




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

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HELP TO BUY (COMMONWEALTH POWERS) BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.50 pm): It is always fun to follow the member for Bundaberg and the member for Bancroft because they give me so much ammunition to use against them. I am growing increasingly concerned with the bills that this government are bringing into the House. Instead of making things better, they are trying to patch up a broken system. We see that with their continual attacks on investors and on people who provide rental properties who have a right to manage their own properties. They are just making everything worse.

We have seen the government continually creating a big black hole, or a massive problem, and then trying to overcome that in the short term by providing some sort of subsidy and leaving behind massive hand grenades for the next government. I fully support a housing equity scheme that assists people into the market, but I think it needs to be done properly. The biggest problem with this scheme—

Mr Hinchliffe: There's a federal election next year. Run there.

Mr HART: Maybe the member for Sandgate would like to read the recommendations of the committee chair. This is the report of the committee chair and then there is a statement of reservation provided by the member for Lockyer and me in the back of it. We all agreed to recommendation 2, which reads:

That the Queensland Government continue to liaise with the Australian Government on the parameters of the Help to Buy Scheme to ensure that the volume of participants and places for targeted groups, purchase price caps, participant income levels and buy-out provisions are appropriate for Queensland.

If we are going to get our fair share in Queensland—the federal government has allocated billions of dollars for the 10,000 places in its plan—then we need to get this right. We need to get this right. The biggest problem we have at the moment is that we do not know any details about the plan. If the Minister for Housing would stop playing politics for five minutes, she could actually talk to her federal colleagues about providing some details to my federal colleagues so that they could make an informed decision on this particular bill. Like me, my federal colleagues know that Labor governments mess up everything that they try to do. Just allocating \$2 billion or \$3 billion to a project is not enough. It is not all about money. It should be about outcomes. We have already heard from our shadow minister today that, while the \$2 billion housing fund has purchased houses, it has not actually constructed any yet. That is the outcome that we need to see.

The member for Lockyer hit the nail on the head—buying houses off somebody else and putting them into this scheme does not add to the pool of houses that are available. It does not provide houses for the people who are living in their vans and on the streets. I was surprised, I must say, when the member for Bancroft said that homelessness was dwindling in his electorate. Maybe they have come to my electorate. I will table these photos of some people living in their vans in the Minister for Housing's electorate.

Tabled paper: Bundle of photographs depicting vans parked in a Gold Coast park [1033](#).

They are very close to her office. I am sure she would feel just the way I do when I see people living in their vans and on the street in my electorate—I want to do something for them. As I said, I fully support a home equity scheme. In fact, I designed one a few years back that we might be able to use, and I would be happy to share some details with the housing minister, if she were at all interested.

We need to get the parameters right. With the income threshold being set apparently at \$90,000 for a single person and \$120,000 for a couple, I fear that we may be setting up some of these people for failure in the future. If they cannot afford something that we encourage them into because their income is low, they may have an issue with paying their mortgages in future and then we just make the whole situation worse. If those thresholds were lifted a bit, then those people would be more stable and more likely to succeed in this process. I think that is something that we need to do.

Currently, there is a cap on the purchase price of \$700,000 in a capital city or regional centre. I did a bit of a scout around my very small electorate on the Gold Coast, which takes in Palm Beach, Varsity Lakes and Burleigh. The minister might be surprised to know that the average price of a house in Palm Beach is \$1.68 million, not \$700,000. The average price of a unit in Palm Beach is \$995,000. There might be a one-bedroom, one-bathroom, one-car-park unit somewhere in Palm Beach for \$700,000, but I would struggle to find it if I were looking for one now. It is the same in Burleigh—the average price is \$1.4 million for a house and \$927,000 for a unit, and Varsity Lakes is pretty similar. The government has had a number of talkfests and solutions have supposedly come out of them. As I said right at the start, no real results appear to be coming from this.

I take exception to some comments that the member for Bundaberg made about my good mate the member for Burnett. The member for Burnett worked in QBuild for 30 years, so he might know what goes on in QBuild. He is a registered builder so he would have quite an idea on how much it costs to build a house. If the member for Burnett comes in here and tells us that a tiny house costing \$750,000 is not the best way to spend the government's money to achieve an outcome, then I believe the member for Burnett. I do not believe the government and I do not believe the renter, the Minister for Housing, who has no life experience whatsoever.

This government continue to attack negative gearing. They attack investors. By the look of the budget that was handed down today, we are going to see more taxes, even though we continually hear promises that there will be no new taxes under their government. No, that was the federal leader of the Labor party—'No new carbon tax under a government I lead'. We cannot believe anything this government say. They continually come into this place trying to rewrite history. They continually try to blame those on this side of the House for their failures.

I say to the members on the other side that I am going to support this bill because it is federal money and, if we can get it right, maybe it will do some good and we can actually get some houses built. Maybe when the federal government changes again next year and we get a decent government in, we will see that come to fruition. Bring on October 2024. There are two very good reasons I want that to come around quickly. One is that I will be retiring, so this will be one of the last speeches I give in this House. The other one is that we have the opportunity to show Labor the door in 2024.