




Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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COMMITTEES

Estimate hearings

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (10.40 am): I rise to oppose the motion moved by the Leader of the House and we in the opposition do so primarily on two grounds. One is the allocation of time to each of the respective ministers and to the Premier herself; the second is the increasing practice of those opposite to assign times for specific aspects of each portfolio. Let me unpack that a little. For starters, let us look at the actual time allocations. We received this motion only about an hour ago so I apologise if my maths is not quite accurate. What I ascertain is that each minister will be appearing for between two to 2½ or up to about four hours. When we consider some of the portfolios that we are talking about, that is significantly less than what occurred under previous iterations of this government and certainly under iterations of LNP governments.

Let us look at the Premier herself. How much time is allocated to questioning the Premier of the state? Do members think she has given herself the most time? No! There will be three hours and 15 minutes to question the Premier of the state regarding this budget and its impact on Queensland. By the time we have rolled out the red carpet, all lined up to say hello, bowed and scraped, we will probably be down to about two hours and 45 minutes. The time allocation is three hours and 15 minutes to question the Premier on the budget.

More importantly, let us break it down and look at how much time we will have to ask questions on some of the significant issues facing Queenslanders at the moment. What we are increasingly seeing is the Leader of the House and the government allocating specific times for specific aspects of a portfolio. I refer to the Minister for Employment and Small Business, Minister for Training and Skills Development and Minister for Youth Justice. Can members guess how long the opposition and crossbench will have to question the minister on youth justice matters? One hour and 15 minutes!

Mr Mander: Seventy-five minutes.

Mr POWELL: Seventy-five minutes, of which we will be lucky to get half so less than 40 minutes—

Mr Mander: It is 37½ minutes.

Mr POWELL: We will have 37½ minutes—I take the interjection from the shadow minister for housing—to ask questions about the youth crime crisis.

I do not know what the Minister for Health has done to upset the Leader of the House—hang on! She took her job and potentially the Premier's. The Minister for Health has been allocated four hours but, again, that is spread across a range of portfolios, including the Office for Women and the Queensland Ambulance Service. That means that the health minister has less than three hours to answer questions about the health crisis gripping the state of Queensland.

If we look again at youth justice, we know that the police minister's portfolios are Police, Corrective Services and Fire and Emergency Services. Can members guess how much time those opposite, the crossbench and government members will have to ask questions?

Mr Ryan: It's the same as last year.

Mr POWELL: It was not enough last year, Minister. We will have one hour and 15 minutes. That is 75 minutes—and, again, half of that is 37½ minutes—to ask the police minister—

Mr O'Connor: Is that approved or allocated?

Mr POWELL: That is funded time. Whether that is actual we will have to wait and see.

Finally, I do not want to steal the thunder of the shadow minister for housing, but in the middle of a housing crisis the housing minister is getting a total of 2½ hours. Seventy-five minutes for the opposition and crossbench to challenge the minister on the budget allocation around housing in the middle of a housing affordability and homelessness crisis is absolutely unacceptable.

What is this government trying to hide? Eight years ago the government was elected on a mandate of integrity and accountability—so we were told.

Mrs Frecklington: How long did that last?

Mr POWELL: How long did that last; I take the interjection from the member for Nanango. It did not even start! Since then, every estimates committee hearing we have had has demonstrated that they are trying to hide more and more. They do not want to be accountable to the people of Queensland. They do not want to be open and transparent. They do not want to be challenged on their budget allocations and how they are spending Queensland taxpayer dollars to address not only those particular areas where we see chaos and crisis—that is, the health, housing and youth justice portfolios—but across all portfolios.

I will leave my contribution there because I know others on this side of the House want to contribute to the debate. I end where I commenced: the opposition will be opposing this motion.