




Speech By
Tim Mander

MEMBER FOR EVERTON

Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2024

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

Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee, Report

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (2.15 pm): It is great to follow the member for Bundaberg in this debate. I trust you have kept your teacher registration up, because in a couple of months time you will be practising that profession again.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Direct your comments through the chair, member for Everton.

Mr MANDER: When I am in town for parliament—I know many people do this—I go for a walk in the morning. One of the most disturbing things I have noticed in recent times is the number of homeless people in this city, on the riverbanks and underneath the bridges. Today in the paper we see reports of homeless people in tents opposite the fire station at Roma Street, just before the William Jolly Bridge. That is happening right under the nose of this government.

During this estimates hearing we found out how bad the situation is—not just in Brisbane but in every town right across this state. Every time you go to a regional city, people will talk about where their local tent city is—down on the riverbank or in the local parks. It is an absolute disgrace. It is symbolic of the utter failure of this government to house our most vulnerable people. Through estimates, we found out that last financial year 145,000 nights of hotel accommodation was used to house homeless people. That is a nearly 30 per cent increase on the year before. Then when we asked what it would be next year, they had absolutely no idea—no planning, no forecasting. Some of these people were in hotels for six months. It is unbelievable that they do not have other transition plans. The minister goes out and says, ‘Anybody who needs a roof over their head, come to us.’ Then they whack them in a hotel and forget about them.

The other thing that is very difficult to accept is the number of people on the social housing waiting list. A week or two before the estimates hearings, we asked the minister to back up the commitment she made to publish the social housing waiting list numbers on a regular basis. We had not had figures since December. Guess what happened. It was not released on the Friday, at that press conference. That night, the minister—after refusing to do it during the day—released it secretly to one source. They have the hide to say that they are transparent. What did we find out? It was 45,473 people—an increase over the last seven years of 53 per cent. We had 5½ thousand added to the list just in the last 12 months. Today I heard the minister talk about the figure suddenly becoming available in the afternoon, after pressure was applied to them by the media and by the LNP. I think that type of behaviour from a government that tries to make out it is transparent is a bit ‘how ya going’.

We have an absolute crisis in this state for which this government has been directly responsible. For the last 10 years the homelessness rate has increased dramatically as has the social housing waiting list. Those opposite come out and make an announcement—maybe a couple a week. They made one last week about 47 homes for older women. When is it going to start? When is it going to finish? There is no mention of it. They say, 'It is probably going to start next year.' The Housing Investment Fund has been in place now for three years. However, not one person, not one Queenslander, is in a home that was built by the Housing Investment Fund despite promise after promise. This is coming from a side that believes they stick up for those people who are vulnerable. I can tell them that is not the feedback we get. The feedback we get in our offices every day is that people are sick of this government. They are sick of the announcements that are made and not backed up. When are they going to realise that announcements do not house people? People want to see results and outcomes, not false promises, not TikTok videos, not Facebook. They want results, they want houses and this government has failed.