



Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Community Support and Services Committee, Report

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.43 pm): I stand to give my contribution to the debate of the committee report on the estimates hearing. We came into the housing portfolio with a major announcement: the public housing waiting list has been reduced. That would normally be something worth celebrating; however, when you dig a little deeper and see how these figures have been reduced you see that 7,000 households were culled from the public housing waiting list, 5,000 people were allocated a house and 6,000 people were added to the list. In real terms, that means that the public housing waiting list in the last year increased. There were more people culled from the public housing waiting list than allocated a house. The minister comes out and celebrates this 7½ per cent decrease in the public housing waiting list without providing any context with regard to how that actually happened. It took the estimates hearing for that information to be divulged.

Let's not forget that when the LNP were in power the public housing waiting list was 17,000. Under this government it went to 32,000 households. Now it has come back to about 26,000 or 27,000. What does it mean in the end? It means that 41,000 people are still on the public housing waiting list.

Ms Scanlon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): The member for Gaven will cease her interjections.

Mr MANDER: Why? It is because for 30 of the last 35 years, Labor has been in power. It is Labor that is responsible for the housing shortage that we have at the moment.

Ms Scanlon interjected.

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

Mr MANDER: It is Labor that is responsible for this blowout in the public housing waiting list. There are tricks and deceit thrown out there all the time with regard to what they are apparently doing.

Let's go to the Housing Investment Fund, a \$2 billion fund. Why not make it \$5 billion, because it makes no difference? In the last two years, not one single house has been constructed from the Housing Investment Fund—not one. In fact, there is one project underway and it is months behind

schedule. This minister goes around the state, holds a press conference every second day with a helmet on her head and gets a shovel in the ground, trying to make out there is action. Guess what: the 41,000 people on the public housing waiting list are not seeing that action. It is not just me saying this; it is also the social services sector, which would never speak out against the Labor—

Mrs McMILLAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I just wanted to make sure that the member knew that his microphone was working.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mansfield, that was an affront to proper process. You are warned under the standing orders for that frivolous point of order.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MANDER: I take that interjection. It is juvenile behaviour from someone who is supposed to be the chair of the committee—ridiculous. Again, it is not taken seriously—

Mrs McMILLAN: I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those comments and ask that they be withdrawn. We are not on a football field.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not an opportunity to debate the matter. Member for Everton, the member for Mansfield has taken personal offence at the comments. Will you withdraw?

Mr MANDER: She has? I withdraw. I think the Housing Investment Fund is the greatest fraud this government has ever announced. It is basically a program to go out and announce. There is not one single thing in the regions. There are supposed to be 77 projects being considered at the moment. We will not see any of this. Nothing will happen with this fund before 2025—if it ever happens—because normally they just make announcements with nothing to back it up.

Let's talk about a question we asked on notice about wilful and malicious damage to social housing property. What did the minister's department provide? They provided a figure of \$90,000. It was not for wilful and malicious damage; it was for excess wear and tear. When questioned about this the minister said, 'Well, that is a legal term; that is not a technical term that we use.' The minister is saying that she has made a conscious choice. She said, 'What figure will we give them? Let's give them the smaller figure: excess wear and tear'—not the figure that later was revealed to be \$1.7 million in damage through drug labs. The minister obviously was embarrassed by and wanted to hide those figures. This is all about transparency and openness. The minister made a deliberate decision to go to the lower figure.

There is another thing I will continue to pursue. Over the last five years this government have spent \$1.6 billion on Indigenous housing. What has the increase in Indigenous housing been since that time? It has been zip, zero, nothing. They have spent \$1.6 billion on Indigenous housing and the numbers have not increased. These are the people who think they champion the cause of Indigenous people. They insult them with those types of statistics.