




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

Record of Proceedings, 26 March 2026

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (SUPPLEMENTARY 2024-2025) BILL;
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 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (12.41 pm): What a contribution from the member for Hervey Bay! He should absolutely take his own advice and stop digging. Beware the law of holes! Calmly and methodically put down the shovel. Stop digging up, member for Hervey Bay.

I would like to begin my contribution by responding to some of the remarks of the Treasurer in his introductory speech when he criticised Labor for bringing forward supplementary appropriation bills during our term in government. I find it interesting that the Treasurer would criticise us for bringing forward funding that delivered real cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders through \$1,000 energy rebates. This is the same Treasurer who cut those rebates. That is what the Crisafulli LNP government did when it came to budget appropriations. The very first thing they did was make everybody's electricity bill \$1,000 more expensive in the middle of an affordability crisis that has only got worse under their watch. That is disgraceful. It was not just the \$1,000 rebate for every Queenslander; hardworking small businesses had their \$300 small business rebate cut as well.

Under this government's watch, CPI has shown the following: electricity prices have increased by 43.2 per cent; rents have gone up by almost five per cent; household costs across-the-board have generally increased by 7.4 per cent; and insurance costs have increased by 4.4 per cent. This is the legacy of the Crisafulli LNP government and their absolute refusal to take any action that will help Queenslanders with affordability and escalating costs. We are seeing that again with the fuel crisis that has been spoken about a lot this week, as it should be. The government refuse to act on that.

A number of previous speakers in this debate have referenced consultancy spends as part of budget appropriations, and I too am going to talk about that. The Treasurer made a promise to Queenslanders that under his watch there would be a reduction in the spend on consultancies in the Crisafulli LNP government. That has turned out to be a false promise, and we have seen that through the appropriation bills and in recent public reports.

The Treasurer said that the Crisafulli government was going to pay for their election commitments by saving billions of dollars in consultancies, but what we have actually seen is they have exceeded the cap they set for themselves. They have missed their own target by \$1 billion when it comes to the spend on consultants. This is a key government commitment that is lying in tatters under this Treasurer. I note that media reports from earlier this month said that Queensland's consultancy spend had soared to a staggering \$4 billion, which has heaped pressure on the Treasurer to deliver on his promises. Last financial year the Auditor-General revealed that spending on contractors and consultants had increased by \$474 million. This has sparked warnings that the government must now sack consultants, slow spending on public servant wages and find savings to avoid a major economic downgrade. The scene is set for the classic LNP cuts, and we are seeing it being borne out in reality.

Mrs Frecklington: You are just speaking rubbish, mate.

Mr McCALLUM: Deputy Speaker, the interjections from the member for Nanango—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kempton): Take your seat for a moment please. Member for Nanango, can you use proper parliamentary titles. I do not think 'mate' quite fits the bill.

Mrs Frecklington: The member for Bundamba is speaking rubbish. Sorry.

Mr McCALLUM: I say through you, Deputy Speaker, to the member for Nanango that people in glass houses should not throw any stones. What a train wreck press conference that was: 'I can't be any more transparent than that.'

Mrs Frecklington: How can you be any more transparent than that? I was very clear.

Mr McCALLUM: Moving on from the member's interjections and getting back to the LNP cuts—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr McCALLUM: Come in spinner! There are cuts and sackings among our hardworking public servants. Look at our rail workers. Under this government, train station workers are having their hours cut and they now face earning up to \$30,000 less. This will affect communities like mine because train stations at Ebbw Vale, Riverview and Goodna will be locked on the weekend and the toilets will be locked. Kids will be going home after school on Monday to Friday through unstaffed stations because station staff have had their hours cut and are finishing at 1 pm instead of 7 pm. Passengers with a disability or in a wheelchair will not have station staff there to place ramps between the platform and the train to get them onto the train. This is what the government's cuts will lead to and it is an absolute shame. There are cuts to radiographers. These frontline healthcare workers are having their wages substantially cut. Deputy Speaker, there is plenty of money: look at the supplementary appropriation funding for health—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Ms Asif interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: We will not have quarrelling across the House.

Mr McCALLUM: This is the legacy of the Crisafulli government and the cuts. There are the warnings from ratings agencies. We have already seen forecast downgrades under this Treasurer. Now we are seeing more warnings from ratings agencies saying that the government needs to cut spending. That means cutting workers' wages and cutting services, and we have seen that. We have seen that in health care and in transport.

Another thing they are cutting is ribbons on Labor projects. When it comes to health funding we have seen the Ripley satellite health facility, a proud Labor project, and we have seen the Treasurer cutting the ribbon on the Swanbank battery in Bundamba. We have the work continuing on the Ipswich Hospital expansion and the Springfield hospital expansion. What I am worried about is that they are running to the end of the Labor projects that were funded. There will not be any more ribbons for them to cut because they are not going to—

Mrs Frecklington: The member for Clayfield is fixing the health system for these girls up here.

Mr McCALLUM: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am finding it a little hard to continue over the interjections of the member for Nanango again.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I can hear you quite well, thank you.

Mr McCALLUM: That is good, Mr Deputy Speaker. What we have is a government that is not actually investing in infrastructure, that is not actually investing in expanding services. What they are doing is trading on the legacy of the previous Labor government whilst they are cutting workers' wages and whilst they are reducing services. This is the kind of underhanded and tricky economic management that we have come to expect from a government that is led by a very tricky and clever Premier who likes to go out there and say one thing but do something completely different. That is what we are seeing when it comes to the funding that will come through these bills.

I will finish off with a quick comment regarding the supplementary funding for the parliament, which of course we support. I suspect that the next supplementary bill for parliamentary funding might need a little bit more for the works on the colonnade!