



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT

### Friday, 4 December 2020

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## FRIDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2020

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Curtis Pitt, Mulgrave) read prayers and took the chair.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, I respectfully acknowledge that we are sitting today on the land of Aboriginal people and pay my respects to elders past and present. I thank them, as First Australians, for their careful custodianship of the land over countless generations. We are very fortunate in this country to have two of the world's oldest continuing living cultures in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples whose lands, winds and waters we all now share.

### SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

#### Temporary Speakers, Conduct of Members



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, during the last parliament, I had cause to remind all members that it is grossly disorderly, and potentially a contempt, to disrespect the authority of the chair. In the first week of the 57th Parliament, I stress to all members the following: under standing order 16, Temporary Speakers have the same authority and powers of the Speaker; Temporary Speakers will be treated by members with the same respect accorded to the Speaker; and I will view any disrespect of Temporary Speakers as if I was myself disrespected. Finally, I note that many of the current Temporary Speakers panel are new MPs, and that is deliberate. I ask that experienced members give Temporary Speakers latitude as they learn the skills of presiding over sittings of the House.

#### Bott, Ms E



**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, since my election in February 2018, Ellaura Bott has served as executive assistant in the Office of the Speaker. During this time Elly has been the first and brightest face that members have seen when they visit my office. Elly is an intelligent and hardworking member of our office and has been an integral part of everything we do. Elly has also just completed a nursing degree and will soon leave us in the new year to take up a graduate nursing position at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. We will miss you, Elly, and we wish you very well in your new career.

### TABLED PAPERS

#### TABLING OF DOCUMENTS (SO 32)

##### MINISTERIAL PAPER

The following ministerial paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Hon. Bailey)—

[361](#) Transmax Pty Ltd—Annual Report 2019-20

##### MEMBER'S PAPER

The following member's paper was tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Maiwar (Mr Berkman)—

[362](#) Letter, undated, from the Australian Youth Climate Coalition (Queensland Branch) to the members of the 57th Parliament regarding climate change and renewable energy

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS


#### Coronavirus, Update



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.33 am): Queensland has two new COVID cases. Both are overseas acquired and in hotel quarantine so we have no concerns about them. That means we now have 10 active cases. There were 3,309 tests conducted in the past

24 hours, which is another good result. The Northern Hemisphere winter is predicted to accelerate cases. The US has suffered its biggest daily death toll: 2,760. Yesterday Los Angeles issued a stay-at-home order. These are all lessons for us that we must stay vigilant, but it is also a reminder that, thanks to the efforts of every single one of us to contain this virus, we do indeed live in the Lucky Country.


### Screen Industry

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.34 am): Queensland saved Australian sport in 2020. We are also shouldering Australia's screen industry in trying times, with more support to come from this week's budget. So far this year, despite COVID, we have lured a record 36 productions to Queensland, pumping \$414 million into our economy, including: Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis* project being filmed at Village Roadshow Studios at Oxenford; *Escape from Spiderhead*, starring Chris Hemsworth, being filmed on the Gold Coast; Universal Studio's *Young Rock*, currently filming at Screen Queensland Studios in Brisbane, to be followed by *Joe Exotic* and then *Irreverent* also at Screen Queensland Studios at Hemmant; and, recently announced, the feature film *Thirteen Lives*, directed by Academy Award winning director Ron Howard to be filmed on the Gold Coast. This is good news for Queensland.

In Queensland, we are experiencing even more demand to film world-class productions here. We know that the screen industry means jobs right here at home. These productions are supporting more than 5,000 local jobs in 2020, and there are even more to come in 2021. We know that screen will be vitally important to our economic recovery efforts into the future. The 2020-21 grant budget for Screen Queensland is \$55.4 million to ensure this industry continues to grow in coming years. That includes an extra \$20 million for the highly successful Production Attraction Strategy, funding for a television hub on the Gold Coast for national and international productions and funding for our \$6.8 million Far North Queensland screen strategy. Mr Speaker, I know that you have a keen interest in that.


The Far North Queensland Sound Stage will create jobs by attracting film productions to the region while also providing a training ground for Queensland filmmakers of the future. Subject to successful completion of a business case, including possible investment by commercial partners, this investment could include: construction of a purpose-built sound stage; office and teaching space; lights, camera and sound equipment; rooftop and solar battery systems; and additional dedicated set-building space. The Far North is already well known as a world-class film location.

### Weather, High Temperatures

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.36 am): The mercury is rising and records are tumbling right throughout the state. This week alone, we have seen seven records for maximum temperatures broken here in Queensland: at Dalby Airport on Monday where we recorded 41.3 degrees, the highest temperature in 99 years; at Roma Airport on Monday where it was 43.7 degrees, breaking an 87-year record; at Charleville Aerodrome on Monday where we recorded 43.8 degrees, the highest temperature in 79 years; at Cunnamulla Post Office on Tuesday where we recorded 46.2 degrees, smashing a 64-year record; and at Applethorpe on Wednesday where it was 37.5 degrees, breaking a 52-year record.

If this week is anything to go by, we are in for a hot summer. Queenslanders are no strangers to wild weather and soaring temperatures, but it is important that we look after each other this summer. We are urging everyone to stay hydrated and stay out of the sun, particularly in the middle of the day. High temperatures can be dangerous.

### Building our Regions

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumbidgee—ALP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning) (9.37 am): I am pleased to inform the House that the state government's Building our Regions program is on track, with 97.8 of our recent round 5 projects already underway in regional Queensland. It is a proud achievement for regional councils during such a challenging year. We have worked closely with our regional councils to fast-track these vital community projects where possible to stimulate local economies, empower our industries and deliver jobs.


Of 41 construction projects, 24 have commenced construction with boots on the ground at sites from Beaudesert to Coen, and 17 are at the design tender stage. Of the seven planning projects, six have already commenced, which means councils will soon be able to make informed investment decisions about future projects for their communities.

Our councils have always had to deal with the unique challenges of regional Queensland projects, including distance, contractor availability and severe weather events, such as bushfires, cyclones and floods. This year, councils have risen to these challenges with great success. With a funding commitment of almost \$365 million, the Building our Regions program supports local government infrastructure projects that stimulate the local economy and create jobs.

Under rounds 1 to 5 of the program, funding has been allocated to 271 projects across 67 local government areas in regional Queensland, supporting an estimated 2,767 jobs. These projects have attracted additional investment of over \$538 million from local government and other organisations. That is thousands of locals building much needed local projects to grow our regional Queensland communities.

Every single one of the projects we fund are expected to make a marked difference in the long term for the communities we are building in. Whether it is enabling future industry, improving recreational and tourism facilities or facilitating high-speed internet and telecommunications, the positive impacts will be felt for generations, long after construction has been completed. I look forward to keeping the House updated on the progress of our Building our Regions projects as they progress towards full completion.

### Queensland Economy

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (9.40 am): As revealed in the 2020 budget, COVID-19 has caused a significant injury to the Queensland economy as it has to economies around the world. As a result, Queensland's budget will go into budget deficit for four years, just like New South Wales. However, because Queensland managed the health challenge better than New South Wales, our economy is performing better.

Members know that Queensland's economic growth—that is, growth in state final demand—was 6.8 per cent in the September quarter, the fastest rate in the nation. Australia's final demand grew by just 4½ per cent. Members will also know that Queensland will exit the pandemic with the lowest debt on the east coast—lower than Victoria and lower than New South Wales. But that is not all. Because we managed the COVID-19 health crisis better than any other state, our economy is reopening and outclassing the nation. Queensland's household consumption increased by 11.6 per cent in the September quarter, outpacing the 7.9 per cent recorded across Australia. Queensland's private investment grew by 3½ per cent in the September quarter, while across Australia investment fell by 0.2 per cent.

Queensland is the only state with an economy larger than it was before the crisis, growing by 0.7 per cent in the year to September. The national economy contracted by 3½ per cent. Queensland is the only state to have recovered all the jobs we lost during COVID-19. We lost 205,400 jobs between March and May; since then we have regained 205,900. Australia is still 223,000 jobs behind its number in March.

