




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Member for Broadwater

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Public Works) (2.43 pm): The people of Queensland are making an important decision this October. When they make that decision they deserve to know what the Leader of the Opposition actually stands for. It is hard to know what he stands for given he relies simply on slippery slogans. It is even harder to know when he runs away from the most basic of questions.

There are some very serious matters of public interest raised over the fact that the Leader of the Opposition was running a company so badly that it could not meet its costs and it could not pay its debts. That company went broke, with hundreds of families and businesses suffering, so much so that he has paid \$200,000 to clearly try to make the problem go away. If the member for Broadwater could not run a small training company properly then how can he run this state? What has been revealed by the ABC is deeply concerning for all Queenslanders. Queenslanders deserve a leader who is accountable and honest with them. What we have seen every step of the way—whether it is this issue or almost any other issue of substance—is that the Leader of the Opposition dodges and weaves questions to try to get away with the clearly secret or dodgy deals that he does.

It begs the question: if the media had not revealed these issues would he ever have fessed up? I put it to the Leader of the Opposition today: will he come clean to Queenslanders on the full story and not the lame explanation that he just gave in this House which frankly raises more questions than answers? He said, 'I came into the company on the promise of a major capital injection which did not eventuate.' I put it to the Leader of the Opposition: who made that promise? How much was the promise for? What did he offer in return for the promise? These are very serious questions. When he is answering them he also needs to tell the people of Queensland a whole range of other things. How did he secure a Newman government grant for companies to establish a call centre for jobs and training in Townsville? Did he disclose that the director of two companies was also a donor to his 2012 campaign? How did he become the sole director of SET Solutions, the training company included in the call centre venture, less than 12 months later? Why did he say creditors were paid when hundreds were not? Why do liquidators suspect he was trading while insolvent? Did he know that that was the case?

If this was all above board, as he suggested to this House a number of years ago, why did he make \$200,000 worth of payments including after he became opposition leader and after he made this statement to the House? Why did he keep \$200,000 in hush money payments a secret? Why did he never update his register of interests with the associated liability, as every single member of this House is required to? These are all questions that the opposition leader must answer.

Queenslanders are right to question whether the Leader of the Opposition can be trusted. They are right to question whether he is fit to lead this state. They are right to question who on the front bench knew about the \$200,000 of payments long after he told this place there were no questions to answer.

The fact is that he has not answered these questions. In fact, it seems he has no plans to based on the contribution we just heard. In fact, he does not front the media. He has not responded to media inquiries about it. He has not provided an explanation in this place. It does not pass the pub test.

There are a whole of range of questions that the Leader of the Opposition needs to answer. We heard a whole range of members of the crossbench come forward in defence—so-called pinnacles of integrity until one of those opposite is at the centre of the limelight. They try to talk about issues like housing, which I find pretty bizarre given the fact that their record is one of blocking investment and cutting funding. It is only a Labor government that can be trusted in October and the Leader of the Opposition needs to front the media and answer these very serious questions.