022, five years later, from their own statistics there has been a net increase of only 1,124 tenancies, or 1,190 new bedrooms. That is less than a one per cent increase. This government cannot be trusted. It does not matter what they say, they cannot be trusted. That was less than one per cent at the same time there was a 70 per cent increase in the number of people on the public housing waiting list.

The housing minister crows all the time about what we did when in government. I can tell him what we did in government. We reduced the public housing waiting list to 17,000. It was 32,000 when we came to government, but 17,000 was the figure we left. That represents just under 30,000 people, but today that has blown out to 50,000 people.

Again, the housing minister asked what we did. We introduced one of the most innovative housing programs in this country, the Logan Renewal Initiative, and they cut it. Since then every other state—Labor or Liberal—has introduced that concept and their social housing and affordable housing is flourishing. That is what this government does. There is a lack of innovation and a lack of vision, and they tore up a signed and sealed contract. Why would people do business in this state when a government does that?

One of my other shadow portfolios is public works. We go from one disaster of a minister to another disaster of a minister to the king of disaster of ministers, Minister de Brenni.

Mr Minnikin interjected.

Mr MANDER: Many descriptors have been given to him. I love it when they say 'beleaguered minister' or 'embattled minister'; that usually means they are on the way out. This minister has had everything. I turn to the review in the QBCC, which only happened because of the pressure applied by the opposition. That was the only reason. There was no problem, but they realised they had to have some sort of pressure valve release, so they announced an inquiry. There was every issue under the sun, whether it was conflict of interest with regard to board members, ministerial intervention or homeowners not seeing building inspectors—it went on and on. That report came down weeks ago and we have seen nothing. Why have we not seen any of it? They actually picked an honest bloke to do the review, Jim Varghese.

Mrs D'ATH: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I appreciate that appropriations is a very broad debate, but this debate has now strayed outside of anything to do with the budget. I ask that the member be brought back to the appropriation bills.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I have given directions twice before that I will take points of order in silence. Thank you, Leader of the House. There is no point of order.

Mr MANDER: This review was released weeks ago and we have heard nothing. Why have we heard nothing? I reckon some recommendations came back that are not particularly good and they are saying, 'How do we work out this one? How do we cover that one up? What do we do there?' Bring out the report so we know what is happening.

In the meantime, the minister cannot even answer a question. We asked how long it takes, when someone reports a defect, for an inspector to go out and see them. It is a fair question. The minutes from the QBCC of a couple of years ago reported alarm that it was taking 11 weeks, so someone knows. The anecdotal evidence is that it is now 30 weeks. If you report a defect, it takes 30 weeks for the QBCC to come out and inspect it. It is absolutely disgraceful. How can Queenslanders have any confidence in that? We are awaiting the outcome of that review. We wait with bated breath to see how the minister is going to spin his way out of this one and what recommendations they will make.

I turn to the electorate of Everton. I went back to last year's speech. I could read the same two paragraphs, because we have not got a brass razoo! We have constantly asked for the intersection of South Pine Road and Stafford Road to be upgraded—the one that has that gigantic poster of me. It is an absolutely stunning poster! One good thing about the delays is that it gives people more time to look at my poster. I have to put my personal interests aside, because that intersection needs to be upgraded.

Murray Watt was the member for Everton before me. I gave him the greatest gift of all time when I beat him: he now has a lifelong seat in the Senate, because he is No. 1 on the left. He put the plans in at the time he was the member and those opposite still will not fund it. We need that intersection upgraded. It is a bottleneck in the north-west of Brisbane. It affects Pine Rivers and anywhere further out, Ferny Grove and Stafford. Those opposite refuse, I can only imagine because it is in an LNP electorate. I am in my fourth term in an electorate that is normally Labor. I do not want to brag, but I am still there. What about the resurfacing of Old Northern Road? It was done only six or seven years ago, but there are potholes everywhere. Thirty thousand cars a day go down that road and it is absolutely dangerous.

I mention Mitchelton Football Club. Members may have seen photos of it during the floods. The artificial turf pitch, which was pristine and beautiful—money was contributed by the Brisbane City Council and the state government—was ruined. The \$1½ million pitch was totally ruined because of the floods. They need money to restore that, not just for themselves but also for the community. We need this facility so that people can play all year round. It was a great sporting experience—a great testament to the vision of the Brisbane City Council. We need special funding from the state government.

I asked for all those things and I got not one brass razoo. This is a budget that failed, a budget that lacked imagination and vision. This is a budget from a government that has checked out.