



Speech By
Sandy Bolton

MEMBER FOR NOOSA

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ADJOURNMENT

Integrity

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (9.23 pm): In December I asked the Premier for an independent inquiry into the failings of our governance and parliamentary systems as these systems of decision-making are instrumental in delivering for Queenslanders. When those systems are broken, no-one is held responsible for the bad decisions or the wasted billions of taxpayer dollars—\$1 billion in inflated BPIC costs for Cross River Rail, and now apparently we have to foot the legal bills; publicly owned buildings left to rot, whether decommissioned TAFE sites or rangers huts, instead of being repurposed, including for housing; \$200 million on the scrapped Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro; \$65 million on the failed Gladstone green hydrogen facility; and now the Paradise Dam fiasco. Even \$4 billion per year on consultants has not stopped the waste or bad decisions.

These are not just numbers; they are hard-earned taxpayer dollars. As we are seeing federally, Australians have had enough of a duopoly that continues to reel out slogans, band-aids and blame. Queensland is no different. We need a properly functioning system of parliament and oversight and an end to elected dictatorships making decisions for vested interests.

The government, when in opposition, said that we need a better performing parliament and greater transparency on all decisions. The previous government did not deliver that, nor is our new government. Neither want to fix the failings when in power. One has to ask the question: why? These flaws give absolute power; however, as Lord Acton said all those years ago, 'Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.' Since 2018 I have stood in this chamber calling for reform of the systems that allowed our housing crisis to continue—it has been a decade—our businesses to struggle and our communities to be robbed of their voices.

The last part to the very sad saga of this parliament was seeing an MP suffering from mental health and other challenges abandoned by one side and subjected to months of harassment and vitriol by the other. That the government then used the committee system for by-election campaigning purposes during that MP's funeral is beyond disgraceful. These truly sad events must be the catalyst for change in this chamber.

If the government will not instigate an independent review, it is time for Queenslanders to do so. We need a system that works, is transparent, is accountable and has integrity—a system that is for everyday Queenslanders, not for behind-the-scenes benefactors. This is a priority for Queenslanders, and both sides of the chamber know it. I ask both parties to make a solid commitment to Queenslanders and support fixing this broken system before voters need to make the decision for them. This is serious. Both sides know that our systems are not working the way they should be, and what has been happening in this chamber is truly appalling.