




Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

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HELP TO BUY (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (3.27 pm): It is a pleasure to stand to talk on this bill. It is a pleasure to be the first government member to speak after the Treasurer delivered an outstanding budget. I look forward to talking more about that. It is also a pleasure to follow the member for Everton. I will deal with a few issues he talked about. The first is the delay of the scheme. The LNP voted against the scheme in the federal parliament. They voted to delay it. The same scheme that Amanda Stoker said was 'dangerous' they voted to delay.

It is interesting that the member for Everton criticises the federal government for a lack of detail when he represents the roaring vacuum of policy that is the Queensland LNP. There is nothing there. There are no policies and there is no detail. It is ironic that the member should criticise the federal government for a lack of detail. It is ironic that he criticises the modular home program. He should talk to the workers at Eidsvold, Gympie or Cunnamulla about their new homes in those areas. It is not right to criticise these new homes that are housing Queensland workers. What I found most interesting was that he spoke with disdain about us throwing everything at the electorate—that this was just us throwing everything at the electorate. Along with free kindy we have: free TAFE—200 courses; 50-cent fares on trains, buses and ferries; \$1,000 off electricity bills; \$200 vouchers for kids to play sport; \$1,000 for apprenticeships—

Mr MANDER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr WHITING: I am getting to my point.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Bancroft, I will ask you to take a seat while I listen to the point of order.

Mr MANDER: My point of order is on relevance. This has absolutely nothing to do with the bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I will urge you to come back to the bill.

Mr WHITING: I was just getting to my point. My point is that the member spoke with disdain about us throwing everything at the electorate. Now we are delivering support for more Queenslanders to own their own homes. If this is throwing everything at the electorate, I can tell him that they like it and they want more of it. If we are giving working class people more cost-of-living relief and a chance to own their own homes, they will take it every day.

It was a pleasure to chair the committee that examined this bill. We found that the Help to Buy scheme effectively complements the raft of actions in the Homes for Queenslanders plan to deliver safe, secure and affordable housing to Queenslanders. I will remind the House what is in this plan and what we are doing. Remember that it had an additional initial investment of \$3.1 billion. It aims to deliver one million new homes, including 53,500 new social homes, in Queensland by 2046. Homes for Queenslanders is already putting roofs over the heads of Queenslanders. The member for Everton criticised that the Housing Investment Fund has not built anything. What I can say is that—

Mr Lister: How unreasonable of him!

Mr WHITING: Listen to this. This is important. Over 600 Queenslanders are now in homes because of the Housing Investment Fund. They are the NRAS homes that we have bought.

Mr Mander: You didn't build any new ones.

Mr WHITING: Over 600 Queenslanders—

Mr Mander interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, member for Everton!

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr WHITING: How can you criticise 600 roofs over the heads of Queenslanders? You have no idea. Why are you in this role? You are a disgrace.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr WHITING: Madam Deputy Speaker, I withdraw.

Mr Millar: That's not like you.

Mr WHITING: Oh, it is like me. Wait till I get going!

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Members, there will no quarrelling across the chamber. Member, I understand you have just withdrawn that unparliamentary comment. You have the call.

Mr WHITING: Under the Homes for Queenslanders plan, people have moved from tents and cars into temporary accommodation. That is because of the uplift of funding that has happened under Homes for Queenslanders. We can say to those residents who make their way to my office that under this plan we have the resources to make sure they are offered some temporary or emergency accommodation solutions. Everyone gets that chance. Everyone gets that offer. I want to thank Jenelle, Nicolina and Huxley in my office who are daily dealing with people coming into my office asking for assistance. Without that particular assistance I do not know what we would have done, so I thank the minister for that.

We have seen the number of residents in our local parks dwindle in recent times. Under the Homes for Queenslanders plan, we have seen an unused aged-care facility in Rothwell converted into 18 dwellings. What I love about that is that people will go from living in tents and cars to living in this temporary accommodation. They will get wraparound services to help them deal with the issues happening in their lives and to help them transition into permanent accommodation. Once again, this is under the Homes for Queenslanders plan.

As we have heard this week, the first home buyers grant has been doubled by the Miles government to \$30,000 for new homes. That is a great initiative and is a wonderful cost-of-living measure. Others will speak about the changes to the eligibility threshold for some transfer duty concessions which will once again save Queenslanders a great amount of money.

I will end by saying that I want to congratulate the minister and the Premier for the Homes for Queenslanders plan for what it is delivering not just in my area but across the state. What we are doing with this bill is relatively simple. We are referring legislative powers to the Commonwealth parliament to deal with a specific issue. The benefits of this referral are straightforward. The Help to Buy scheme is a good scheme from the federal government and we want to support it. It will get more Queenslanders into safe, secure and affordable housing.

During the committee hearings, the submitters focused on the design of the scheme. We collated those opinions. What we have said to the minister and to the Premier is advocate and liaise with the federal government to talk about the design of that scheme so we can see more Queenslanders in the future be eligible for it. We would love to see more places in this scheme flow to Queenslanders. I know that the minister and the Premier will do this, but I am appealing to them to be parochial in advocating for more places in this scheme. I have every faith they will do that. They are fierce advocates for this state. They do want to see more Queenslanders get into safe, secure and affordable housing. I commend the bill to the House.