



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Main Committee

**NATIONAL BROADBAND NETWORK
FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY BILL 2010**

Second Reading

SPEECH

Monday, 15 November 2010

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

<p>Date Monday, 15 November 2010 Page 157 Questioner Speaker Sidebottom, Sid, MP</p>	<p>Source House Proof Yes Responder Question No.</p>
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Mr SIDEBOTTOM (Braddon) (7.33 pm)—That speech, and those similar speeches on the other side, including the member for Wentworth’s speech, are all about delay. They know everything about delay. They did nothing for 13 years when they were in government, they did nothing while they were in opposition except put up a pathetic plan—I think it was either No. 19 or No. 20—and they were that confident of it they sacked the architect, stuck him on the backbench and said, ‘Thanks very much for nothing’. That is how much confidence they had in it. We listened to the member for Goldstein trying to um and ah his way through trying to explain what their policy was, and we had the Leader of the Opposition say to Tony Jones or Kerry O’Brien—one of those perceptive interviewers—‘Don’t take me on a tech survey, I don’t know anything about it.’

Now we have his shadow opposition spokesperson on telecommunications with the absolute mission statement to destroy the NBN coming up with another delay tactic. What a joke! Isn’t it interesting that he is that keen on accountability, saying ‘We must have a Productivity Commission investigation. We must have the parliament poring over this for the future of Australia. We must have every man and his dog poring over this to make us feel confident that the investment is needed.’ We know it is really all about delay. If he was that keen on accountability, he might have had the Productivity Commission do a cost-benefit analysis of the Adelaide-Darwin railway. We might remember that one.

Ms Saffin—We do.

Mr SIDEBOTTOM—Of course we do. What about the privatisation of Telstra? We all remember that cost-benefit analysis by the Productivity Commission that did not happen as well. What about the member for Wentworth himself? If he is going to be a hypocrite, he should at least have some runs on the board. What about his \$10 billion water plan? I do not remember the Productivity Commission’s cost-benefit analysis of that. Do you remember the OPEL regional broadband plan? I think that was plan number 16, 17 or something like that. I do not remember the Productivity Commission undertaking a cost-benefit analysis of that. So let us have none of this nonsense that we have heard from the other side. We all know this is about delay. That is the mission statement of the member for Wentworth. His mission statement is to destroy the NBN.

I have already spoken several times on this in the parliament—even today. We have the industry saying we need the NBN. Statistics tell us we need the NBN. Australia has a pathetic performance record of delivery—or lack thereof—of high speed broadband. We had the member speaking before me bleating on about the lack of services in regional and rural Australia and telling us that we have to leave it up to the free market because competition and the free market will provide those services. What a load of rubbish! They have not produced it to this point and will not produce it on their own plans. The NBN will provide those services to rural and regional Australia.

If Tasmania is any example, that is why they voted Labor. That is why so many of the Independents supported Labor. Indeed, it is the specific reason they voted Labor. That is why anyone who knows anything about it—including Telstra—agrees, unless they are part of the old conservative commentariat. I am talking about the good old *Australian* newspaper and News Limited. I am talking about the scaremongering and fearmongering that we are all doomed, that every school in Australia is a complete waste of money with the BER and that everybody has had tacky old insulation set up. What absolute rubbish! Thousands of Australians have had safe insulation installed. Thousands of schools and students throughout Australia have benefited from fantastic BER projects and they know it. I do not hear those on the other side screaming out about these schools except one or two wonky ones. But, of course, what do you expect from the other side? The NBN is what Australia needs. The NBN is what Australia wants and the NBN is what Australia should get. Move aside. Forget the delay. (*Time expired*)