The value of new loan commitments to households is 44 per cent higher in October than it was 12 months ago, the second-fastest growth rate in Australia and almost double the national average of 23 per cent. The number of housing approvals increased by 9.7 per cent in October. The national average was just 3.2 per cent. Retail sales in Queensland increased by 11 per cent over the year to September, almost three times the national increase of four per cent.

Employee jobs in Queensland increased by 7.4 per cent between 18 April and 14 November, ahead of the Australian average of 6.1 per cent. Employee wages in Queensland increased by 3½ per cent between 18 April and 14 November, faster than the Australian average of just 2.2 per cent. Labour force participation is the highest amongst east coast states and is one percentage point higher than when the crisis began as more Queenslanders are encouraged to re-enter the workforce. The value of Queensland's merchandise exports is \$66.8 billion, 1½ times more than New South Wales.

As the budget shows, we are delivering this superior performance with lower taxes, with the average Queenslanders paying \$628 less than the average citizen in the rest of Australia and \$1,100 less than people who live in New South Wales. The years ahead will be challenging, but this government will be with Queenslanders every step of the way.

### Fraser Island, Bushfire



**Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (9.43 am): Seventeen firefighting aircraft, including the large air tanker, were used by firefighters on Fraser Island yesterday. Nearly three million litres of water and retardant gel have been dropped on the fire, and the priority right now is protecting people's lives and property. No lives have been lost and no property has been destroyed.

The deployment of firefighting resources, including the large air tanker, is a matter for the experts, our firefighters. I trust them to make the right decisions, just like this government trusted Dr Jeannette Young, our Chief Health Officer, to make the right decisions. However, as with any emergency incidents, there will be an independent review conducted by the Inspector-General Emergency Management, or IGEM, to determine whether anything could be done better in the future. In fact, Queensland's IGEM model was singled out by the royal commission into bushfires as an exemplar of independent evaluation and investigation. This is what the royal commission, Scott Morrison's royal commission, said—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Kawana will cease his interjections.

**Mr RYAN:** The report stated—

Queensland and Victoria's IGEM arrangements perform valuable assurance, evaluation and continuous improvement functions—

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The Treasurer will cease his interjections.

**Mr RYAN:** It continues—

for their state fire and emergency services. Other jurisdictions should establish similar arrangements.

We will have an independent review by the Inspector-General Emergency Management and any lessons that can be learned will be acted upon. Again, the priority now is protecting lives and property. As I speak, there are nearly 100 specialists, including professional firefighters, on the ground fighting this fire and they are being supported by firefighting aircraft including five fixed-wing bombers, two Helitak bombers, two air attack platforms, one air observation platform, one large air tanker and one LAT lead plane. The large air tanker is contracted to be in Queensland for the bushfire season. If there is a need to keep—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left, I do not believe that the minister is saying anything that could be considered provocative. I ask you to cease your interjections. I would like to hear the ministerial statement.

**Mr RYAN:** If there is a need to keep the large air tanker in Queensland longer, the contract can be extended. In fact, that has already happened. If needed, the contract can be further extended. In addition, if operationally required, there are other firefighting aircraft available around Australia for use in Queensland, including a large air tanker based in New South Wales, just as the Queensland large air tanker is available for use elsewhere in the country when required. This further emphasises the need for the federal government to implement one of the key recommendations of the royal commission, and that is to establish a national aerial firefighting fleet. It is on the Prime Minister to implement the recommendation of the royal commission into the bushfires to support communities right around Australia.

### Racing Industry




**Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.47 am): The Palaszczuk government's investment in the racing industry across Queensland continues to grow. Since 2017 we have made massive investments in the country racing package and prize money with more than \$110 million being distributed to participants and clubs throughout Queensland. The 2020-21 budget sees a continuation of the strong work of the Palaszczuk government in providing new and renewed racing infrastructure as well as the continuation of the hugely successful country racing package with further funding committed through to July 2023. This package is the lifeblood of non-TAB clubs across regional Queensland and this funding will be welcomed by the industry and will support tourism and jobs in these local economies.

The budget also sees funding allocated to two transformative racing infrastructure projects that were announced recently by the now tourism minister. We have committed the funding to commence the first phase of the \$38 million redevelopment of the Gold Coast Turf Club. This will include tunnels, improved training tracks and, importantly, the addition of lighting for night racing. We welcome the Gold Coast city council's recent approval for this development. We know that the thoroughbred industry around the track supports over 1,000 jobs already and the construction phase will support a further 300-plus jobs in the local area.

In the Ipswich area, the development of the Greater Brisbane Greyhound Centre is underway with consultation occurring with industry about the facilities that will be built. This will be a project that delivers not only a new, safe racing environment but the ability to build in community facilities. The Palaszczuk government will also continue its commitment to integrity in racing with a focus on not just integrity, but enforcement and education of the participants about on and off track requirements for the welfare of their beautiful animals.

The Palaszczuk government supports racing and what it means to Queenslanders. That is why we are backing it in this budget. I am proud to be, once again, Queensland's racing minister.

### **Coronavirus, Update; Queensland Ambulance Service**


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (9.49 am): As the Premier stated, we have had two new cases overnight of COVID-19, both acquired overseas and both detected in hotel quarantine. This brings Queensland's active cases to 10, with 3,309 tests conducted in the last 24 hours. I have also received a briefing this morning from the Acting Chief Health Officer in relation to New South Wales. I have been advised that there are no other positive cases at this stage—that is certainly welcome news—that extensive testing is going on and that there is an extensive response by the New South Wales government. The genomic sequencing is ongoing. We are expecting to see some results of that in the next 24 hours. That will tell us whether the positive case has come out of hotel quarantine or was likely acquired in the community. That is a particular area of interest for all governments, so we will be watching closely the results of that. We are very pleased that over the last 24 hours, despite the extensive level of testing, there have been no further positive cases.

Can I talk about our wonderful ambulance services. Demand for ambulance services continues to grow, and our record health investment will continue to support the Queensland Ambulance Service and the Queenslanders they help each and every day. The budget provides the Queensland Ambulance Service with \$933.9 million in operating expenses, an increase of 5.4 per cent from the 2019-20 budget. The budget also provides \$55.8 million for capital expenses. The good news about that is: that will pay for 135 new and replacement ambulance vehicles, and \$18.1 million for new and replacement ambulance stations.

Our record budget also means that 109 new ambulance officers will be joining the QAS in locations across the state. There are also mental health clinicians for Queensland Ambulance Service operations centres. Then there is the new and replacement stations, including completion of facilities at Munruben, Yarrabilba, Drayton, Kirwan, Mareeba and Girraween, and planning for new ambulance stations at Ripley, Caloundra South and Ormeau. We are investing in more despatchers and better technology for Queensland Ambulance Service operations centres so that when a call comes in on 000, 90 per cent of the time that call will be answered within 10 seconds.

Our record budget means that for those suffering a cardiac arrest their chances of survival are increased because of the mechanical chest compression devices being rolled out to critical care paramedics who respond to these cases. It means that when you are experiencing a mental health crisis there will be senior mental health clinicians working hand in hand with despatchers and paramedics to get you the most appropriate specialised care. I met some of those experts very recently when I visited Kedron. It means that ambulances responding to emergencies are getting there quickly, because this government continues to invest in technology to support emergency response and dynamic deployment despatch activities. It means that when a paramedic responds to a call it is more likely their vehicle will have a power assisted stretcher to lift patients safely and to reduce the physical strain on our paramedics. Throughout this challenging year, the Queensland Ambulance Service has supported Queenslanders. In this budget we are proud to support them.

