




Speech By
Ali King

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Record of Proceedings, 14 November 2023

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Pumicestone Electorate, Cost of Living

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (2.42 pm): In Pumicestone, as right across Queensland, the cost of living is the No. 1 issue that people are raising. Every day, people are telling us that their interest rates are going up, their insurance premiums are going up, their rents have gone up and their groceries and petrol have gone up. They are struggling to make their budget stretch and they are hurting. That is why we are listening and taking action. We are investing in every possible way we can to support hardworking people in Caboolture, retirees doing it tough on Bribie Island, families in Beachmere and pensioners in Toorbul. We are investing in the biggest cost-of-living package that has ever been seen in Australia.

Since 2017, our power rebates have given almost \$1,000 in support to households. If you are a low-income household, that rebate is getting closer to \$2,000. Our new appliance rebates of up to \$1,000 are not only helping people to replace their whitegoods but also enabling them to invest in upgraded, more energy-efficient appliances that will keep their bills lower into the future by about \$100 a year. Free kindy means that if your child goes to the best kindergarten in Australia, our Bribie Island Community Kindergarten, you are saving \$4,600 a year—100 per cent free, to attend Australia's very best kindy.

Just as you cannot plan when you will get sick, if money is tight you also cannot budget to be sick. Now the whole family can get 100 per cent free public health care at our world-first satellite hospital at Caboolture and next year on Bribie Island—something I am incredibly proud of. It helps household budgets, because when you are sick is sometimes when you can least afford care.

From our public housing big build to free period products in schools, our Palaszczuk government is working every single day to support people facing national and global cost-of-living pressures. Under the LNP, that is all at risk. Let's look at their record. When the LNP were in power, how did they support Queenslanders with the cost of living? What did they provide in terms of cost-of-living rebates on people's power bills? They provided zero. In fact, they oversaw the biggest increase in power bills in the history of Queensland—47 per cent—and they provided zero in support for those families.

They did not make kindy free; they cut 500 teaching positions. They cut TAFE. They put school ovals up for sale in Moreton Bay. When they slashed health services, the LNP forced Queenslanders to pay for private care and they created the ultimate cost-of-living crisis for the 731 local nurses that they marched out the door in Metro North.

The Crisafulli opposition leader gave his short, sharp position on our satellite hospitals very clearly when he tweeted his infamous infrastructure cuts list. Even though he deleted it three minutes later, he is not backing away. The one thing he will never backflip on is his plan for cuts. We know what the LNP think of our Bribie Island Satellite Hospital because they told us and they show us. Their leader called it an overspend. The local LNP said that we should spend the money on a private hospital.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms KING: Give them the reins of government and you just know that they will privatise it. That is no help for Queenslanders who need cost-of-living help when they are sick or hurt.

Energy is where that cost-of-living fail from the LNP bites hardest. The wackjobs and the wowers in the Queensland LNP want to block our cheap, clean renewable power in favour of pushing nuclear—the most expensive power on earth—straight down Queenslanders' throats.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, you are warned under the standing orders.

Ms KING: The LNP have Ted O'Brien, the nuclear windbag from Wide Bay. There is federal opposition leader Peter Dutton, calling for his ominous-sounding 'nuclear new dawn'. There is Canavan the 'coalition cooker', calling for small modular nuclear reactors that would cripple cash flow for households. Just this week we heard about NuScale, the LNP's poster boy for small modular nuclear reactors. It was cancelled after costs escalated from US\$3.6 billion to US\$9.3 billion and nobody would invest in it. That is the LNP's only answer to the cost of living: cuts to jobs and services and the most expensive power on earth.

People in Pumicestone who are struggling with the cost of living simply cannot afford the LNP and their toxic plans for nasty nuclear and crafty cuts. They talk about structured cost-of-living support, but that is just a cover-up for their structural cost-of-living cuts. The LNP have no plan for the cost of living except cut, sack and sell.

Dr Rowan interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Moggill is warned under the standing orders.

Ms KING: They want to cancel our progressive coal royalties and our mental health levy and sack workers wholesale.