



Speech By
Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 15 September 2015

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee, Report

 **Mrs STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (8.51 pm): Firstly I want to thank the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee for permitting me to appear, but so much for the estimates process of 2015 being an open and transparent investigation of the state budget. It was more an exercise in avoiding the truth, especially when it came to budget figures. Labor's protection racket was notched up a rung when the questions on notice replies were deliberately withheld until around 4.30 pm the day prior to the hearing. Despite being delivered to this committee by 10 am on the Monday morning, there was an inexcusable delay of 6½ hours and the minister said she wanted a reason for the delay as well. I wonder if she has asked the committee chair yet and what was his reason and has he offered an apology?

The Department of Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games has been rudderless. There was no director-general at estimates despite being named on the budget papers, because Dr Richard Eden was callously sacked without any explanation. One has to wonder how the Commonwealth Games legacy is coming along without him as he had so much corporate intel. Labor does not have an overarching plan for the \$23 billion-plus tourism industry and the minister is too busy talking down the industry and playing politics at its expense. Negativity and scaremongering over the Great Barrier Reef campaign caused real harm for Queensland's tourism industry, as recent media reports have indicated.

This minister stood in parliament in May and described the industry as the 'Leaning Tower of Pisa' and she has continued to spread fear since. Rather than mock the solid efforts of operators who were united in their goals to double overnight visitor expenditure, the minister should be encouraging them to aim high, to reach for the stars. When in government the LNP set an aspirational target that aligned with Tourism Australia's 2020 visitor expenditure targets, but Minister Jones has scoffed at that and discarded it. This minister is all about innuendo over substance. She uses flaky figures and holds up what can only be described as a chart that was made for the TV cameras as it had minimal details, no mention of tourism and was not possible to be identified as it had no headings and it could have represented anything. I want to table that chart. There is no proof that this chart came from Mr Stephen Gregg or that it indeed was what she purported it to be and it does not match the figures on a TEQ chart circulated by CEO Leanne Coddington in January 2014.

Tabled paper: Bar graph from 2012 to 2019 [[1069](#)].

One of the biggest measurable success stories of this year's budget was the \$150 million listed as new investment attraction. The LNP's target of \$25 million was very impressively exceeded, yet nowhere does the SDS refer to the Tourism Investment Attraction Unit by its name—a unit established by the LNP. The acting director-general of DTESB mentioned it three times as he tried to explain why Labor was only aiming for \$50 million. The minister could not bring herself to mention it at all. I was pleased to see the board of TEQ reduced in size, as this was the original plan when I formed the new

entity in 2012. I was also pleased to see the LNP's aviation attraction unit maintained. Two of the three new routes that the minister claimed were actually secured under the LNP. However, just adding more dollars to this fund without enhancing the criteria will not guarantee growth.

The minister was all over the shop with funding figures, particularly regarding the certainty of current funding for RTOs. Neither the minister nor the CEO gave ironclad assurances it would remain, and the same applied to the new regional events model. And what of the \$20 million promised by the LNP to continue drive tourism strategy initiatives like the attractive landscape signage? I want to credit the former minister for transport and main roads for rolling those out throughout Queensland. It is noted the minister recognises the impact Labor's lockout laws will have on tourism, so let us see if she stands up for the industry when Labor's laws are brought in—1 am lockouts threaten to cripple tourism on the Gold Coast and elsewhere. And what of her government's direction to the task force reviewing VLAD laws to repeal or amend them? The Gold Coast is a tourism mecca, one whose reputation took a serious hit over bikie behaviours, yet the minister dismissed the seriousness of it and tried to change the subject. Queensland's tourism industry deserves a minister who is committed to fighting for them and working with them to grow the market in Queensland, not one who places unnecessary restrictions upon them and mocks their efforts.