



Speech By  
**Hon. Glenn Butcher**

**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**

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Record of Proceedings, 6 March 2024

**MOTION**

**Cost of Living, Select Committee**

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (5.06 pm): I move the following amendment—

That all words after 'That' be omitted and the following inserted:

'the House:

- (a) notes that the government has established a Cost of Living and Economics Committee;
- (b) notes that the government will move a motion in the House to establish a Supermarket Pricing Select Committee to examine the cost of groceries in Queensland and the associated cost-of-living pressures;—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. I am sorry to interrupt, Minister. I will hear the amendment in silence. I assume that if members want to debate it they will need to hear it as well. If there are any further interjections, members will be warned.

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Leader of the Opposition, I could not have been clearer. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I continue—

- (c) notes that Queenslanders are paying more for their groceries, while farmers are being paid less for their produce;
- (d) notes that the Miles Labor government has provided \$8.224 billion in concessions in the 2023-24 budget to assist Queensland families and businesses with cost of living; and
- (e) condemns the LNP for not properly standing up to the big supermarkets.'

We know that cost of living is front of mind for all Queenslanders. That is why we are delivering on the \$8.2 billion in cost-of-living relief that has been announced in the state budget. It is the biggest cost-of-living package ever delivered by a government in Queensland. We are freezing car registration and public transport fares, making kindy and TAFE free for families, outlawing rent bidding and making bonds portable.

The motion moved by the member for Nanango is typical of the LNP—huffing and puffing and delivering nothing. Who can forget the member standing up with her Bradfield plans out in the paddock marked 'not for construction'. Those opposite have no idea. The LNP cannot deliver a policy on anything, let alone a real plan to help Queenslanders with the cost of living. The motion's attempt to shift the focus away from the big grocery chains is typical of the LNP here in Queensland—in the pocket of big business once again.

Instead of backing our farmers and our consumers by helping to drive a hard bargain with these supermarket giants, like the Premier has done, the LNP are failing Queenslanders doing it tough. If the member had paid attention she would know that this side of the House is delivering cost-of-living relief right now. We are absorbing dam safety costs; offering irrigation price discounts of at least 15 per cent for irrigators—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Buderim and member for Nanango, your interjections have been ongoing and are designed to interrupt. You are both warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BUTCHER:** In terms of irrigation pricing discounts, there has been 15 per cent off water bills for irrigators in the last three years. For our horticultural growers it is 50 per cent off.

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The member for Southern Downs is warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BUTCHER:** That represents millions of dollars of discounts so far. For residents, our concealed leaks policy is giving relief. South-East Queenslanders received a \$55 water discount. There has been funding to councils right across the state—particularly in regional Queensland—to support our councils to help keep downward pressure on rates. There is also a \$120 water subsidy for pensioners in South-East Queensland. Do honourable members know the most interesting thing about discounts for the elderly here in Queensland? The LNP wanted to cut them, and the member opposite was part of that. Let that sink in for a little bit. Those opposite had the gall to rip money from our seniors—our grandmas and grandpas—here in Queensland. They wanted to take that money off them. When it comes to water projects—

**Dr Rowan** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Pause the clock. Member for Moggill, you seem to be picking up bad habits from the member for Buderim or he is channelling his ventriloquism to you. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr BUTCHER:** When it comes to water projects for regional councils, the LNP said when they were last in government that councils were sitting on a goldmine, including the Banana Shire Council. They used that as an excuse to cut the funding to councils for water projects. Under the LNP there would be no Building Our Regions in Queensland, no Mount Morgan pipeline, no Toowoomba-to-Warwick pipeline and certainly no Haughton pipeline in Townsville. The LNP's claims about water prices going up is a lie. They should check their figures. I say to the member for Nanango that they are wrong. Let's put the facts out there. Bulk water prices—

**Ms SIMPSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Resume your seat please, member for Gladstone. I will take some advice in relation to that. I was seeking to get the attention of the Clerk. Member for Gladstone, you have used unparliamentary language. I would ask that you withdraw.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I believe that has satisfied the point of order.

**Mr BUTCHER:** Let's put the facts out there. Bulk water prices under Labor have stayed down well below inflation. Prices between 2012 and 2015 under the LNP government went up at least 12 per cent every year. That was under those guys opposite when they were in government. There was a secret tax just to turn the tap on. The LNP in Queensland are a party of pretenders. We know that. They pretend to care about the cost of living, pretend to support our farmers in Queensland and pretend to care about Queensland.

Labor listens and we deliver. We will always support Queenslanders with cost-of-living measures here in this state without being told by the LNP, who managed to sack 14,000 people in Queensland. If we are talking about the cost of living, not having a job in Queensland under the LNP speaks volumes.

*(Time expired)*