### **Coronavirus, Women and Girls**

 **Hon. SM FENTIMAN** (Waterford—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice, Minister for Women and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (9.53 am): I am so proud of the budget handed down by the Palaszczuk government this week and how we have responded to the

impacts of COVID. I am proud because we have put women front and centre in our economic response, because we know that women have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. I am incredibly proud to table this morning the Palaszczuk government's fifth Queensland *Women's economic statement*.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Government: Queensland Budget 2020-21—Women's Economic Statement [363].

Women have borne the economic brunt of COVID more than men by working in frontline jobs such as aged and health care, teaching and child care and cleaning; in industries most impacted by shutdowns such as retail and hospitality; and in part-time and casualised work. More women than men have lost their jobs during COVID, and at home they still are primarily responsible for the care of children and for domestic work, both of which have increased in COVID. The Palaszczuk government has responded by creating skills pathways for women through Skilling Queenslanders for Work, our free TAFE and our free apprenticeships. We continue to implement policies to support more women in male dominated industries such as STEM and traditional trades and to support them to thrive in small business.

Tragically, the COVID-19 pandemic has also seen an increase in violence against women in Queensland. Almost one in 10 women in a relationship experienced domestic violence during COVID, with two-thirds saying the attacks started or became worse during COVID. We have committed \$152 million this financial year to the safety of Queensland women and girls and delivered on each and every one of the 140 recommendations of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence, *Not now, not ever*.

While I am on feet talking about women's safety, I want to bring to the attention of the House a dangerous and reckless move by the federal government. This week the federal LNP pushed through the House of Representatives legislation that will abolish the Family Court. By undermining the family law system, Scott Morrison and Christian Porter are putting Queensland women and families at risk in the time of their greatest need. Evidence shows that specialist knowledge of domestic violence is critical when making decisions in family law cases. The Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Bar Association have strongly opposed the proposed merger of the Family Court with the Federal Circuit Court, and the Family Court's first chief justice, Elizabeth Evatt, said that it would lead to undesirable outcomes for children and families. Women's Legal Services Australia spokesperson Angela Lynch said that her organisation's opposition to the merger was about ensuring the safety and best interests of the child and the safety of adult victim survivors of family violence in family law proceedings.

I have written to my federal counterpart the Minister for Women, Senator Marise Payne, and urged her to consider the views of stakeholders from the legal profession and women's advocates to stop the passage of these bills in the Senate, to save the Family Court and to make sure that women and children are kept safe in their time of need.

## Arts Sector



**Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (9.57 am): Queensland is the first Australian state to open our theatres to full capacity without an exemption required. This means full houses for seated ticketed events. We are welcoming more visitors, boosting employment and reconnecting Queenslanders with arts and cultural experiences. There is plenty on offer.

At QPAC, in the weeks ahead audiences can enjoy: Circa's *Carnival of the Animals*; Queensland Ballet's *60 Dancers: 60 Stories*; shake & stir's *A Christmas Carol*; and QPAC's *Spirit of Christmas* concert. I know that many members will relish the monster news that from January *Shrek The Musical* will be the first major musical in Australia to perform at 100 per cent capacity without an exemption since COVID-19. That is right here in Queensland. *Shrek's* QPAC season will support an estimated 3,000 shifts for artists and arts workers and will be a major drawcard for interstate visitors.

Our museums and galleries are also back to work. Queensland Museum's *Sea Monsters: Prehistoric Ocean Predators* takes guests on a journey through our ancient inland oceans. *The Motorcycle: Design, Art, Desire* is exclusive to GOMA thanks to blockbuster funding from the Palaszczuk government and support from Tourism and Events Queensland. It features 100 exceptional motorcycles from the 1870s to the present and is also exclusive to Brisbane.

Cultural and heritage visitors spend more and stay longer than other visitors. Prior to COVID-19, the arts, cultural and creative sector directly and indirectly contributed an estimated \$12.3 billion to Queensland's economy and employed around 92,000 Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government's 2020 budget delivers a plan for Queensland's economic recovery with an investment of over



\$290 million in the current financial year. This includes our \$22.5 million Arts and Cultural Recovery Package to sustain the sector through COVID-19, develop new work, reopen our venues and support COVID-safe audience experiences across the state.

Our investment is helping the sector to emerge with strength and supporting Queensland's economic recovery. As at 31 October, \$12.8 million in funding from the recovery package has already been committed, supporting 242 applicants. I am incredibly proud of the way that Queensland's arts community has responded to the challenges faced this year. I invite Queenslanders and interstate visitors alike to some of the incredibly rich cultural experiences on offer in the weeks and months ahead. With restrictions easing and the reopening of borders, the arts sector in Queensland is good to go.

## PARLIAMENTARY CRIME AND CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

### Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner, Report



**Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (9.59 am): I lay upon the table of the House the Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner's report titled *Report of the work and activities of the Crime and Corruption Commission under chapter 11 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000* dated September 2020.

*Tabled paper:* Parliamentary Crime and Corruption Commissioner: Report of the work and activities of the Crime and Corruption Commission under chapter 11 of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, dated September 2020 [364].

The committee is required to table this report within 14 sitting days of receipt. The committee received the report on 4 September 2020. The report concluded that the reports provided to the parliamentary commissioner by the chairperson of the Crime and Corruption Commission were adequate; inspections conducted by the parliamentary commissioner of the CCC's controlled operation records on 3 September 2020 verified the information in the chairperson's reports; and the CCC has complied with the controlled operations provisions of the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act and the requirements related to registers.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

**Mr SPEAKER:** Honourable members, question time will conclude today at 10.30 am.

### Infrastructure Projects



**Mr CRISAFULLI** (10.01 am): My question is to the Premier. Moody's has warned that the budget may struggle in responding to future shocks. Will the Premier agree to our call for infrastructure to be fast-tracked to get the 214,000 unemployed Queenslanders into work?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I say this to the Leader of the Opposition: we should look at the track record of the Newman government when it came to infrastructure.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You can see it. Those opposite built a monument to themselves. It is called 1 William Street. That was the infrastructure project they fast-tracked. They fast-tracked a building for themselves—not for Queenslanders, for themselves. We have committed \$56 billion worth of infrastructure over the next four years to make sure that we have the roads, we have the schools and we have the hospitals for our growing state. Not only are we going to build the schools and the hospitals and the police stations and the ambulance stations; we are going to provide the services to go with them. Not only are we going to build Cross River Rail; we are going to build the trains to be used on Cross River Rail—made in Queensland, not offshore like the LNP but right here in Queensland in Maryborough.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The LNP was not even going to build the trains for Cross River Rail if it was elected.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Sorry, Premier. The member for Kawana will cease his interjections, as will the member for Maryborough.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. We are going to build the second M1, working with the federal government. We are going to continue to invest in the Bruce Highway—not a hoax like the LNP during the election.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right. Could it get the money out of the Morrison government for the four laning or the six laning or whatever the hoax was? No, nothing. With regard to infrastructure, it is this government that has put over a billion dollars into water infrastructure in this state. It was about a year ago that we heard about the Bradfield scheme, the Bradfield scheme, the Bradfield scheme from the LNP.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** How much was it?

**Mr Dick:** \$20 million.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! What is it about water?

**Mrs Frecklington:** They won't build it.

**Mr SPEAKER:** It was a rhetorical question, member for Nanango.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** The member for Nanango should not be interjecting about water.

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That is right: she went to the election saying, 'We're going to build a big, bold vision—the \$15 billion Bradfield scheme.' We rifled through the papers to find out how much those opposite were going to put in, and on the day before the election it was revealed to be \$20 million. When was the dam going to be built?

**Mr Dick:** Ten years.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** In 10 years time. That is not fast-tracking. That is the slow road.

**Mrs Frecklington:** See how big it is—how bold and visionary it is?

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier—

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is so bold and visionary—

**Mr SPEAKER:**—please resume—

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, resume your seat.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:**—he is—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Premier, resume your seat.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Before calling the Leader of the Opposition, question time is half an hour today. It does not mean that an hour's worth of interjections must happen in half an hour. We need to hear the speaker on their feet.

