

*Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations — Eighty-second Report —
“The Local Projects Local Jobs Program and the Establishment of a Parliamentary Budget Office” — Motion*

Resumed from 4 November on the following motion moved by Hon Alison Xamon —

That the report be noted.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: In the short time that is available to me to speak to this committee report, I want to reflect on the very enthusiastic endorsement the Local Projects, Local Jobs program received from government members, and how they have clung to one finding in the report like a desperate person would grab at a life raft on the open ocean. There are a series of findings in this report, and I will go through the most appropriate ones when I get the opportunity, but government members have seized on the one specific finding that the Premier considered worthy of acknowledging, which states —

The Committee has found that the administering departments implemented the Government’s LPLJ program in a professional, transparent and accountable manner.

That is true. But the Premier and members opposite failed to acknowledge, at the very least, findings 20 through 23. I will read them in. Finding 20 states —

The jobs aspect of the Local Projects Local Jobs program title is attributed to a branding exercise.

We have been reflecting on cynicism and the risks of corruption throughout government. I think corruption begins when cynicism takes root. Reflect on that. Finding 21 states —

The Committee did not receive evidence to demonstrate that any new jobs in the form of sustainable or on-going employment were created by the Local Projects Local Jobs program.

Finding 22 states —

The Local Projects Local Jobs program created an expectation that new, sustainable and on-going employment would be created as a result of the implementation of the program.

Finding 23 states —

Job creation was not measured or tracked by the Government or the administering departments throughout the implementation of the Local Projects Local Jobs program.

They are quite damning findings about a government program dressed up as a jobs initiative at a cost of \$40 million to the taxpayer. In the time available, it is worth reflecting on that last element—that departments did not even bother tracking job creation as they rolled out the program. I will reflect on a piece of evidence provided by the ex-director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, who said that there was no analysis.

The DEPUTY CHAIR: Pursuant to temporary order 4, further consideration of that report is postponed until the next sitting.

Consideration of report postponed, pursuant to standing orders.