



Speech By  
**Fiona Simpson**

**MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 November 2023

**MOTION**

**Palaszcuk Labor Government, Polling**



**Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (5.02 pm): I move—

That this House calls on the Labor government to immediately cease the taxpayer funded Ipsos polling commissioned by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and immediately release to the public the full results received to date.

The LNP is calling on Labor to immediately stop taxpayer funded secret polling and to publicly release all results. We are demanding action from this Palaszcuk Labor government because keeping these polls hidden only fuels the reasonable belief that taxpayer money is being surreptitiously used to run the Premier's re-election campaign. This cannot be allowed to continue. Executive government should not be an engine room for Labor's campaign machine that is funded by taxpayers. Some \$400,000 of taxpayers' money is being funnelled into electioneering that is so secret that the Premier is blocking its release in cabinet papers. What could possibly justify information about Queenslanders being too secret to share with the very people it impacts and who have funded it?

Labor treats executive government and the Public Service like its own political plaything. When Queenslanders' money is being spent, there must be transparency and accountability. There is simply no justification for this secret polling to continue to be locked away from public view. Queenslanders value integrity in government and their priority is a government that works for Queensland's best interests. The only interest Labor is working for is their re-election. They are more interested in fixing their image than in fixing the problems that are faced by Queenslanders.

Some 500 days ago the Coaldrake review *Let the sunshine in* was released in response to the integrity inferno engulfing this state Labor government. Premier Palaszcuk said she would 'lock, stock and barrel' adopt the recommendations, which included releasing cabinet documents within 30 days. Well, 500 days later, that still has not happened and the Premier's department is blocking the release of the Ipsos sentiment polling results—funded by the taxpayer—claiming cabinet in confidence. The reaction to the Palaszcuk Labor government's latest integrity scandal over secret polling funded by the taxpayer has riled up a lot of people in our community, and with good reason. The Centre for Public Integrity chair, Anthony Whealy KC, said—

It is really disgraceful. It is black and white, it's a complete undermining of public integrity.

This secrecy, I think it's indefensible and the public is entitled to know the outcome of this polling and what it is really about.

Transparency International Australia Chief Executive Clancy Moore said—

With an election around the corner, it does appear this public funded polling of people's views on government policies could be for political purposes and a potential misuse of public money.

When Premier Palaszcuk was elected in 2015, she said that 'accountability and transparency would be at the forefront of her government's agenda' and 'no-one is more committed to good, honest government than me'. Well, hasn't a lot changed? Did the Premier mean it when she stated that in 2015? She may have, but she is certainly not demonstrating it now. This taxpayer funded polling is a

complete rort. This government, in the way that it is acting, is opening itself up to allegations of corruption. It is time they released this polling. It is an abuse of the public purse; it is abuse of public trust.

Only the LNP has the right priorities for Queensland's future and will restore integrity to government. An LNP government will always prioritise the needs of Queenslanders above media, spin and manipulation. We saw in the lead-up to the 2020 election this government spend over half a million dollars on secret polling—so they have form. Why is it secret? If it is in the public interest, the public has a right to know. It is time that polling done in the dark is brought into the light. This government controls what its opponents can spend of their own money, of non-taxpayers' money in an election campaign, but they dip their sticky fingers into the hard-earned cash of Queenslanders in order to stay elected—that is corrupt. It is a rort, and it has to stop.