## Drought

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** My question is to the Minister for Agricultural Industry Development. Given Moody's warning about dealing with future shocks to the economy, can the minister outline the modelled costs of the ongoing drought across Queensland?

**Mr FURNER:** I thank the member for his question. It is such an honour to be the agriculture minister in the 57th Parliament. When I travel throughout regional Queensland it is such an honour to be referred to as 'Furner the Farmer's Friend'.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** And the fishers' friend; I take that interjection. We have heard time and time again—

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Kawana, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr FURNER:** We have heard time and time again the misleading information delivered by those opposite, who should know better, particularly those from regional Queensland, about a myth of cutting funding out of the drought funding that this government has proudly delivered over many, many years

and will continue to deliver. We have committed to providing ongoing funding for drought for our primary producers right throughout Queensland. I dismiss the premise that the Leader of the Opposition is delivering with respect to claiming that there will be reductions of funding in terms of drought for our farmers. We never will and we never have.

It was those opposite who cut funding from the budget previously, who cut jobs in regional Queensland and who cut public servants right throughout our wonderful state in terms of our Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. I will not accept any argument from those opposite who come into this chamber and suggest that the Palaszczuk government is doing anything other than protecting our primary producers right throughout this state, and we will continue doing that.

We will invest in the regions. We will invest in agriculture. We will invest in protecting our farmers. We will further their interests like we are doing with cluster fencing to ensure that sheep numbers grow right throughout Western Queensland. The member for Gregory knows this and I commend that part of his speech yesterday when he recognised the good work that the Palaszczuk government is doing in respect of this matter. We need more people like the member for Gregory on the front bench, and I commend the comments that the *Longreach Leader* made about him that he is definitely a person who should be promoted.

**Mr Lister:** Blah, blah, blah!

**Mr FURNER:** I will not defend the member for Gympie from the *Longreach Leader's* comment with respect to him being inaudible. Next week in estimates I am sure he will get the opportunity to clarify that critique that the *Longreach Leader* delivered so it can be corrected. Next week's estimates will be a time for him to correct the record to ensure that he is not classified any further as being inaudible in the *Longreach Leader*.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Southern Downs, it is a shame that we have a repeat of a previous interjection along the lines of, 'Blah, blah, blah.' I think you know how that ended last time. You are warned under the standing orders. You will cease all interjections.

### Townsville, Economy

**Mr WALKER:** My question is of the Premier and Minister for Trade. Will the Premier please update the House on the government's plan to rebuild the economy in and around Townsville and detail any new opportunities for my community?

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I thank the member for Mundingburra for the question. I know how much the member for Mundingburra loves where he lives. He loves that town, he loves that community and he would never leave that community. I know how much he loves that community. In fact, with regard to the former member for Mundingburra, this is what he said when he lost his seat. He said, 'I love this city.'

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. The Treasurer will cease his interjections. The Leader of the Opposition will cease his interjections. There will be no quarrelling across the chamber.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** He said, 'I love this city. These people have supported me as a young councillor, as a first term MP.'

**Mr Crisafulli** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you are warned under the standing orders. I just called you to order directly.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** 'They have always been great to me and this result won't change the fact I will always call this city home and it will mean so much to me.' It is not home anymore. Back to more important issues.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr Dick:** I didn't have to buy a plane ticket. I didn't have to come 1,400 kilometres.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** That's right. Our government will continue to invest in Townsville.

**Mr Dick** interjected.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I love the city of Townsville. I love the community. I love the people.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Everton and Treasurer, you are both warned under the standing orders.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** As part of this budget we have earmarked \$739 million for vital infrastructure and capital works for the region. There is \$1.1 billion for the Townsville Hospital and Health Service, \$42.3 million to maintain and improve local schools—investing in schools and hospitals—there is also \$63 million to expand and improve social housing and \$14.2 million for a new Advanced Manufacturing Skills Lab and, of course, the hydrogen and renewable energy centre at Bohle TAFE that I was talking about earlier this week. Plus there is the implementation agreement for the \$1.8 billion CopperString project which will unlock the vast New Century mineral deposits of the North West linking Townsville.

Today I am also proud to confirm that we are getting on with the job because the Coordinator-General has received the draft environmental impact statement for the project and is now assessing the proposal before it is released for public consultation. That is even more good news.

At the beginning of 2021 we host the Australia Day program in Townsville. It is the first signature event for the region. I am also pleased to confirm that the first meeting of my cabinet will be in Townsville. The cabinet will be going up to Townsville. It is a growing community. We are continuing to invest and once again showing our support by taking the whole cabinet to Townsville for our first meeting of the year, showing once again our great commitment to the regions and to the great city which I love and I know the member for Mundingburra loves as well.

### **Coronavirus, Vaccine**

**Mr JANETZKI:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. The budget is based on the assumption of a successful COVID-19 vaccine rollout next year. Can the minister guarantee all rural and regional Queenslanders will have access to a vaccine at the same time as those in the city?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I thank the member for his question. It is an important question. All Australians are eager to see what comes of the vaccines that are being developed, not just the one that the UK has now adopted but the other vaccines that are being worked on around the world, including right here in Queensland by the University of Queensland.

As for its rollout, there is a lot of detail to be worked out before we get to the point of a date and how it is to be rolled out. The first point is that it will be a decision of the Morrison government in relation to the vaccine and its approval or otherwise through the TGA regarding its suitability to be used here in Australia.

**Mr Dick:** The National Vaccination Scheme is run by the national government.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take that interjection by the Treasurer. We know that the Commonwealth has made a commitment to fund the purchase of the vaccine and to have it delivered to Queensland. Beyond that the support ends and it will be up to us to fully fund the delivery of it at that stage. As I understand it, at this point it is not proposed that it will be funded through Medicare. It will be a cost to the government. To have this delivered right across Queensland will be a very big job logistically. I know that Queensland Health and the Chief Health Officer are already turning their minds to how we do this for all Queenslanders. We want to encourage every Queenslanders to take up this vaccine because when we do we will have the opportunity to open up our economy even more and to protect the most vulnerable in our community.

We will wait and see what comes of the vaccine that is being used in the UK. I eagerly await the outcomes of the other trials happening around the world and here in Queensland. We are incredible in the medical research that we do. We have often led the way in medical research.

**Ms Bates:** Except we have just underfunded them.

**Mrs D'ATH:** I take the interjection. I am not quite sure why the member for Mudgeeraba is interjecting. I am answering the question. This is a very important issue. We look forward to the vaccine coming to Queensland and making sure that it is available to all Queenslanders. At least the member for Mudgeeraba is here for the whole of my answer this time, but she is clearly not listening.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mrs D'ATH:** There are 15 minutes to go, I know. We are working through that detail now, but there is a lot of work to be done with the Commonwealth and understanding how the Commonwealth is going to deliver it out into the regions which is the commitment.

### The Spit

**Mrs McMAHON:** My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning. Will the Deputy Premier update the House on the Palaszczuk government's plan to attract more visitors to the Spit and is he aware of any alternative approaches?

**Dr MILES:** I thank the member for her question. It is a great question. I am really proud to report to the House that planning and design works are underway for the new pontoon and jetty at the Spit as part of the Palaszczuk government's multimillion dollar strategy to improve and promote the Gold Coast icon into the future. During the election we announced \$22 million of capital works to deliver new infrastructure at the Spit. Designers are already hard at work developing concepts for the new pontoon and jetty as part of the program of improvements there.

The Spit is a Gold Coast icon. This project will ensure it remains a drawcard for decades to come. Whether you go to the Spit to surf or to go fishing, to take your dog for a walk or for a picnic with the family, the Spit is a great place for tourists and locals and we, the Palaszczuk government, are making it even better.

New infrastructure such as this creates jobs—jobs in construction as well as jobs in the tourism and hospitality industries, as a result of the people it attracts. Projects like this are an important part of our economic recovery plan for the Gold Coast. We expect that the jetty will become a new Gold Coast attraction as a great spot to fish or enjoy Broadwater views looking south to Surfers Paradise. All of these attractions will put the Spit on the map—it has always been on the map—as one of the Gold Coast's must-see destinations.

