




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2024

CHEAPER POWER (SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL)

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (5.30 pm): It is a pleasure to follow the Premier. The Premier talked about almost everything but the bill. I am sure Mr Deputy Speaker will allow me some latitude in my contribution. I am not pre-empting your decision.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Resume your seat. I will take some advice. I found that contribution to be somewhat disrespectful to the chair. I adjudicate this chamber fairly as per the standing orders of this chamber. I will adjudicate your contribution in exactly the same way as I adjudicate the contribution of the Premier and every other member of the House. I would ask you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw and I apologise. It was not meant to offend. I will note in my contribution to this bill that the Premier simply made stuff up. When we are talking about the bill that was before the House last sitting week, it was actually the LNP that moved amendments to keep the current generating assets of the state's fleet in the state's hands. I am pretty sure it was the Miles government that voted against it. One has to ask who has sold assets in Queensland. Labor has sold the assets, whether it was Forestry Plantations or the Cairns Airport. I think they even sold the lotto. The energy minister, who is sitting here in this House, has a little grin on his face because he knows that I am right when it comes to who sold the assets. The only government that has form in Queensland is the Labor government. The former transport minister has been here long enough to know that.

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at the comments by the member and ask that they be withdrawn.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw. Each and every Queenslanders—with the exception of a few—is struggling with the cost of living. That is what brings us here today. As the shadow Treasurer said, and as we have said publicly, unlike what the Premier has said in this chamber today, we support any measure that helps with the cost of living. One must also consider and debate how we got here. We are talking about a decade of mismanagement and a decade of an incompetent government that has led to the fact that we have soaring cost-of-living pressures on everyday Queenslanders. The Treasurer can pretend that since December all of a sudden it is a new government. I would love to know what the former premier thinks of this new government. I would be very interested to know what the former premier thinks of the new Premier's handling of cost-of-living issues.

This bill is about electricity costs. In the last 12 months Queensland's electricity costs have gone up 19 per cent—three times the national average. One would have to ask why. One of the reasons is the Callide Power Station being offline since 25 May almost three years ago. I am looking at the energy minister. The minister is agreeing with me. He knows it has been offline. Where is the Brady report? Where is the explanation for Queenslanders as to what happened under this energy minister and this Premier, who might like to think he is new but who has actually been here for quite a long time. He was the environment minister, then he was the health minister—that did not go so well—and I think he was the infrastructure minister. Now he is the Premier overseeing all of the failures of the former government

and all of the issues that are contributing to the cost of living. This Premier wants us to believe that, miraculously, he is new. It is like the time when he jumped electorates from the inner Brisbane seat to the Murrumba electorate—is it Murrumba?

Ms Leahy: It was Maranoa last night.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I will go back to the bill. I was going to mention when he dropped the doctor title, but I am not sure if it is back.

An opposition member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to take that interjection from whoever said, 'Oh my'—and blasphemed.

Mr Harper: This is the worst contribution you have given.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Order, member for Thuringowa.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am more than happy to take the member for Thuringowa's interjection. He is a paramedic, of course. We have hospitals in crisis. Paramedics are having to work so hard because this government is not providing the services that are required in our health facilities. We have had failed health minister after failed health minister and it is contributing to the pressures and the cost of living of all Queenslanders.

Let us look at the CPI data from last year, remembering this is a third-term Labor government: a 6.7 per cent increase in health costs—the highest in the nation; a 4.2 increase in transport costs—the highest in the nation; an 8.4 per cent increase in rent costs; an 18.5 per cent increase in insurance costs—and we know insurance is going up because of the crime rate in places like Townsville; and a 7.4 per cent increase in sports participation costs. Labor has focused on bandaid solutions. Where we differ from this government is our focus on driving real reform to lower the underlying costs of electricity prices in Queensland. That is a serious issue that must be addressed. We have already announced a maintenance guarantee. We have already announced we will be up-front and honest with Queenslanders about what is actually happening with Callide. If Callide has not reopened by then it will be heading towards four years since it was shut down. When will the minister direct CS Energy to release the Sean Brady report? It is very important that each and every Queenslanders who is struggling with their electricity bills knows why. Any subsidy will help reduce an electricity bill.

Mr Walker: Are you going to sell it off?

Mr Harper: Are you going to sell it off? Great question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members. The member is not taking interjections.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I am happy to take that interjection. I will take the member back to the beginning of my contribution where I said the Premier was misleading the House. It was the LNP that moved an amendment to the bill to ensure our currently owned energy generators remained in our hands. It was the member opposite who voted against that because the member is a Labor member of this House. Who likes to sell our assets? Labor likes to sell the assets! We need only look to Labor government after Labor government that sold assets. We on this side of the House are doing everything we can to ensure the people of Queensland know what a rotten, incompetent government these ministers represent—

An opposition member: A crisis.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They are in crisis. The government is incompetent when it comes to doing everything they can to ensure the cost of living comes down. Cost of living is exceedingly important to not only the people of my electorate but also people all across Queensland. We know that Queenslanders simply cannot afford another four years of this Labor government. They cannot pay their bills. In many cases there are people living in tents. Every time I drive across the bridge over the Brisbane River at Fernvale—if I go that way—another tent has popped up. One would assume, just by looking at the Fernvale tent index, that there is a major housing crisis, a major cost-of-living crisis and that Labor does not care. We have a bandaid fix. Let's see what this government will do about the electricity prices across Queensland—three times higher than the national average. This government is a national shame when it comes to electricity prices, and they know it. That is why we have to show Labor the door in '24.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Logan, member for Nanango I think you used some unparliamentary language in your speech. I did not interrupt, but I ask you to withdraw.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I withdraw.