

# Jarrod BLEIJIE MP

Member for Kawana  
Shadow Minister for Education and Shadow Minister for Industrial Relations  
Manager of Opposition Business



26 February 2020

The Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk MP  
Premier of Queensland

By email: [thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au](mailto:thepremier@premiers.qld.gov.au)

Dear Premier *Annastacia*,

I refer to the issue of determining and allocating resources for Non-Government Members of the Legislative Assembly.

I understand that your government is in the process of fast-tracking legislative reform to give the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal jurisdiction to deal with and decide upon resourcing of Cross Bench Members of the Legislative Assembly.

I note the following motion of the House was carried on 22 October 2019.

*That this House notes—*

1. *30 years ago the Fitzgerald report stated that non-government party members must be provided with appropriate resources and detailed information to enable them to supervise and criticise;*
2. *the Fitzgerald report recommended the creation of the Electoral and Administrative Review Commission (EARC) and it conduct a review of the provision of non-government members with appropriate resources of staff and equipment, and proper access to information in respect of government activities;*
3. *EARC's subsequent report recommended that the total staff establishment of opposition parties should be maintained at 20 per cent of the staff establishment of ministerial offices; reflect parity with the salary profile of ministerial staff; and the allocation of the opposition parties' staff establishment to particular opposition parties should be on the basis of the proportion of seats held by the party;*
4. *in 2018 the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) recommended that the process to decide an appropriate level of resourcing for all members of parliament should be determined by an independent entity, such as the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal (QIRT);*
5. *to date the recommendations of the Fitzgerald report, EARC and the CCC have not been implemented;*
6. *the public interest would be served by ensuring independent, objective and consistent assessment of duties and resources of non-government members, and bring Queensland in line with NSW, Vic and SA; and*
7. *calls on the government to amend the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal Act to give QIRT the function of deciding the resources of non-government members.*

The motion was not opposed.

Consistent with the resolution of the House, the Opposition supports the referral of all Non-Government Members including Opposition resourcing to the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal.

In considering my request I ask that you take into consideration the following:

1. Your comments as Opposition Leader in 2012 about Non-Government resourcing, and the importance of being independent and even-handed in dealing with all Members of the House.
2. The Crime and Corruption Commission in finalising its assessment on whether you breached the Criminal Code made the following remarks:

*"The CCC acknowledges that the government of the day has authority to determine appropriate resourcing for Ministerial and other office holders. However, following the assessment, the CCC is of the view the process to decide an appropriate level of resourcing for all Members of Parliament should be determined by an entity independent of the government of the day. This would serve the public interest by ensuring an objective and consistent assessment of the duties of Members of Parliament. The CCC recommends the Parliament should consider this further."*

3. Minister Bailey, in his contribution to the motion passed by the House on 22 October 2019 made the following remarks:

*"This is an appropriate motion to deal with something that has not been dealt with by a range of governments over time. I think it is a good thing that the government is supporting this motion."*

*"This is not just a matter of the crossbench; it is also a matter of the opposition. Governments change at times, and it is important that this is settled and is done in an independent way. I think that will add to the improvements to our legislature and our parliament, whether it be for the crossbench or the opposition."*

4. Minister Lynham, in his contribution to the motion passed by the House 22 October 2019 made the following remarks:

*"This motion seeks to provide an independent assessment in deciding the resources of non-government members. As noted by previous speakers, the Premier has previously indicated that she supports the subject matter we are currently debating, and the government today is supporting the motion in the House."*

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*"The motion refers to the Fitzgerald report. I know that the Premier has a strong, deep commitment to the principles of the Fitzgerald report like no other. We must never forget the Fitzgerald report.*

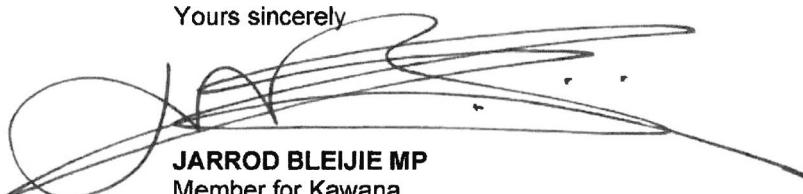
*"I remember being in opposition, sitting on those crossbenches and looking at the resources we had in opposition—opposition from Mineral House—under-resourced and trying to mount a strong campaign."*

Given your many years of assuring the people of Queensland that you support the Fitzgerald principles, will you support the House's resolution to refer all Non-Government Resourcing to the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal?

The Opposition stands ready willing and able to assist in your deliberations.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely



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c.c. Deb Frecklington MP – Leader of the Opposition  
Allan Macsporran – Crime and Corruption Commission