Those on this side of the House know that the Spit was only very narrowly saved. If the LNP had been re-elected in 2015, the member for Clayfield was all set to sell off the beautiful Spit to the highest bidder. It is just one of many things the member for Clayfield wanted to sell when he was the treasurer in the Newman government. While the member for Broadwater started the week saying that Campbell Newman was history and they had learned their lessons, last night the member for Clayfield made it very clear that he had learned no lessons at all. He is back from retirement, on the field and off the bench.

Last night the member for Clayfield used his budget debate speech not to back in the member for Broadwater but to defend the budgets he delivered from 2012 to 2015—budgets roundly rejected by the Queensland people. The member for Clayfield made clear that he has learned no lessons. He made clear he has no regrets. That is what one gets with the LNP: they start every week saying, 'Campbell Newman is dead!', and by Friday they are chanting, 'Long live Campbell Newman!'

### Great Barrier Reef, Initiatives

**Mr ANDREW:** My question is to the Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs. Can the minister please explain to the House about reef credits, how they are funded and what is the long-term impact on agriculture?

**Ms SCANLON:** I thank the member for the question. Of course, we on this side of the House are very proud to protect the Great Barrier Reef. We are doing that through a range of initiatives as outlined in our economic recovery plan and in the budget handed down this week. Our reef credits are incredibly important in protecting the Great Barrier Reef. We know that water quality is the single largest issue affecting the longevity of the reef and we must make sure that we create the right environment so that people can continue to enjoy it. The Great Barrier Reef supports 60,000 jobs and injects \$6 billion into the local economy. We are ensuring that our Great Barrier Reef is protected through a range of other initiatives, such as vegetation management laws and reef regulations, and we are working with industry to make sure that we improve water quality.

What we have from the federal government is a complete lack of vision when it comes to setting out very clear emissions reduction targets, yet we know that the largest issue facing the Great Barrier Reef is climate change. I note that the ABC is doing a two-day documentary around the Great Barrier Reef. I thank them for that because it is incredibly important that we highlight not only its great ecological significance but also the jobs that it creates.

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr Brown** interjected.

**Ms SCANLON:** I take that interjection from the member for Capalaba. When it comes to reef credits we are making sure that we protect water quality while working with farmers and the agricultural sector. I am more than happy to provide a briefing for the member to go through the details so that he knows how this can benefit communities in his electorate. I thank him for the question.

### Budget, Job Creation

**Mr KING:** My question is of the Treasurer and Minister for Investment. Can the Treasurer please update the House on how the Palaszczuk government's 2020 budget will support jobs and growth, and is the Treasurer aware of any other approach?

**Mr DICK:** I thank the member for Kurwongbah for his question and his interest in the state budget. The shadow Treasurer has already clocked off. It is Christmas time and budget week. He has had four days to ask questions about the budget. It is now Friday and he does not have any more questions about the budget to ask the Treasurer. The Leader of the Opposition has clocked off. He will not ask me a question. The shadow Treasurer will not ask me a question. The shadow finance minister will not ask me a question. Lazy, lazy, lazy: that is what they are. The member for Kurwongbah, who has represented his electorate so well for the past five years, was re-elected with an increased majority. That is because Labor works and the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP whinge.

One would have thought that, in a week when we had record high growth in our economy, the LNP would be backing in the economic and fiscal settings of our government, but no. All we hear is negative whingeing and whining, and that is what we heard yesterday. The budget reply speech was written by the Leader of the Opposition himself, I understand, and didn't it show! We had almost an hour of whingeing, complaint and negativity about Queensland. He was talking down Queensland. The biggest thing that the Leader of the Opposition wants is to power-dive into the abyss. Do you remember that, Mr Speaker? He was talking down the Queensland economy. They are writing a question now. They have thought, 'I'd better give him one,' so I will be ready. They are working it up now. You have one minute and 30 seconds to go, members opposite.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr DICK:** They are writing off Queensland. We have not heard one word of complaint—just like in the *Australian* today—about the massive operating deficits in New South Wales and the federal government. They make not one word of complaint about them. No, they are heroes of the nation! We fix the economy, which is what the Labor government has done here, supporting jobs, small business, manufacturing, industry and agriculture across the state. We are backing them in. That is exactly what our budget has done.

What the Leader of the Opposition will not reveal is what he will cut to get rid of the deficits. He says that he will not borrow. He says that debt is bad. He says that he will not borrow to fund deficits so he must cut, but still he will not reveal his cuts. He says that Campbell Newman is bad but still will not apologise. There has not been one word of apology. What will he cut? Will he cut 1,800 nurses and midwives? Will he cut 4,400 health workers? For two years they talked about the Bradfield scheme and they are still backing it in with \$15 billion, shovel ready, and \$20 million for consultants. What you get from the LNP is all talk and no action. To punish the former leader of the opposition they have made her the shadow minister for water. That is not fair of the Leader of the Opposition. That is a bit cruel. We look forward to hearing about the cuts—

*(Time expired)*

### Bushfires, Aerial Resources

**Mr LAST:** My question is to the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services. Will the minister explain why Queensland's flagship aerial tanker, which was promised to keep Queenslanders safe and strong, has spent weeks grounded at Bundaberg Airport while Fraser Island burns?

**Mr RYAN:** I have been wondering where the member for Burdekin has been all week. He is in a big job now and he has to step up. I saw him here this morning. If he had been listening to my ministerial statement he would have the answer and could have asked a better question. The estimates hearings are coming up soon and the member for Burdekin will have to do a bit more work.

We back the experts. It is not for the member for Burdekin or any politician to tell our firefighters when they should use their firefighting equipment. The tanker is an important capability for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. It is used by our firefighters and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services when they deem it operationally appropriate. Indeed, it has been used. In the past week alone

the larger air tanker was used on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and yesterday. It is an important capability. It is a capability that our government has provided to Queensland Fire and Emergency Services for bushfire season.

However, it is important to recognise that that capability is part of a broad suite of equipment and capability available to emergency services right across the nation. The larger air tanker in New South Wales can be deployed in Queensland and we saw it deployed earlier this year during the Queensland bushfires. This is the important part: we have had a royal commission into bushfires that was set up by Scott Morrison and that made recommendations to the federal government.

**Mr Boothman** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Theodore is warned under the standing orders.

**Mr RYAN:** Of the three most critical recommendations, the first relates to establishing a national aerial firefighting fleet. What did Scott Morrison say about that? No, he will not commit to that! The royal commission said that legislation to declare a national emergency should be introduced. Has he done it? No! We have the most robust system. What did the commission say about reviewing emergencies? It said that every state should set up an IGEM. We have the gold standard. They should copy us. What did Morrison say about that? No! When it comes to supporting communities and supporting the capability of emergency services agencies right across Australia, Morrison set up a \$4 billion recovery fund, but how much has he spent? Zero!

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, nobody in the chamber has had more sleep than anyone else.

### **Children's Health Queensland, Funding**

**Ms BATES:** My question is to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. Can the minister explain why the budget cuts \$17.919 million from the budget of Children's Health Queensland in the middle of a global pandemic?

**Mrs D'ATH:** I will certainly check the statistics, because, not surprisingly, over the past week just about every question on health from those opposite has been misleading, although I am sure not intentionally. I will explain the budget to those opposite. What they are looking at is in relation to the budget actuals, so what has been spent for the 2019-20 year, versus the budget allocated for 2020-21.

What they are not comparing is the actual allocated budget for 2019-20. If they do, what they will see is that our budgets have increased across all of our HHSs in relation to our allocated budget for 2019-20 compared to 2020-21. We are very proud of the record investment we are making in each one of those HHSs.

Why were the actuals higher? The global health pandemic—

**Ms Bates** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Mudgeeraba, you are on a warning. You can leave the chamber.

