




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR EVERTON

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.41 pm): I rise to give my speech in response to the budget for this financial year. Firstly, I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on what was a very well thought out, articulate and forensic examination of this government's failures over the last nine years. It was a forensic examination which exposed this government for what they are—full of promises and very slack on delivery; full of chaos; full of crisis. This is a government that cannot deliver on the promises that they make. This year they boast about the record revenue that they have received, but our services have gone backwards.

There is no greater example of this than in some of the areas that my shadow portfolio covers. Some of the biggest challenges at the moment are in the housing space. We all know that we are in the grips of a housing crisis, with nearly 50,000 Queenslanders on the public housing waiting list. That is a 70 per cent increase in the number of people seeking social housing accommodation over the last five or six years. This government has treated those vulnerable people with contempt. How have they done that, you might ask? They have done that by continuing to make promises and failing to deliver on those promises.

A new minister has come in and has been there for a couple of weeks. There is a new minister because the former minister obviously failed in her role and had to be shuffled around to another portfolio. Unfortunately, the new minister has continued with the same narrative and the same MO which is, 'Let's make promises and not worry about the delivery of those promises.' For example, according to the government, in this budget 500 new houses will be built. When pressed about that announcement, the minister was very vague on the details and, in fact, what she ultimately said was that those 500 homes would be 'commenced to be built by 2025'. It is now 2023, we are in the middle of a crisis and they have the temerity to treat people like fools. They are treating vulnerable people with disrespect by giving them false hope by making promises that are in the never-never. Why did we come to that conclusion? It is because there have been so many promises that they have made that simply have not come to fruition.

We all remember the Housing Summit late last year, which the Premier had to be dragged kicking and screaming to hold because of a *Courier-Mail* campaign and because of the relentless opposition from the LNP that was keeping them accountable for their promises. Given that campaign, they had this summit. Basically every signature housing policy announced at that summit has proven to be an absolute dud. Let us go through some of those. There was the student accommodation which was generously donated by Griffith University. After six months of this government examining that proposal, after announcement, after announcement, after announcement saying 'Yes, there will be people there in a few weeks, a few months. It won't be long now,' and after spending \$2 million on evaluations, out of the blue they said it will now no longer happen. All of that false hope for 200 people, who are currently homeless, to be able to access emergency accommodation. Then the Deputy Premier came out,

continuing to treat the Queensland public like fools, saying, 'What we are going to do instead is buy 64 houses right across the state. Guess what? We have already done that. We have done that in a two-week period.' We are going to continue to examine and expose that deceit in other forums of this parliament. That was the No. 1 failure.

Then, there was the great granny flat announcement. It was the grandad of all announcements that has been proven to have not have an impact. We asked the housing minister about it; she could not tell us. We asked the Premier about it; she could not tell us. The Deputy Premier could not tell us about it. They eventually came up with something that they concocted somewhere. This was a policy that they said was foundational and would have such a dramatic impact on those who are homeless.

Then, we had the fabulous Help to Home program. In the middle of a rental crisis, they make an announcement that they are asking for 1,000 homes in the private rental market to go into the social housing space. This is how these people think. They do not think about extra supply, which is the core issue of our housing crisis; they think we are going to rob Peter to pay Paul. How successful was that program? They got 55 properties out of a target of 1,000—an abject failure, once again. Trying to take houses out of the private rental market was a ridiculous policy in the first place.

Some of the statistics that we have heard recently are incredibly disturbing. This minister has continued the narrative. I will say that constantly coming out and telling the public how many houses they have built misleads the Queensland public. The inference is that these are additional houses in the social housing portfolio. They continue to throw out the figure of 4,000. The Productivity Commission has exposed that deceit because the Productivity Commission has said recently that, over the term of this government, there has actually been only 1,400 additional houses—not 4,000. This is a miserly increase, in a housing crisis with 50,000 people on the public housing waiting list, of 2.7 per cent. They are big on the announcements. They are very quick to mislead Queenslanders—this is proof of that. Again, it has been exposed. Long before that, the Productivity Commission told us that this government spends the least amount of money on a per capita basis on social housing in the country. It has again been exposed. That is not me saying this; it is the Productivity Commission saying it.

