



Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2019

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

**State Development, Natural Resources and Agricultural Industry Development
Committee, Report**

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (3.04 pm): It is fortuitous that I am following the minister for— I take the earlier interjection from the member for Buderim: the minister for what? The minister did take four questions. The most pertinent one was from the member for Buderim, who asked what he is the minister for. In the past five minutes we have had yet more proof. In his last 20 seconds the minister thanked his department for the wonderful things they are doing for this state, but he did not mention a single one. The reason we asked all of our questions of the public servants is that he is the minister for literally nothing. He is the most emasculated infrastructure minister the state of Queensland has ever had and it was always someone else's problem.

The minister also said that the purpose of estimates is to test and interrogate the government's budget. The Palaszczuk Labor government's budget was bad for infrastructure, bad for jobs, bad for regions and bad for the future of the state. It was a budget of higher taxes, more debt, fewer jobs and less infrastructure. Labor and the minister always talk big about infrastructure but, as we have heard, he cannot mention a single project because the Treasurer has taken all of the decent projects off him. He has none to be responsible for.

The reality is that Labor is borrowing more and building less. Infrastructure spending across the forward estimates has decreased by \$23 million compared to last year. The member for Inala has invested less in infrastructure than any premier in living memory. Queenslanders are sick and tired of their lucrative royalties, delivered to the state from resources dug up in their towns, going to the member for South Brisbane's pet project—Cross River Rail—to boost the value of her personal property portfolio.

Not only is government infrastructure investment down; Labor has killed off job-creating private sector projects worth billions. Estimates revealed a litany of promised infrastructure projects that have been delayed, reneged on or their business cases locked away. It did not matter where the project was or what it was—the Cairns Convention Centre, on which we have belatedly seen some action from the government, Brisbane Live or Nullinga Dam, which has been shelved forever. All of them have been delayed, postponed or reneged on. It did not matter if it was a state development area or a regional plan. If it had been announced by the Palaszczuk Labor government there was almost an implicit guarantee that it would be delayed, scrapped or reneged on.

I give Townsville as an example. It has been three years since it was promised a North Queensland regional plan by the member for South Brisbane. Guess what? They are still waiting. Perhaps if the member for South Brisbane spent as much time and effort working on the land use plan she promised Townsville as she did on planning her personal property portfolio, it might have been completed by now. Unfortunately for Queenslanders, that is just the way it is with the Palaszczuk Labor government. Irrespective of who the Labor minister is, their own self-interest always takes precedence over the interests of Queensland. Again we saw it evident from the contribution of the member for Woodridge—yet another audition for leadership of the Labor government.

With this Labor government devoid of leadership, it is always spin over substance, always policy on the run, always promises with no delivery. I genuinely feel sorry for any industry that the member for Woodridge takes a feigned interest in supporting. Take Queensland's craft brewing industry—a strong industry that is a showcase of the great manufacturing ability of our great state. I have to mention Brouhaha in my own electorate of Glass House. First the minister gives taxpayers' dollars to a Scottish multinational company to move to Queensland and directly compete against our own industry. Then his colleague the member for Barron River introduces a beer tax specifically targeted at Queensland craft brewers, hiking their fees tenfold. It is no wonder, as the *Courier-Mail* revealed in April this year, that more than 18,000 manufacturing jobs have been wiped out under the Palaszczuk government, with the sector now employing its lowest number of workers since the 1990s recession.

Queensland cannot afford too many more budgets of higher taxes, more debt, fewer jobs and less infrastructure. The Palaszczuk Labor government is well and truly taking a pound of flesh from hardworking Queenslanders. Its 10 new or increased taxes are ripping \$3.5 billion from the Queensland economy across the forward estimates. These taxes have consistently been cited to be costing jobs and reducing economic activity by a range of third-party stakeholders, whether it be the Property Council, the Queensland Resources Council or commentators in the *Australian*. Queensland cannot afford Labor.