



Speech By  
**Jennifer Howard**


**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH**

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**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Cost of Living**

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.16 pm): The *Macquarie Dictionary* announced this week that 'cozzie livs' is the 2023 Australian Word of the Year. It is local slang, as we know, for 'cost of living'. I have to admit I actually have not heard anybody say 'cozzie livs' to me in a conversation, nor have I seen it anywhere in print, but I do give full marks to the *Macquarie Dictionary* for at least capturing the Zeitgeist of this inflationary age that we are living in. The cost of living is something that is very real and something that everyone is talking about. We hear people talking to us about it in our electorates. We know that people are struggling to meet the ever increasing costs of housing, petrol, groceries and utility bills.

This government is responding by supporting extensive relief measures that will help put more money into Queenslanders' pockets. We can do this because of our progressive coal royalties. These are designed to ensure Queenslanders get their fair share of the record coal profits. Those opposite us would cancel progressive coal royalties if given the chance. They are not interested in delivering a share of the profits back to Queenslanders; they are only interested in allowing coal companies to keep the profits for themselves. That would mean taking away what funding we are providing as cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders when they need it the most.

Some of the relief measures and concessions that we are providing to Queenslanders include a \$550 cost-of-living rebate on electricity bills for all Queensland households, the \$1,072 cost-of-living rebate for seniors and concession card holders, free kindy for all four-year-olds from next year, and up to \$1,000 to purchase energy efficient appliances.

That is not all. We know that many Queenslanders are struggling with housing affordability. National pressures from rising interest rates, record low rental vacancies and record migration are stopping Queenslanders from meeting their basic housing needs. What is particularly concerning is the number of people in my electorate on low incomes who are now locked out of the private rental market due to significant rent increases.

With the support of the Palaszczuk government's record investment in housing, I am fighting every day to make sure Ipswich gets its fair share of social and affordable housing. I am pleased to see construction is well underway for a social housing complex for older people in Basin Pocket. Construction is soon to start on a new social housing complex in West Ipswich. I am very pleased to announce today that construction is proposed to start next year on a new 43-unit social housing complex in Booval, right near the train station. The target cohort of tenants for this project will be women, a group which is increasingly vulnerable to homelessness.

Another group increasingly being edged out of the housing market are young first home buyers. I want to thank the Premier and the minister for making the recent announcement that we will be doubling the First Home Owner Grant from \$15,000 to \$30,000. Over the past three years, the First Home Owner Grant has helped 24,000 Queenslanders get into housing, and this will see a significant uptake in that.