**Government members** interjected.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! The member will leave the chamber under standing order 253A for one hour.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Mudgeeraba withdrew from the chamber at 10.30 am.*

**Mrs D'ATH:** I cannot reflect on the absence of the member, but I hope it is not me. That is four times members have been thrown out in five days during question time.

If those opposite chose to spend any time looking at the budget papers and comparing the actual allocated budget, they would see that we have had an increase in cost because every one of our HHSs has had to ramp up to prepare for COVID and the worst that could have come if it was not for the way that we dealt with it. It is not luck; it is leadership. It is leadership by the Premier, leadership by the former health minister and leadership by the Chief Health Officer and Queensland Health.

Let's compare that with those opposite. The Leader of the Opposition in his budget reply speech mentioned health once and did not outline their vision for health or what they would do for health. He just said, 'We need the best health care for Queensland.' Yes! That is why we have a record \$21.8 billion of investment in health and ambulance services in Queensland in this year's budget.

It is appalling that the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition could not bring themselves to talk about the health budget, the importance of investing in the health budget, or even to thank our health staff for what they have done during COVID. There was very little reference. There was pre COVID mention, there was post COVID mention and the only reference to COVID and what we are going through is the economic impact. The economic impact is significant, but do members know what? We cannot recover our economy if we do not get the health response right. Acknowledge our health workers and what they are doing and the fact that it is leadership—

*(Time expired)*

**Mr SPEAKER:** The period for question time has expired.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

### APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL

#### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from 3 December (see p. 454), on motion Mr Dick—

That the bills be now read a second time.



**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (10.32 am): I rise to speak on the 2020-21 government appropriation bills. These post-election budget blowout bills are exactly what I expected from this debt dependent, fiscal failure of a Labor government, unfortunately re-elected on the back of a totally unrelated scare campaign over health. In fact, I was so confident the government would use the coronavirus excuse to further blow out Queensland debt in this budget, I predicted it would be \$130 billion even before the Treasurer's announcement. I knew that he would not miss the opportunity to rack up more borrowings on the Queensland taxpayers' credit card whilst using the excuse of the coronavirus to hide Labor's insatiable appetite for more Queensland debt, even to pay recurrent expenditure—never mind the fact that Labor had racked up \$102 billion worth of debt before the coronavirus hit town. In the old Labor adage 'you never let a chance go by', so they could not resist the opportunity of a good excuse to whack more debt burden on the shoulders of Queensland's children and their grandchildren which I cannot foresee will be paid down in the near future.

We are all at the start of a world economic downturn and Australia is at the tip of the tail of the dog in world economic terms. Queenslanders, brace yourself for tough times ahead. This budget has the usual Labor Party mantra about hiring more public servants to hide their private sector failings, as evidenced by their top-of-the-pops rating as having the highest unemployment of all mainland states. How embarrassing for a Labor government! Our state has bountiful resources being extracted from the ground; Australia's favourite tourist destinations, as evidenced by the opening of the borders; unrivalled agricultural product; and a booming migration level fuelling construction across the state, yet we have the ignominy of the highest unemployment in mainland Australia, presided over by a Queensland Labor government.

The numbers will get worse. The state government shut the borders relentlessly while they knew the Morrison federal government was paying for their election pitch of keeping the borders closed through JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments amounting to billions of dollars. That pea and thimble trick will cease next year and then the real cost of keeping the borders closed will be sheeted home to this government. I know that they will buck and squeal about Morrison keeping the payments up, but the reality is that these 'on the dole' payments will have to stop sometime. When they do, this sleight of hand budget will be exposed for the mirage that it really is.

You can guarantee that over the next four years the debt level will be creeping upwards from the \$130 billion promise we have today. The only hindrance to a Labor Party all-out assault on maximising the credit card debt will be an independent ratings agency bold enough to downgrade the fiscal position of this government again, as in the Bligh-Andrew Fraser era.

Coming into another election which will be all about the economy will sound the death knell for any treasurer aspiring to be the premier when—not if—the current Premier takes her leave of parliamentary duties. I can remember former premier Peter Beattie walking across the floor of this chamber, turning to those on this side of the House and saying, 'If it was up to you guys, I would be here for 100 years.' But Labor shifts them on, and the audition is for the member of the AWU faction, Treasurer Cameron Dick, trying to get his way through. We welcome him as the alternative Premier, I can assure you!



I am pleased, on behalf of the Mermaid Beach electorate and the people of the Gold Coast, that some funding—some—has been included for M1 upgrades and there is seed funding for the Coomera Connector which is much overdue. The \$10 million for exit 41, the \$5 million for exit 49, the \$12 million for the Coomera Connector and the \$6 million for exit 57 are all just bandaidsolutions for a problem that will reach parking-lot status by the time another four years has gone by. Instead, some of the \$5,400 million designated for the ex-treasurer's underground railway pet project in South Brisbane should be transferred to get the Coomera Connector well and truly underway rather than spend beer money, in road-building terms, on fiddling with a few crossings.

I note also that \$50 million is allocated this year for light rail stage 3, which is 85 per cent in my electorate; however, a lot more money is required to finish this. This drip-feed approach to most of the projects for the Gold Coast indicates how short of money this government really is. There are plenty of promises, but most have over four years of funding and utilise federal government money allocated to Queensland as part of the spend, with little acknowledgement that it actually comes from the federal government.

I am also appreciative of the \$10 million for the sports centre to be built at Miami State High School, a great school with a great headmistress/principal—whatever you call them these days. Again, funding is over four years. That epitomises the drip-feed approach to getting jobs done in Queensland.

A curious omission from the budget is money set aside to pursue the global tourism hub the Labor government trumpeted for the Gold Coast in the lead-up to the election. It was always a furphy, even before the coronavirus hit town. For the Palaszczuk government to walk away from the Star casino's offer of a \$100 million extension to the Gold Coast convention centre in return for a 20-year exclusivity deal for the Gold Coast operation was sheer madness and incompetence.

I note that there is no money for the convention centre extension in this year's budget. I am sure there will be no new alternative casino operator in the next 20 years. Why on earth did this foolish Labor government walk away from a \$100 million contribution from the private sector for one of the most important tourism infrastructure projects on the Gold Coast? I bet Star casino will now not be stumping up their \$100 million as they know that after the coronavirus pandemic has hit the world, there is no need to pay for their exclusivity for 20 years as there will be no competitor on the Gold Coast for another 20 years.

It is an absolutely rolled-gold opportunity lost by the Palaszczuk government. It is no wonder they have one measly seat out of 11 on the Gold Coast, where people recognise their disdain for the private sector capital of Queensland called the Gold Coast. I noticed Senator Murray Watt, one of the rejects from this parliament—I think it was Murray who when we had him in here; normally we get the rejects from the Senate in here not the other way around, sorry, Minister—

**Mr Furner** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Mermaid Beach, please direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr STEVENS:** I apologise, Mr Deputy Speaker. Senator Murray Watt was moved down to the Gold Coast and made a spectacular effort in trying to garner a few more votes for the Labor Party using his federal moneys down there, but he failed miserably. We have 10 out of 11 seats—'Hear, hear' for the wonderful Gold Coast.

Another year of Labor, another budget blowout and \$26,000 of debt placed on every man, woman and child in Queensland and yet no-one seems to care. We can see the drip-feed method of paying for infrastructure. The Labor Party obviously did not want the big headline of record debt prior to the 31 October election, but to be honest I do not think it would have made any difference to the election result as the election was totally about the health scare. The Labor government did not care one iota about the financial cost of the shut businesses because ScoMo and the federal government were paying for the pain through JobKeeper and JobSeeker. There was relatively no financial pain for the state government but a hell of a lot of electoral gain from scaring aged people nightly on the news and in the papers in the morning with coronavirus statistics from all around the world.

The Premier and the Chief Health Officer were the reality TV stars on free-to-air television and they rode the disaster politics all the way to the finishing post on election night. Now we have this debt-laden budget foisted upon Queenslanders, ostensibly on the back of the COVID excuse. Premier Palaszczuk has been blessed by this pandemic. One could legitimately ask: could the Labor Party have won government without coronavirus? This budget tells us it could not.


