



Speech by

Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Hansard Wednesday, 5 August 2009

APPROPRIATION BILLS: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Mrs STUCKEY (Currumbin—LNP) (12.21 pm): In addressing the Appropriation Bill 2009 as it relates to Estimates Committee A report No. 1, I firstly want to express my appreciation to the chair, the honourable member for Yeerongpilly, for his fair and even-handed approach. I further extend my sincere thanks to the research staff, headed by Rob Hansen. I commend all of the members of this committee for the manner in which they conducted themselves and the spirit of friendly cooperation. I also congratulate the Speaker for his manner and willingness to answer questions and openness to ideas and suggestions that were put forward. It was a willingness, I must say, I have not seen exhibited in many other portfolios. It is also his desire to see the setting of high standards that will uphold the dignity of the Queensland parliament and the Westminster system in which we operate. I commend the Speaker's staff and of course the assistance from the Clerk and his staff and all of the parliamentary staff whom the honourable member for Mount Isa so generously mentioned. I want to add my thanks and appreciation to them for looking after us not only in sitting weeks but outside sitting times as well.

A number of topics were covered in this estimates hearing. I suppose one that affects us all very directly outside of this place is electorate office security. It is critically important that electorate office security is implemented in all electorate offices. Like many, my electorate office in Currumbin was given a security upgrade recently. The workers were very polite but I have to say that, like a lot of boys, they did not clean up their mess too well afterwards and we actually purchased a vacuum so that we did not have metal shavings left for our constituents. I noticed also that the chairs in my front foyer were bolted to the floor with very fine chains. I do question whether this is a waste of money as the chairs themselves actually need replacing. It would take very little to smash them to smithereens, so I question the value for money of some of these upgrades. The front reception glass was replaced but, as one of my electorate officers pointed out, it would still be fairly easy to point a gun through it. I genuinely hope that that situation will never happen.

Under the procurement guidelines, I understand that Queensland companies should get a fair hearing in tender submissions. For matters pertaining to the electorate offices, surely steps should be taken to ensure that these repairs and upgrades are performed by Queensland companies. An example of not using a Queensland company was the changing of our locks, and I understand that several offices on the Gold Coast had their locks changed by a New South Wales company. I really do question why we do not ensure that this work is performed by Queenslanders. Mind you, I am very friendly to our New South Wales counterparts as my seat is right on the state border and I am well aware of the importance of good cross-border relationships and the flow of jobs, schooling and industry.

The issue of air conditioning was raised in light of the upgrades that would comply with government mandates for six-star energy efficiency. I also note that the Speaker requested the Department of Public Works to get an answer for us on that, and I am wondering if that answer has been supplied. It is to be hoped that the Speaker will act to ensure that renovations to the House provide a leading example in greenhouse performance.

I note also the cost to amenities in the Annexe costing \$1.236 million. In 2008-09 it was \$618,000 and again post 2009 this amount was mentioned. I am of course referring to the toilet amenities. I do not wish to be thought of as the 'loo lady' in the future. I note that the honourable member for Clayfield has already mentioned this but, quite frankly, the situation for a lot of us was really quite untenable. I refer to the cost and the time to build these amenities and the condition of the existing pipes. I even noticed the tainting taste to the quality of the water, and I do ask if these issues can be corrected.

I also note that a Speaker's Advisory Committee is to be set up. I am very interested in the heritage aspects of that. Coming from Adelaide and having a heritage listed building of my own, I have enormous respect for these kinds of buildings and the importance of restoring them in the manner in which they were built.

I also want to mention the number of times the lifts are out of order. I almost missed my spot here today because one of the lifts is out of order yet again. I know that these things cannot be helped in an ageing building, but I would ask that they are looked into. I thank all of the committee.