



Speech By  
**Patrick Weir**


**MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE**

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

**Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee, Report**

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.14 pm): I rise to speak as a member of the Clean Economy Jobs, Resources and Transport Committee on the recent estimates hearing. It was a very long day. I would like to thank all members of the committee—the chair, the member for Redlands, and the members for Mundingburra, Lytton, Toowoomba North and Callide. Although we have differing opinions at times, by and large we work fairly well together, as we did during estimates. That is not to say it was perfect, but the member for Redlands did fly the flag very well as the chair.

We have heard about the number of questions that were asked and the huge advantage that the opposition had—I have heard a figure up to 80 per cent. I am not disputing any of that, but asking questions does not equate to getting answers. Even though the opposition asked a lot more questions than the government on a number of subjects, the questions were very light. There was no greater example of that than during the energy portfolio on one particular topic: the Pioneer-Burdekin dam. We asked the minister, the director-general and departmental representatives, ‘What is it going to cost?’ We heard that the original figure of \$12 billion will change, but not one of them could give a figure as to what that project will cost. That is of real concern to every Queensland taxpayer.

We heard Brendan Worrall, the Auditor-General, state that he was concerned that that project would not be financially viable, that it will become too expensive. We have heard that it will be in excess of \$20 billion. If that is what it is going to cost, we need to know. It did not matter how many times that question was asked because we still got no answer. We asked when the detailed analytical study would be released. All we know is that it will be after the election, which is quite convenient.

When answering questions, the minister referred to previous governments, blamed federal governments and talked about senators. He talked about everybody else but did not answer the questions. There was a question about Project Kruger. The member for Bonney tried to pursue that line of questioning but it created a fair bit of confusion because some witnesses seemed to know what it was but the minister did not. We never really got to the bottom of that one.

One thing that really stood out to me in this estimates process was the lack of Dorothy Dixter questions about hydrogen. Hydrogen was basically not spoken about. In estimates hearings in previous years, hydrogen was front and centre. Suddenly, it has completely dropped off the radar.

It was interesting to hear the Minister for Resources say yesterday that everything is wonderful in the mining industry, that there is growth and that coal is doing well. That is because those approvals were done 10, 15 and 20 years ago. That is why those projects are expanding. That is why there is exploration. The problem will be evident in the years ahead. A lag will follow the uncertainty that has been cast upon the industry. That is coming, and for a minister to not realise that is really disturbing.

I cannot talk about mining without expressing my sympathy for the recent death of a miner at the Byerwen Mine. Dale Last prosecuted safety throughout that section of the hearing and it is something we all hold dear in this House. I am sure I speak for both sides when I express my sympathy to the family of that miner.

In terms of the transport portfolio, there is no doubt the current transport minister went to the previous transport minister and asked him, 'How do I give answers without giving an answer?' because he followed the pattern of the previous transport minister almost to the letter. It was uncanny. The state of our roads and the delays with repairs are concerning.

I cannot finish without thanking the staff of the committee, particularly our research director, Amanda Ward. She is taking a well-earned break. We wish her all the best for her time off.