

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Fadden Electorate: Economy**

Mr ROBERT (Fadden) (12.05 p.m.)—Christmas, the Yuletide season, is upon us. It is a time when we remember our Christian heritage as a nation, going back through our roots in Britain, and of course a time when we remember the meaning of Christmas, a celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. In a celebration of Christmas, I sent out Christmas cards to all of my constituents to wish them all the very best for this wonderful season, and I included a magnet that had a list of emergency phone numbers so that if, in dreadful and dire circumstances, one of my constituents needed to know a range of key emergency numbers, the magnet would have them.

Because it is Christmas and we are leading into the new year, a time when people make new year's resolutions, we should, before we make the next set of resolutions, reflect upon the past year. Looking at the past year in my electorate, the news has not been particularly good. The government's funding cuts to Regional Partnerships has meant that the application for the Oxenford and Coomera youth centre was not assessed and not passed. Fadden is the fastest-growing electorate in the nation. It has grown 31.6 per cent between the 2001 and the 2006 census details. The library believes that within 3½ years my electorate will be 19.8 per cent oversubscribed. It is by far the fastest-growing electorate of any in the House. That growth is in the north of my electorate. There is only one community centre, the Oxenford and Coomera youth centre, whose AGM is in two weeks time, and funding has been cut from it because the Regional Partnerships program has been cut as well. We cannot get a roof for Riding for the Disabled, because Regional Partnerships has been cut.

Businesses were also left in the lurch when the \$700 million Commercial Ready program was cut. We recently had storms lashing the coast, affecting many residents, especially in the suburb of Labrador. If we keep reflecting on the last 12 months and the impact it has had on my electorate, if we look at the KFC—the 'Kevin financial crisis'—and the adverse effects, it is ironic that we are the only nation in the world whose government's decisions have made us worse off.

The bungled bank guarantee saw massive distortion of the market. Thirteen out of the top 20 cash and property management funds froze redemptions. Over 270,000 Australians have had redemptions frozen, and when I met with ING a few days ago they said they believe that is a very conservative number. I have spoken to many of my constituents who cannot get access to their own funds because of the distortion of the market caused by this government.

I look at the state of our health system, our hospitals. In Queensland there are 36,000 people on waiting lists for elective surgery, and there are 159,000 waiting to get on the waiting list. At the Gold Coast Hospital, where all of my constituents go, 48 per cent of people will spend over eight hours waiting in the emergency department. It is the busiest emergency department of any hospital in Queensland. The Australasian College for Emergency Medicine believes that, if you spend longer than eight hours waiting in an emergency department, you have a 30 per cent higher chance of a higher morbidity or mortality rate. You have a 30 per cent chance, or more, of dying by waiting over eight hours in the Gold Coast accident and emergency department.

I look at how Queensland state Labor debt is ballooning and at how they hide the debt in government owned corporations so that it does not appear in the balance sheet. Then, yesterday, I saw that the 'Kevlani' bank is about to be launched, as this Prime Minister does exactly the same thing that Queensland state Labor are trying to do. The concept of a Kevlani bank is of a state owned bank that can borrow in a vain attempt to keep that debt off the government's balance sheet, so that the government does not have to

report to the nation that, within 12 months, it has gone into deficit. That is the sole reason for a Kevlani bank.

Governments can borrow for whatever they need. There is no issue with governments borrowing money as in the mechanism of borrowing. We contend in the opposition that there is no need to go into debt when growth is still strong, and we will not give the government a leave pass. But to generate a Kevlani bank, to go and trace petrodollars in such a Whitlamesque move simply to keep a deficit from the balance sheet of the federal government is simply and utterly outrageous.

So the reflection on the 12 months is not good. It took us 12 years to get out of Labor's last debt and to actually amass a surplus, and it has taken this government 12 months to spend it and go back into deficit. As I look forward to the next 12 months, I simply ask the government, I plead with them, I challenge them: can you simply do better? You cannot do any worse, but for the sake of my constituents of Fadden, can you simply do better?