



Speech By
Christopher Whiting

MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee, Report

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (7.45 pm): I rise to speak to this report in place of the member for Inala. I am standing in her stead here, looking at the notes she has prepared. I know that she will be listening to this. Thank you, member for Inala, for this opportunity. I did not get to see much at all of these particular examinations, but I have read through the notes and the report and I do find it fascinating. There is one thing I do want to know—

Mr Smith: What about Emu Swamp Dam?

Mr WHITING: I was just about to say that we will be talking about the member for Southern Downs here, so, Deputy Speaker Lister, you will have to separate yourself from this. How many times from this corner of the chamber did we hear that call in the last term, what about Emu Swamp Dam? I am going to say it as well. What about Emu Swamp Dam? From what I understand, there is no money as yet for Emu Swamp Dam. Am I right: it is not appearing? There is nothing there. What a shame!

I say to the member for Southern Downs, whom I am addressing in the third person here: I am sorry, but we are going to keep on bringing this up. Deputy Speaker Lister, your strong voice reminded us of this so many times. Member for Southern Downs, we are going to hold you accountable for this. I think it is a legitimate issue. So many times we heard the bellowing from here, what about Emu Swamp Dam? We will now take up the mantle of asking the same question of this government. The member may not be able to ask it, but we will be asking it: 'What about Emu Swamp Dam?' I might leave it at that. I do not want to make the Deputy Speaker feel more uncomfortable than he is at the moment.

I will repeat what I said in the House when talking to other reports: what we learned through the estimates process is that the LNP cannot keep their promises and they cannot keep their word. Instead of delivering the fresh start that they promised, what they have delivered is the same old stuff from the LNP—the cuts, cancellations and chaos. Now add in a healthy dose of self-entitlement as well.

I will call on the member for Bundaberg again. Am I right in saying that the land for the second Bundaberg fire station is there but there is no money to build it? Is that correct?

Mr Smith: No money.

Mr WHITING: It is not there—cuts, cancellation and chaos. The land was bought for the fire station, but what we learned from estimates is that the money is not there, and that is an absolute

shame. For the stretched firefighters the call-outs are still coming, but this government's answer is to do nothing for them. As I said: cuts, cancellation and chaos.

Speaking of cuts and chaos, one of the things that was discovered during this estimates hearing was that under Labor 205,000 small businesses were eligible to receive a \$650 energy rebate but under the LNP I am informed that is gone. There is not a dollar of energy bill relief in the first budget. Now that is cruel cuts—

Mr Head interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): Member for Callide, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr WHITING: Do not get me started, please, member for Callide. One of the other things that we did discover is that disaster recovery has been turned by the LNP into jobs for mates. Meetings with state recovery coordinators used to be with impartial public servants. That is out the door. Now we will be seeing meetings with known LNP operatives. Once again, it is a salve to their sense of self-entitlement.

One of the other things that was discovered by this estimates is that life-saving safety upgrades for Rural Fire Service appliances have been stalled. There are no new appliances ordered under this budget. Every one that will be delivered this year has been funded by Labor. As I said, I was not there but I have read the report and what we have seen is another litany of cuts, chaos and cancellation. It is the same old LNP. I will finish by saying 'Emu Swamp Dam'.

(Time expired)