What else did the Productivity Commission report say? This is a government that says it values community housing organisations. Guess what: it does not. It does not value community housing organisations. It is philosophically opposed to community housing organisations. What is the proof of that? In the last eight years, the amount of Queensland government social housing that is headleased to the community housing sector has gone backwards. There are 91 fewer properties. New South Wales has increased it by 25,000, because it respects community housing organisations. This is one of the reasons we have not been able to get access to the NFHC funding. The opposition leader explained it quite well. A billion dollars has gone to New South Wales and hundreds of millions of dollars have gone to Victorian community housing organisations, and we have had a lousy \$8 million out of a multibillion dollar fund. Actions speak louder than words. The community housing sector is champing at the bit to play its part in solving the housing crisis we have at the moment, yet this government continues to ignore it.

This government spruiks about how much money is in the Housing Investment Fund and how it has been increased from \$1 billion to \$2 billion. It could make it \$10 billion. It means nothing if no houses are built from it. At one place at Chermiside the first sod has not even been turned. Thirty-two units were supposed to be done by September, yet the first sod has not been turned. Again, the government is great on announcements but absolutely pathetic when it comes to delivery.

I turn from one area of failure to another area of failure—that is, public works. Minister de Brenni thinks he has been sailing on the breeze lately because of all of the other controversies taking place, but he should not worry: people in the construction sector know his shortcomings. There is no greater example than the QBCC. The number of inquiries I get from either builders or people building houses in terms of issues with the QBCC is extraordinary. I am sure that members of the government would not realise how long it takes for a building inspector from the QBCC to go out to inspect a property when somebody has a problem. The average time at the moment is 28 weeks. That is more than six months to have an inspector go out and see a property. That is beyond belief. People who have a problem with their home, who are unhappy with what a builder has done, have to wait six months to have somebody come out and see them. That is despite the QBCC increasing its staff by 30 per cent over the term of this government.

I am running out of time. There are so many failures I am yet to mention that I do not know where to turn. In the area of sport, there is \$2.7 billion for the Gabba, which the AOC chair said needed only a lick of paint. There is no detail on that \$2.7 billion. We do not even know what it is going to provide.

What is the outlay for local community sporting organisations? It is \$48 million. Just 1.7 per cent of the projected cost of the Gabba will be spent on local sporting organisations that want just a new dressing room or lights. The lack of investment in local sporting organisations is marked. Everybody is saying, 'What's happened to those grants we used to get of \$100,000, \$150,000 or \$200,000?' I tell you what: my electorate does not get it and I think most electorates represented by members on this side of the House are not getting that sort of benefit.

I turn to my electorate of Everton. The traffic congestion in the Everton area is atrocious, yet we have seen nothing from this government. This is the ninth budget brought down by this government, and each time I have raised the intersection of South Pine and Stafford roads that needs an upgrade. I will give credit to my predecessor, Murray Watt, who went and got the study done. They have the plans. The plans are there, ready to roll. It is probably going to cost about \$150 million now, but we have to get it done. Then there is Linkfield Road. Linkfield Road is not in my electorate—it is in the electorate of Aspley—but my constituents use it and get stuck in gridlock. This mob is not going to address it until 2025. You have your Labor mates in government now federally—

Ms RICHARDS: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is not directing his comments through the chair.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member, I ask you to direct your comments through the chair.

Mr MANDER: Thank you for the direction. The road network in the north-west of Brisbane is atrocious. What do those opposite do? They propose a tunnel examination that is not going to help the north-west; it is going to help their electorates. They are going to spend \$35 million.

Mr Mellish interjected.

Ms Boyd interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Aspley and member for Pine Rivers! Order!

Mr MANDER: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Let's bring some civility back to this argument. It is just unbelievable how they go on.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: Screaming. Here they go once again. We will never again hear about this tunnel—until the LNP comes to government and provides the infrastructure that is needed. That is the main reason we supported the Olympics: we want transport infrastructure built in Brisbane, and those opposite are failing miserably.