




Speech By  
**Michael Hart**

**MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE  
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; STATE FINANCIAL  
INSTRUCTIONS AND METWAY MERGER AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (3.23 pm): I rise to give my last speech on the budget in this House—No. 13, I think it is. Hopefully it is a lucky 13 and not an unlucky 13. It is my 13th budget response and nothing much has changed over the last few years with Labor budgets. Unfortunately, they have again missed their opportunity to actually do something with this budget to fix the underlying issues of previous budgets and previous decisions this government has made. This could have been a budget for the next four years. Instead, it is only for the next four months.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr HART:** Does the member know what they say about repetition? It eventually becomes the truth, and it is the truth. The reality is this is a budget for the next four months to try to con the people of Queensland into voting for Labor once again.

Initially, I will talk about the Burleigh electorate and what is in the budget for it because I would run out of time if I talked about how bad this government is and how bad this budget is. When we look at doing what matters for the Gold Coast, this glossy brochure that comes with the budget documents includes a map with five dot points. There are 10 state seats on the Gold Coast but there are only five dot points. There is a little barcode that says that if you want to see more you can zoom in. It takes me to another page, which is a very similar page, with 17 items. There are 17 items on the Gold Coast for the 650,000 people who live there and 10 state seats. That is how serious the Labor Party takes the Gold Coast. I guess that is because Labor holds only one state seat on the Gold Coast with the seat of Gaven. That is not going to last very long because Bianca Stone is coming to that seat. We are going to see two new members on the Gold Coast. When I retire Hermann Vorster is going to take over. The Labor Party will have two shiny new Gold Coast members to have a go at and those members will be in government.

What we are seeing in this budget is subsidies of \$11.218 billion, including \$3.739 billion for electricity. I am supportive of people receiving these subsidies because this government has put them in a place where they need them to survive. That is one of the biggest problems we have here. Instead of fixing the underlying issues—the real cost-of-living issues that people are faced with—all we are doing is subsidising them for the next six months just to get through the next election.

Let us look at electricity, for instance. The members on the other side are very keen to talk about the 43 per cent increase in electricity that they blame us for, but the reality is that the same thing that is happening now happened back in 2010, 2011 and 2012. The Labor Party is spending a lot of money on a cost recovery system like electricity and that is flowing through to people's bills. The other day I heard the Treasurer or the Premier say that no-one is ever going to say that electricity should cost more.

Obviously they have forgotten about that infamous letter that Andrew Fraser sent to Martin Ferguson, and I will table that for the benefit of the House.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 5 February 2009, from the former treasurer of Queensland, Hon. Andrew Fraser MP, to the then federal Minister for Resources and Energy and Minister for Tourism, Hon. Martin Ferguson MP, regarding a review of weighted average cost of capital for regulated transmission and distribution businesses [1064](#).

In that letter he said that the regulated asset base recovery was not enough and he wanted it to be higher. He wanted electricity prices for the people of Queensland to be higher, and that is what we inherited in 2012 when we were elected. We basically saw increases of 15 per cent a year locked in for that term. That is where that 43 per cent came in and now we are seeing it again. Why is this happening? For years and years we had cheap electricity in Queensland. The only real thing that has changed is the attempt to put in place a carbon tax and the ideological rush to renewables. That is what has led to higher electricity prices. Members opposite can smirk at that, but if renewables are as cheap as they say they are why are our electricity bills going up? Why? The reality is that all of the renewable energy that has been put in place is privately owned. This government does not own any renewable energy projects yet. They have not built anything.

They are using subsidies. They are using power offtake agreements at inflated rates that have pushed our electricity prices up in order to reach this renewable energy target. I was quite happy today to hear the Leader of the Opposition say that the Pioneer-Burdekin scheme would be scrapped because that was another 20, 30, 40, \$50 billion that would have added to the price of people's electricity bills. For the benefit of members opposite, the reality is there is no business case for this pumped hydro scheme, there is no environmental study done yet for this project and it cannot be built in the timeframe that they are talking about. The people up there do not want it. It has no social licence. The government is hanging its hat on this because it knows that when the sun does not shine the solar panels do not work and when the wind does not blow the turbines do not produce electricity and it has to have thermal power generation to supply the people of Queensland or otherwise the lights will go out. They are the facts. If you do not have some form of storage this whole system does not work. The government is hanging its hat on one big storage and even that project at that size would not be enough. It is very sensible for the Leader of the Opposition to say that we should have a number of these around the place. Pumped hydro does work. We do need it. Batteries work. We do need them, but we have to do in it a sensible fashion. This government was putting all of its eggs in one basket and it was just not going to work.

