



Speech By  
**Melissa McMahon**


**MEMBER FOR MACALISTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2024

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**  
**APPROPRIATION BILL**  
**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**  
**Appropriation Bill**

**Cost of Living and Economics Committee, Report**

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (11.48 am): It is wonderful to follow the member for Maroochydore in this debate. I am really glad the Premier got to speak about our recreation and boat fishing after watching the member for Maroochydore's fishing expedition during the estimates process. What I have heard so far is that members of the opposition bemoan the fact that this government is ignoring the priorities of Queenslanders, but if they had asked questions that actually referred to the priorities of Queenslanders during estimates they would have learned about our record cost-of-living relief. The cost of living is the biggest issue facing Queenslanders, but you would not know it from the questions that were asked by the opposition at estimates.

I know that in my community and in Logan things like the electricity rebate are having a big impact on the cost of living. That was in the estimates documents, but you would not know it from the opposition's questions. The 20 per cent off rego—that is going to be making big savings in my community's pockets over the next 12 months—is a big issue in my local area and my constituents are loving it, but you would not know anything about that from the opposition's scrutiny of the estimates. Instead, those opposite focused on, as the shadow Treasurer focused on, small amounts. I will tell members what is a small amount: \$200,000. That is a small amount, and where is the scrutiny of that?

Let us get back to the estimates process and what was actually in the budget. Let us have a look at things like cost-of-living relief for our first home buyers. In estimates we found out that there is eligible tax relief in the budget—and this was able to be scrutinised at estimates—of \$360 million for first home buyers and increased first home owner grants worth \$209 million. That is money that will be helping Queenslanders. That is what Queenslanders worry about. They worry about the bills that are coming in their mailbox. They are not interested in any of the things that the opposition decided to waste time on in estimates.

Estimates is a scrutiny process. This is an opposition that continually complains that this is a government that hides or has no transparency, but it has the opportunity to ask ministers questions here in question time and at estimates senior public servants are there to ask questions of. However, what do members opposite do? They waste their time on the minutiae of process, not what actually matters to Queenslanders. Queenslanders want cost-of-living relief. Queenslanders want to know that they can afford their bills. Queenslanders want to know that they can put their kids in sport to have active lives. Queenslanders want to know if they can go to a hospital. Queenslanders want to know about the satellite hospitals that are going to help them see a doctor at a time when a kid has an ear infection. Was there a single question about that during estimates from the opposition? No!

Those opposite are not in touch with what Queenslanders want. They think Queenslanders are spending their time worrying about planes going to regional Queensland so the Premier can visit regional Queensland, but that is not what the people in Beenleigh are worried about. People in Beenleigh want to know what their next electricity bill is going to be. I can tell them: it is going to be zero, because this government has made decisions—whether it is our progressive coalmining royalties or whether it is our management of renewable energy—that bring down the cost of things. It is what is in the bills in Queenslanders' mailboxes and inboxes that are Queenslanders' priorities, not the minutiae we had in the committee.

As I said, there was an opportunity at estimates for the opposition to ask questions of senior public servants, but instead we always had the gotcha attempts. Senior Queensland public servants need to be on notice because it appears that the member for Maroochydore has taken it upon herself to be looking in the windows of senior public servants and their personal relationships to bring that up and drag it before the House. The peeping toms on the other side think that is what is important to Queenslanders. They want to know who our public servants are sleeping with! That is what the opposition is worried about. It is not worried about the cost of living. It is not worried about our infrastructure builds. It is just worried about political gotchas. After four years in this place there has not been a bill suggested or raised by the opposition that will do anything to make a difference to Queenslanders' cost of living and that will do anything to make a difference to Queensland's way of life and improving it for Queenslanders. Only this government does that, and those opposite failed at estimates to do that.