



Speech By
Christopher Whiting


MEMBER FOR BANCROFT

Record of Proceedings, 26 March 2026

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (SUPPLEMENTARY 2024-2025) BILL;
APPROPRIATION (SUPPLEMENTARY 2024-2025) BILL**

Resumed from 25 March (see p. 802), on motion of Mr Janetzki—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (11.43 am), continuing: As I was saying last night, we are in a situation where under the LNP Queensland has the second highest rate of inflation: electricity prices have gone up 43 per cent, rents have gone up 4.9 per cent, housing costs have gone up 7.4 per cent and insurance, as the shadow minister said last night, is up four per cent—double the national average. We have a cost-of-living crisis. It is appropriate that the LNP use the appropriation bill to deliver cost-of-living relief. That is absolutely essential. Labor used these bills to deliver the \$1,000 electricity rebate for households and the \$300 rebate for small businesses. These are absolutely important in delivering cost-of-living relief.

There was genuine relief when we were explaining to people that they will get \$1,000 off their electricity bill. People loved it and they were relieved. It really made a difference in their lives. We are at a point now where those people in home parks especially had built up this lovely big bank of electricity rebates and now that has gone they all of a sudden are having to pay electricity bills again. They are feeling the pinch of the cost of living. Labor's rebates were genuine, heartfelt cost-of-living relief. Last night the member for Coomera said that this was a last-ditch attempt to buy votes.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr WHITING: I think it shows the prism through which they view this cost-of-living relief.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): The member for Coomera will cease his interjections.

Mr WHITING: They only look at it in terms of what is to their political advantage. I emphasise that this delivered genuine relief to those working-class Queensland families who absolutely needed that relief. We delivered it for them. The appropriation bill delivered cost-of-living relief in terms of 50-cent fares. We have heard a bit about that today. There is one 'Mr 50-Cent Fares' in this state and that is the Leader of the Opposition. Everyone knows that. The LNP has jumped on the bandwagon, once again looking at it through the prism of political advantage. When it was first brought out they labelled it a con job and unsustainable. Another bandwagon moment we have seen is the \$200 FairPlay vouchers. That was a real cost-of-living relief measure delivered by Labor through budgets and bills like this. It made a difference.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr WHITING: The member for Morayfield pushed for the expansion of that program. I know it has made a huge difference to working families in our area. The LNP could use these supplementary bills to deliver cost-of-living relief, but we are not going to see that. They will, for example, not use this to

deliver any meaningful relief in the provision of affordable housing. Instead they will stick to the cuts they are already making to those large lots of publicly owned land at Mango Hill, South Brisbane and Northshore Hamilton. They have stripped affordable housing provisions from those developments, as well as the fast-track provisions where a developer could fast-track their development if they gave 15 per cent over to affordable housing. There were around 30,000 homes in projects that were affected by this. There is no meaningful measure to help the provision of affordable housing. There are only cuts.

Where in this bill are those measures that make rents cheaper? Where are the measures that provide more affordable housing? What is contained in the appropriation bill to lower the price of electricity? At the moment, instead of measures to lower the price of electricity, we have measures that kill off renewable energy projects. Renewable energy is the cheapest form of electricity in the market.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr WHITING: This sets them off every time. They are cancelling wind farms, cancelling battery projects, cancelling public investment in these projects.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera is warned under the standing orders.

Mr WHITING: The way they can force up electricity prices is cancel these renewable energy projects. The LNP could use this appropriation bill to further fund crucial services. In my electorate, while Labor was in government the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program delivered 2,159 jobs. That is 2,000 families whose lives were changed because they got training and jobs through this program. What I am hearing is that those community-based organisations in my area are facing a cessation of that funding. Younity, for example, has had six people working on delivering those programs. They are going to have to sack them all because their funding is facing a cliff. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is a rolled-gold program that has been successful in preventing youth crime and family breakdown.

RAYS, Redcliffe Area Youth Scheme, has learned in the last couple of days that funding for their Safe Space project is going to be coming to an end. This is a mental health service. It works after-hours. It is peer led. It keeps people out of the emergency department in the local hospital. It not only changes lives but also saves lives. They are facing a cessation of funding. This is during a week where we have had a suicide prevention breakfast here at Parliament House.

This bill could fund those community services and they are needed more than ever. Instead, we look at what the LNP is actually delivering through this appropriation bill. As we have heard the shadow treasurer say, this is delivering money for consultants. The LNP have said that they will fund their election commitments through the savings they are making by not going down the path of using consultants, but the point is that they are going to miss their cap. They had a \$3 billion cap in the 2025 financial year and they are going to miss it by \$1 billion. Over four years they need to find, I think, \$6.8 billion in savings by not using consultants. They have not made a good start. They have already missed out on reaching the cap. They are failing to find the savings to fund their election commitments. I will not speak too much longer on this bill—

A government member: Good.

Mr WHITING: I have changed my mind. I was not going to, but I have changed my mind.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members to my right. Member for Bancroft, you have one minute and 52 seconds.

Mr WHITING: I know, and I will try to use it all. I emphasise that governments can use supplementary appropriation bills to help Queensland families. More than ever, we need cost-of-living relief for working-class communities and working Queensland families. I emphasise again that under the LNP the state is facing inflation that is the second highest in the nation. Electricity prices have gone up 43 per cent under the LNP. Rents are going up 4.9 per cent. We have a rental crisis and there is very little in this appropriation bill to help fix that. Housing costs are going up 7.4 per cent. Throughout North Queensland and Far North Queensland, insurance costs have gone up four per cent, which is double the national average. We have a cost-of-living crisis unfolding under the LNP. In the area of insurance, the effects of climate change are becoming more and more apparent throughout Queensland, especially in the north of Queensland. Insurance is going up because of the effects of this particular crisis.

I emphasise again that the LNP really does need to view these bills as an opportunity to deliver cost-of-living relief to ordinary working Queenslanders. In this world, more than ever that is what they need. They need someone to back them, as Labor did with our \$1,000 electricity rebates. That is the kind of initiative we need to see in these bills.