The Treasurer ran around the state with his propaganda document of Unite and Recover pinned to his suit under his arm. I am sure there were blank pages behind the glossy front page because this budget will recover nothing for Queenslanders. Perhaps he should have called it the 'unite and cover-up'

document because the debt burden, the drip-feed for infrastructure and the borrowings for recurrent expenditure will undoubtedly be exposed in the years ahead when the Morrison government takes Australian businesses off their dole payments of JobKeeper and JobSeeker. That is not to mention our tension with China—Queensland's biggest trading partner. My friends in the wine industry are suffering already. I am doing my bit to catch up. If China takes a big stick to our resources industry then Queensland will end up borrowing just to pay the interest bill.

The Treasurer did not know Queensland's debt level—hello. He did not know we had a budget booked in for April—hello. He certainly does not know the pain of small business caused by his government's restrictions that his parents' small business would have rammed home to him. As a treasurer, the member for Woodridge makes a great attorney-general for Tuvalu!

Fiscal knowledge and responsibility will be the centre of the next election in 2024. In February, when we sit again, it will only be three years and nine months until the election. Coronavirus will be a dim, dark memory as the world utilises the myriad vaccines that are coming to the fore very quickly. When jobless rates start to rise to double digits, when the scarcity of money drives interest rates up around the world and when this Labor government runs out of credit capacity, the people of Queensland will realise how they have been hoodwinked into returning this fiscally irresponsible and incompetent government to the treasury benches. They will not make the same mistake twice. Barring earthquakes, floods, fires or other disasters—and flies—that Labor needs to rely on, 2024 will be all about the budget and this pretend Treasurer with kindergarten financial credentials, who will probably be Premier by then, will reap the rejection by the people of Queensland of his making.

If I may digress momentarily, I advise the House of the recent passing of a great Queenslander and close mate of mine for 40 years. Dr Michael Joseph Barry—Mick, to everyone who knew him—passed away in the surf at his beloved Currumbin on 6 November aged 78 years. Mick was Australian Wallaby No. 542, a respected ear, nose and throat specialist, a great family man and a doyen of the Tugun-Currumbin area. We shared ownership of several successful racehorses. He was a board member of the Gold Coast Turf Club and honorary doctor for the club for many years. A memorial and wake was held for Mick at the Gold Coast Turf Club last Friday where many of his friends and family celebrated his generous, joyful and fun-loving personality with loving reminiscence. Vale, Mick Barry, physically gone but never forgotten. A great mate.

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.46 am): I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills and the 2020-21 state budget. Any logical thinking person would know that the global COVID-19 pandemic has dominated 2020, bringing death and disruption to all parts of the world. We have seen cases grow across the globe substantially. Recent deaths in the US have reached 275,201, with alarming estimates that this could reach 400,000 deaths in total by the first quarter of 2021. The total number of cases in the US has reached a staggering 14-plus million.

Conversely, this year the Palaszczuk government, led by the people's Premier, has kept Queensland safe from this insidious pandemic. With the scientific expert advice from the Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, Queensland has been at the forefront of dealing with the health response.

I know previous speakers, including the last speaker, the member for Mermaid Beach, spoke about a health scare. We merely need to go to the World Wide Web and see the statistics I have just quoted to understand that this is no health scare. This is a real issue affecting the globe. Our health response has shielded Queenslanders from the spread of COVID-19, and with the carefully balanced oversight of our Treasurer's budget Queensland will be guided through the current difficult times to a brighter future.

Notwithstanding that, opposition members, speaker after speaker, have been talking down the Queensland economy and putting consumer confidence at risk. They are just like Campbell Newman when he compared Queensland's economy to Spain when Spain had 25 per cent unemployment. The LNP love bad news for Queensland. They love it. When jobs are lost because of COVID, they cannot wipe the smiles off their faces. When businesses are hurting, we see the gleam in their eyes. When farmers are doing it tough, they sink the boot in and bleat that everything is terrible. When they cannot find enough bad news, they come in here and make it up, like they made up the supposed cuts to drought funding. There are no cuts to drought funding. It is little wonder the LNP executive has called a recent meeting to question what the LNP stands for.

In my electorate of Ferry Grove, ensuring access to a quality education has been a driving passion of mine, and I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered in spades. From minor works to major transformational infrastructure projects, this government has delivered

\$50 million worth of investment into schools in the Ferny Grove electorate. That is \$50 million driving jobs in our local community, as well as improving learning environments for both our students and our teachers.

The last state budget delivered new classrooms for Newmarket State School and enhanced outdoor learning spaces at Mitchelton Special School and funded ongoing work on the major entertainment and performing arts precinct at Ferny Grove State High School. In addition, the budget will deliver a refurbished hall and classrooms at Mitchelton State High School. I commend the Palaszczuk government and, in particular, the education minister for supporting this funding.

Through the recent campaign we pledged \$5 million for a new school hall for Oakleigh State School and a further \$400,000 for stage 2 of a community hub for Patricks Road State School outside-school-hours care. Of course, this state budget has delivered on those commitments. That is what the Palaszczuk government does: we get on with the job of delivering for the people of Queensland, and the state budget once again delivers for Ferny Grove.

Our ongoing improvements to Samford Road will make a daily difference to many in and around the Ferny Grove electorate. I and many of my constituents are very much looking forward to the Ferny Grove transit oriented development, or TOD, getting underway and creating more jobs in our local area. I cannot overstate the importance of this development to the Ferny Grove electorate and the surrounding region. This project will create 700 jobs during the construction phase and another 700 ongoing jobs once it is complete. That is 1,400 jobs being created in my electorate. This is going to contribute to the prosperity of Ferny Grove for years to come. It is not just the jobs that will provide a benefit to people in my electorate. It is also the more than 400 additional car parks in that development, supported by more than \$9 million from the Palaszczuk government. Ferny Grove is a vibrant community and it continues to be my honour to serve its people and to deliver these outcomes for them.

Turning to my portfolio, the Palaszczuk government has a proud record of investing in my portfolio of agricultural industry development and fisheries and rural communities. It is no wonder that when I travel thousands of kilometres across this wonderful state I am welcomed as 'Furner the farmer's friend'. Like every sector in virtually every nation across the world, our fisheries and agriculture businesses have been doing it tough—really tough. We have stood by farmers. We have stood shoulder to shoulder with them. We were the first state to declare agriculture an essential industry. We backed them to keep supply chains open and, where necessary, to diversify their businesses into other markets. I dare to say that the cooperation between industry and government was unprecedented—a fitting response to the unprecedented times we faced because of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Even as we continue to implement Queensland's plan for economic recovery, we continue in that wonderful, productive spirit of working together for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

I know the Leader of the Opposition in his budget reply speech suggested that we are at war with agriculture in this state. The only war we are in with Queensland's agriculture industry is the one where we stand side by side, fighting shoulder to shoulder and helping our farmers take on the world. Despite what the Leader of the Opposition had to say, we remain steadfastly committed to agricultural research and extension, both directly through our many DAF research facilities and through significant partnerships with industry and the university sector. In fact, the Queensland government's research contribution to Agri-Science Queensland has risen from \$84.9 million in 2014-15 to \$94.3 million in 2019-20.

Agriculture and food production has long been a mainstay of the Queensland economy, and the Palaszczuk Labor government knows the importance of supporting it into the future. We are supporting it for our farmers and fishers. We are supporting it for the many thousands of jobs that rely on it—the supply chain and transport industry jobs, the manufacturing jobs, the export jobs, the retail and restaurant jobs. All of them rely on our food and fibre producers, either in full or in part, to support their businesses and their jobs. The commitments in this state budget will deliver for our state, ensuring we are growing our regions and keeping food and fibre production as a significant driver of our economy and jobs.

