



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**BILLS**

**Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2014-2015**

**Consideration in Detail**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 19 June 2014**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Thursday, 19 June 2014  
**Page** 6805  
**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Jones, Ewen, MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr EWEN JONES** (Herbert) (11:34): I was going to put this in halves, but I am happy for Parliamentary Secretary Frydenberg to take this on notice. I do have a question for Parliamentary Secretary Tudge as well. In relation to the red tape reduction, is there a possibility that we will make this a COAG process? The work we have done on red tape and green tape reduction has been fantastic. It is a great start. The commitment to keep going is important. I see the member for Wright is here. His previous occupation was a truck driver. Most of his red tape costs would have been state government costs. My big concern here is the possibility of cost shifting or responsibility shifting to the states. If we save \$1 billion then the states put on \$500 million of red tape, we would still be \$500 million better off but the states would have jumped in. I would like to see if you are going to follow that through.

My second question for Parliamentary Secretary Frydenberg is on the tender process. I will give an example. The Flinders Shire Council had a nine-kilometre stretch of road that they costed at \$9 million. Because it was over the threshold it had to go to national tender. It was picked up by a national supplier and the cost was \$27 million. They flew in their team, equipment and camp and did the work and nothing went through the local community. Is it possible that we can look at something in relation to the tender process to ensure that the money that is expended by the Commonwealth in regional and regional communities does stay there and we give more flexibility to local councils in that area?

I represent the seat of Herbert, which includes Palm Island. We have a number of Indigenous organisations. I have a real issue when it comes to the running of some of these Indigenous organisations. Lack of accountability and poor governance have meant massive losses of funds. People have been shifted out of these organisations. Information on what we believe were fraud matters has been provided to the police. It is very hard for the police to prove fraud. Is there an instrument in ORIC—and will the parliamentary secretary take it upon himself to have a look at the rules of ORIC—that is similar to ASIC's rule that someone is no longer fit and proper to run an organisation, so we can make sure that the governance to the community is better off?

Additionally, would the parliamentary secretary be able to advise me about the opportunities to work and get a decent job. I know he is very passionate in this regard. Palm Island is 2½ hours on the ferry, so the 90-minute rule no longer applies. If someone is moving to Palm Island, there is no onus on them to look for a job. The difference between being on benefits and working can quite often be a disincentive to them getting a job. Can the parliamentary secretary give me some information in relation to what he is thinking about this and what the government is thinking in this space?