




Speech By
Trevor Watts

MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH

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REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.55 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill and speak on behalf of the people of Toowoomba and south-west Queensland. People in my part of the world are very pleased to see this legislation. There are housing pressures in Charleville, in Quilpie, in Roma. There are housing pressures all throughout the south-west and certainly in Toowoomba. We want to help young people move into the south-west and think about careers, whether they be teachers or nurses or whether they want to work in agriculture. We want opportunities for them, and removing stamp duty means that they can move around the state. After they finish their university degree, they can go into a regional area and buy affordable housing and not have to pay stamp duty. The Greens would much rather see them stay in the CBD and try to work out how they are going to buy a multimillion dollar house, which is just a nonsense. We want these people to come to the south-west. We do not want stamp duty to be a barrier for a first home buyer in the south-west, so having them come out to our area and not have to pay that stamp duty is a great incentive for them to get into home ownership.

Earlier in this debate I heard a member talking about the downgrade that was faced and how it was nothing to do with the Labor government. I just want to clarify a couple of issues. After 34 months in government, in 2014-15 the interest bill paid by Queenslanders was \$3.9 billion. That was the interest bill being paid on debt as we left government. After 10 years of Labor being in government, the interest bill at the last Labor budget—the 2024 budget—was \$7.73 billion, so a substantial increase in that 10 years in the interest bill. How many affordable homes could be built for \$3 billion? Probably a few, but just not by Labor.

When we look at the MYFER that was put forward, the true cost of Labor's completely incompetent mismanagement of its spending over the period of time of governance is \$9.9 billion, and that is just the interest. That is not to get the debt down; that is just what the people of Queensland have to pay because those now on the opposition benches could not control their spending. Costs are being driven up and cost of living is hard because everything that the Labor Party touched has driven up the costs for the people of Queensland. Therefore, it is great to be part of a Crisafulli government that is providing some cost-of-living relief, particularly around home ownership, and better access to health care. We know that under Labor there was this moment of consternation by medicos as to whether they were going to have to restructure their entire business, whether they were going to pay tax, how it was going to work and what was going to happen. It was very unsettling for people who have invested a lot of money in setting up a business so they can provide health services.

We are told by some of those opposite that what we are doing is completely unnecessary. We are told by others sitting next to them that they had already put an amnesty in and so therefore it was not necessary. The amnesty is going to run out. If this was not necessary—if this was, as we are told, something that was not required—then why was the amnesty put in in the first place? The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners and the Australian Medication Association warned that it would force doctors to raise their fees or, much worse, particularly in my community and communities

west of us, shut their doors. Health services in regional and remote Queensland, particularly out in the south-west, are pretty hard to come by. It is difficult for some people to keep their practices operating. Having to pay a tax because the former treasurer Cameron Dick could not manage the spending and the former main roads minister could not control expenditure—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Member, could I ask you to resume your seat.

Mr WATTS: Thank you very much, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pursuant to the motion agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bill having expired, I call the Treasurer to reply to the second reading debate.