

We The People

Program 77

Hurting People 101



Remember how bad the Beattie and Bligh governments had become. How they had a ball with our money and racked up a colossal debt through unbridled waste. Then we Queenslanders rightly threw them out of office and installed our new hope, Campbell Newman. Now the task ahead of him is great in getting the budget under control and I have had sympathy for him but that's changing. Let's reflect on what Campbell Newman said on the night he won office and I quote.... *"It's all about you, it will always, always be about you"* and *"We will keep our promises and not let you down"* and finally *"I pledge to you we will conduct ourselves with humility, grace and dignity"* Oh really, well I think there are mounting examples of his government's arrogance and one is his handling the changes to body corporate fees.

Take for example Don Avery who is a retired policeman who served the community all his working life. Don's wife passed away ten years ago and now he lives alone in the Pinnacle high rise complex in Broadbeach. He signed a contract and bought his unit in 2003. The contract laid out the formula for charging body corporate fees and these apparently depend on floor area and other vagaries and this formed part of the purchase contract. However, in 2004 the Fischer case was pronounced the preferred view of the Court relating to the Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997. In brief this meant that all high rise units may be charged the same fee regardless of the size or location of the unit taking into account fairness and it effectively overturned the original fee structure delineated in the purchase contracts. As a result In 2009 the fees changed in the Pinnacle by up to 70% thus changing the market value of units and applying unexpected massive costs to smaller unit owners. In 2011 the Queensland parliament amended the Act to supposedly reflect the original fee structure at the initiative of Peter Lawler MP. Now The Newman government is changing it yet again apparently to return it to what they say is a fair base although tell that to unit owners who are overwhelmed and baffled by the changes and charges. What a mess. Just to give you a feel for this asinine law listen to this clause 46A which references the basis of determining the Body Corporate fees.....are you ready..... here we go.....*The equality principle for deciding contribution schedule lot entitlements for the lots included in a community titles scheme is the principle that the lot entitlements must be equal, except to the extent to which it is just and equitable in the circumstances for them not to be equal.* So is Don Avery supposed to understand that at 81 and no wonder he is confused as I am.

These multiple convoluted idiotic changes to the law directly affect the lives of many people. To our older residents it brings desperate uncertainty and enormous cost. Body corporate fees rise up to 100% and in the case of Don Avery, a massive 70%. He cannot afford the increase and the change also lowers the value of his unit so he can't afford to sell either. Some of the local LNP people just won't address the issue and hide behind Newman's coat tails while Jarrod Bleijie the Attorney General doesn't seem to appreciate the pain he's helping to inflict even though he claims to be a family man. The silence of some of the local LNP representatives has been deafening and it's a disgrace. We call on the local LNP members or the Premier or the Attorney General to explain directly to 4CRB listeners what's going on and why so many good people are being hurt.

Can't the Premier see the good folk from his Brisbane bureaucratic penthouse, can't he hear the cries of the ordinary person and what happened to all that caring sharing stuff he sprouted after being elected. The average Australian seems to have less influence than minority groups and boat people and the level of civil dissatisfaction grows daily yet we are suppose to be subservient and not ask questions or make a fuss. My point here is about the treatment of people and not about the fee structure. Well, we the people are watching Mr Newman and if you want a second term you need to listen to us. In the mean time I am going to see Don Avery again and have a cup of tea with him and hear more of his life story.....like to come along Mr. Newman.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley.