



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**COMMITTEES**

**Public Works Committee**

**Report**

**SPEECH**

**Wednesday, 16 March 2005**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>		<b>Responder</b>	
<b>Speaker</b>	OÖÇÖConnor, Brendan, MP	<b>Question No.</b>	

**Mr BRENDAN O’CONNOR** (Gorton) (4.22 pm)—by leave—I rise to concur with the comments made by the Chair of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, the member for Pearce. I think it is important to note the extent of the work undertaken by the committee over the last 12 months. As already outlined by the chair, the works have been very comprehensive indeed. Committee members are very mindful of the fact that decisions made by government that lead to departments making proposals to be put to us pursuant to the Public Works Act 1969 are, on occasions, quite rushed. There are obvious needs that have to be met, and therefore we are sympathetic to the requirements that arise quite often very suddenly. What the committee members are also very mindful of and what the committee does quite well is to try to find the right balance, to apply the authority of the committee practically but with the view of ensuring value for money when great expenditure is outlayed for particular proposals.

As the chair has indicated, the actual amount of money spent on the proposals before us exceeds half a billion dollars, and therefore it is not to be trifled with. It is an enormous amount of taxpayers’ money, and I think we do our best to ensure that the departments are spending it properly. I also add my thanks to all members of the committee and, indeed, to the secretariat. It is a very busy committee, with very many inquiries. Above and beyond that, the annual conference took up quite a large amount of the secretariat’s time. I think they do a great job in providing us with the assistance we need to deliberate properly. Finally, with respect to the tabling of the report on the proposed fit-out of new leased premises for the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources in Civic, I indicate my support for the comments made by the member for Pearce.