




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.34 pm): The member for Pumicestone and some of the newer LNP members who have been contributing to this debate have not been around for long, so I will give them a little bit of a history lesson.

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr McCALLUM: I take the interjection from the member for Bonney, who has been waiting for so long to have some kind of housing policy that he can call his own—but back to the new members from the LNP. The opposition supports exempting general practitioners from payroll tax because it is Labor policy. The changes that were made by the Miles government at the time enabled practitioners to avoid being subjected to payroll tax. In fact, the action that was taken by Labor at that time was supported by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners. The RACGP were encouraging other states like New South Wales to follow Queensland's lead. We made it clear when we announced our support for an exemption that there would not be any cost to the budget because we factored in that medical centres were never going to pay the payroll tax. The exemption will not cost the government any money in terms of forgone revenue, something I will come to later in my contribution in relation to other elements of the bill.

The only reason there is a bill before this House is to respond to the obscene scare campaign that the LNP ran before the election. I was almost going to take an interjection from a member who was not in their seat but they caught themselves! Evidence of just how ridiculous the LNP's scare campaign on this was can be found right here in the House back on 14 September 2023, when the member for Woodridge and then treasurer said—

Queensland, of course, was the first state to offer an amnesty relating to payments to contracted GPs—an amnesty that is in effect until 30 June 2025. Other states have followed our lead, instituting amnesties of their own.

Labor made a commitment to removing the payroll tax prior to the election. In fact, a media report from 9 October last year in the *Brisbane Times* states—

Doctors' groups have welcomed a ... election pledge to exempt GPs from paying payroll tax, a move they say will help keep medical costs down.

Indeed, the same article in the *Brisbane Times* goes on to say—

... Opposition Leader David Crisafulli promised to do the same in one of his first commitments of the campaign ...

He popped up from behind the small-target strategy he was running to announce a policy that Labor had already implemented.

Moving on to some of the other elements of the bill, this is a bill about revenue. Can I just say that revenue in the state of Queensland under the Crisafulli LNP government is going to take an enormous hit. We found that out yesterday when Standard & Poor's announced they are preparing to downgrade Queensland's forecast from stable to negative based on—

Mr Stevens: Because of your treasurer.

Mr McCALLUM: I know that those opposite try to blame Labor for this. They do not want to stand up and take any responsibility whatsoever. Let's listen to what Standard & Poor's actually said. They said that the revised outlook was from stable to negative. They stated—

... we see elevated uncertainty over Queensland's fiscal outlook. This is because the government—the LNP government—

describes MYFER as the previous government's "last budget update" and hasn't incorporated its own fiscal strategy or all of its decisions in fiscal forecasts.

No fiscal strategy! That puts paid to the ridiculous contention those opposite are putting forward that somehow the S&P downgrade is Labor's fault. It is the LNP Crisafulli government's fault and independent credit rating agencies know it; that is expressly what they said in their advice yesterday. Quite frankly, I am not surprised. This is a Treasurer who around Christmas spent more than a third of his time on leave, so it is no wonder that our credit forecast is going down.

I move on to the transfer duty threshold. As other speakers from the opposition have contributed during this debate, we will support practical measures that do help home owners and improve housing affordability. However, as other speakers have raised during this debate, there are real concerns around the application of the removal of transfer duty in this bill in that it is not targeted. What is proposed in this bill is a blunt instrument that will drive an inequitable outcome when it is applied. For example, when somebody is buying a multimillion dollar property in LNP electorates like Broadwater or Bonney, they are going to see a much bigger discount than people in my electorate of Bundamba who are seeking to buy their own home. In fact, during the committee process it was also—

Mr O'Connor: So vote against it.

Mr McCALLUM: I take the interjection from the member for Bonney who, once again, like most of the LNP members opposite, is so simplistic and so reductive that he always brings a debate on a bill back to a binary proposition and cannot entertain any kind of detailed debate over the technicalities of the bill. We will not see it because this debate will be guillotined in about 15 minutes time and it will get rammed through. Then we will see Queenslanders, we will see rich people with deep pockets buying multimillion dollar mansions getting an enormous discount thanks to the Crisafulli LNP government when battlers out there will be seeing a much smaller benefit, and that is no accident. That is no accident at all.

As previous opposition speakers have indicated, what is proposed in this bill will not really change the dial when it comes to housing affordability in Queensland. Whilst the measures that are contained in this bill are going to be supported by the opposition, what they represent, just like the Adult Crime, Adult Time laws that were passed last year, is underdeveloped and not fully progressed policy and legislation that should have been done a lot better. Those measures should have been more targeted; they should have been able to deliver a much more equitable outcome when it comes to housing affordability right across Queensland, but they do not because the Crisafulli government has not done the work.

We look forward to calling out the LNP government when it comes to their incomplete work and their lack of detail when it comes to the laws they have drafted, just like they have a dearth of legislation in this House at the moment. We have seen the stalling this week because they have no legislative process at all.