In the last 10 years that I have been watching Labor Party budgets I have seen this government spend more and more money in every budget and the outcomes have been less and less over that time. We are seeing money spent on crime and we are seeing crime increase. We are seeing more and more money spent on health and yet there are ambulances parked at our hospitals and the outcomes for people in the health system are not what they should be. The price of electricity has gone up—I have already talked about that—and we have a massive problem in housing. The government put in place a \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund and over three years they have built zero houses. It is not all about money; it is about outcomes. It does not matter how much money you spend on something if you do not achieve an outcome. This government has put in place best practice industrial conditions which mean that every project it builds costs more and more money with less and less outcomes. We saw that with the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program blowing out by \$2.4 billion because of problems that the minister put in place. We have seen every transport project blow out. We are yet to see how much Cross River Rail blows out to. When the facts come out about that, I think it will be a shock to everyone. We have 43,000 people on the social housing waiting list at the moment. New housing approvals are down 30 per cent.

One has to wonder why the Premier would think that the people of Queensland would forget what has happened in the last nine years. In his speech the Treasurer said it is about what is going to happen in the future and not about what happened in the past and that people should not be expressing their opinion about what happened in the past. I would say that that is exactly what elections are about. They are about people expressing their opinion about how bad this government has been and throwing it out the door. I can see that well and truly coming. This morning it was great to listen to the Leader of the Opposition, David Crisafulli. He gave a cracking speech—one of the best speeches I have heard in my 12 years in this place. For some reason the Labor Party are surprised that the policies are starting to roll out now. They are pretty dramatic policies that they have not even thought about. The members over there can say we copied some of those things, but that is not the truth. We have been working on these things for quite a while.

**Mr Sullivan** interjected.

**Mr HART:** There is lots more to come, member for Stafford. Watch this space. Removing the stamp duty tax from first home buyers when they build a new house is a fantastic idea. It is scrapping a tax. When have we heard about anybody scrapping a tax before? It has been a long time since I have heard of a tax being scrapped. I think it happened once when somebody stood on a hill and said, 'There will be no carbon tax under a government I lead', and then that tax was scrapped. I think it has been quite a while since that.

A policy that impressed me was the change to allow people to rent out one of their rooms and still allow them to be eligible for the first home buyers and stamp duty concessions. We are in a housing crisis, a crime crisis, a health crisis. We are in crisis after crisis after crisis. This is important to allow young people who are trying to buy their first house to earn some form of income in that first year and not have to suffer by not having access to the first home buyers grant or those tax concessions. Raising the threshold to \$700,000 and partial concessions to \$800,000 are all good things that will help people get into housing. That is something that should worry every member in the House. I am concerned about whether some of my children and grandchildren will be able to afford houses moving forward. These are the sorts of policies that we need in place to encourage that.

The members of the Labor Party should be prepared for more policies to come. Policies will be released at a time when they cannot be pinched and copied. The Labor Party is pretty good at copying and pasting. There is talk about this being a new Miles government which is not responsible for anything that has happened in the past. I thought I would have a quick browse through the job history of Premier Miles in this place. He was the minister for the environment; he was the minister for health and ambulance services—so maybe he has some responsibility for what has happened in the health services; he was the minister for regional development and manufacturing and minister for water—so maybe he has something to do with the increase in water bills that we are seeing around the place; he was in charge of planning, infrastructure and local government—so maybe he has got something to do with the problems we have in the housing area; and he was the Deputy Premier. He has had responsibility for pretty much everything that has gone wrong in this place. Is it any wonder that he is trying to hide from his history and create some sort of smokescreen so that the people of Queensland cannot see what sort of person he is and what sort of government this is. The people of Queensland can see straight through this. We are going to have a new government in October. I will be watching from the sidelines. I wish those new members all the best for the future, along with everybody else in this House.