One of the things that the Palaszczuk government is rightly proud of is the extent to which we have supported the return of the sheep industry to this state. Multiple investments in cluster fencing to support producers in keeping wild dogs out of their properties are reaping the benefits. We have seen the number of sheep in Queensland almost double to more than 400,000, and lambing rates in those areas have risen from 40 per cent to as high as 90 per cent. We are not done supporting this industry yet. The state budget includes a further \$4 million to be provided in rural agricultural development grants to fund more cluster fencing and other measures to help grow the sheep industry in western and southern Queensland.

On my visits to many rural areas I have seen firsthand the massive difference wild dog fencing makes for sheep. It instils confidence and security, increases productivity and creates employment in our rural communities. That is real investment and real support for the sheep industry because the Palaszczuk government is backing them to succeed.

The budget also commits \$1.4 million for biosecurity grants to equip local councils, industry groups and natural resource groups to prepare for and respond to biosecurity threats. We understand that biosecurity is everyone's business, and our state faces a higher risk of biosecurity incursions than any other Australian state or territory. Our investment in supporting the agriculture sector ensures one of the traditional backbones of the Queensland economy can grow, thrive and support the jobs essential to Queensland's economic recovery in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Palaszczuk government has done important work to ensure that we leave a legacy of sustainable fisheries for our children and our grandchildren. Over recent years we have invested to ensure recreational fishing groups who support our fisheries and help to teach the next generation of recreational fishers how to enjoy this pastime sustainably have received significant support from this government. For several years we had \$100,000 annually in recreational fishing grants for these organisations. This was doubled to \$200,000 in the most recent year. In the state budget we have delivered on our election commitment to offer \$1 million in recreational fishing grants over the next four years. We said we would boost our support for recreational fishing groups and that is exactly what we have done.

The Palaszczuk government's commitment in the 2020-21 budget is to raise the annual amount of grants available to \$250,000 and we will retain that level for a four-year period. This program will cast for activities and projects to enhance sustainable recreational fishing throughout Queensland. With over 900,000 recreational fishers in Queensland, it is no surprise the program attracts so much interest. Recreational fishing is an important driver of jobs in Queensland communities and our COVID-19 economic recovery plan. Our grants program is particularly interested in applications that contribute to the Sustainable Fisheries Strategy target to increase the satisfaction of recreational fishers.

Over four years, we will be investing \$1 million in recreational fishing grants to support learn-to-fish clinics, recreational club activities, restocking and research assistance. It is an important part of ensuring Queensland's fisheries are managed with world's best practice.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech on the budget for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of speech be incorporated in *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

As the Minister for Fisheries, I've been proud to see that we have sustainable fisheries so our children and grandchildren and those who work in the industry can continue bringing home the catch-of-the-day.

Speaker, this State Budget shows the Palaszczuk Labor Government's unwavering commitment to regional Queensland.

When we stand up and say we are delivering infrastructure for Queensland, we mean right across the state.

And when we say we are delivering jobs for Queenslanders, we mean all over the state as well.

The State Budget is not just about dollars and cents. These are strategic investments designed to enhance and make the most of our most vital industries, including agriculture.

Out of the 46,000 jobs being created by our \$14.8 billion infrastructure investment, 28,700 of those jobs will be created outside the Greater Brisbane region.

We have made a \$50 million strategic investment in dropping water prices for irrigators to help our farmers to turbo-boost our economic recovery.

We have made strategic investments in skills, including agricultural skills, in high schools in locations like Roma, and in our TAFE colleges in places like Bundaberg.

These investments look well beyond the headlines of today to make a meaningful difference to our future economy and our future capacity.

Speaker, many Queenslanders—I would even dare to say the vast majority of Queenslanders—support our efforts to ensure animal welfare in this state.

Queensland has the most robust animal welfare laws in the nation, and that is something we should all be proud of.

There are a number of organisations that help to provide that care, the most prominent of course being the RSPCA.

However there are other organisations in our communities that have provided years, sometimes decades of service in this regard.

During the recent election campaign I was pleased to be able to visit the Young Animal Protection Society in the electorate of Barron River with my Ministerial colleague, Minister Crawford.

We were there to commit \$1 million over two years to The Young Animal Protection Society, otherwise known as YAPS, to transform their current facilities.

Speaker, every Member of this place understands the importance of educating our young people. They are our future, they are our hope, and they are a key reason why we fight so hard every day to do better for Queensland.

Speaker, the COVID-19 pandemic has been tough for everyone to deal with.

Home life, work life and community life has been disrupted and changed in some ways that might take years to feel normal again.

We owe our constituents our best efforts to reinforce their sense of security, their sense of a bright future and their confidence that their Government is getting on with the job of delivering for them.

Whether it is jobs, certainty for business, education facilities, support for agriculture and fisheries, or ensuring our regional communities have a strong voice in Government, this State Budget delivers.

I commend the Budget to the House.



**Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.58 am): Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, before I start my speech today, I would like to acknowledge your ascendance to the role of Deputy Speaker. I congratulate you on that. I know that, from your role as temporary Speaker with me in the last term of government, you will conduct yourself with utmost dignity. I look forward to working with you over the coming years. As I have already said to you, you have a big set of double pluggers to fill, but that is another story.

I rise today to speak in support of the Palaszczuk government's 2020-21 state budget as I know this budget will go a long way to supporting the resources sector, which is critical for regional communities, like my home town of Townsville, as well as for all Queenslanders. As we know, the resources sector played a key role in keeping the Queensland economy running throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will continue to lead the way as we embark on our road to recovery. The Palaszczuk government understands just how critical a role this industry will play throughout the recovery process—from the \$34.3 billion it brings to the Queensland economy to the more than 60,000 people it employs, particularly in regional Queensland.

Our recovery begins with maintaining exploration to lead to new discoveries of minerals and gas for our pipeline of future resource projects. We are backing exploration with more than \$29 million invested into exploration grants, initiatives and COVID support for explorers and miners. We are backing the hunt for in-demand new economy minerals with a \$9 million investment. These are the minerals that power our batteries, our phones and the electric vehicles that we heard the member for Burleigh talk about. Renewable energy technologies will play a big part in the gadgets, devices and technology that we use in the years and decades to come.

To help get into the new economy global chain faster, we have already fast-tracked a \$2 million investment earlier this year to understand the potential for rare-earth minerals. Furthermore, we will pump in another \$11.7 million to keep explorers on the hunt for those new economy minerals for the next three years and to deliver jobs and prosperity for the future. To help keep explorers' boots on the ground we are reducing their operating costs, waiving \$9.8 million in rent along with freezing exploration fees and charges at their current rates until July 2021.

Through our Strategic Resources Exploration Program we are investing another \$3.3 million to help boost gas and mineral exploration. Another \$845,000 budget investment will also make data collected from exploration projects freely available from January 2021 via a government geological database. Everything learned from exploration projects will be shared with the whole sector, helping to stimulate more mines, more exports and, most importantly, more jobs for Queenslanders.

Our coal industry will continue to be the pillar of Queensland's resource sector. As outlined at page 45 of Budget Paper 2, coal exports are expected to recover by 9.75 per cent in 2021-22 as the global economy begins to recover and demand for coal rebounds.

One of the areas that will play a big role in mining new economy minerals is the North West Minerals Province, and that is why we are backing this sector with real investment. There are opportunities in traditional metals like copper, lead and zinc, but there are also great opportunities in emerging resources like cobalt, vanadium and scandium. Rare-earth minerals will be a key part of a low-emissions energy future. We have developed a strategic blueprint for Queensland's North West Minerals Province and we are implementing that plan. This blueprint is backed by our \$13 million New Economy Minerals Initiative, which was launched late last year. The works under this initiative include a strong focus on assessing the potential of former mine sites to test their potential for new supply. Mr Deputy Speaker, you only need to look at New Century Resources and the amazing work they have done with processing tailings at the old MMG Century mine near Mount Isa to see the potential.

We have also provided a \$10 million boost to the Collaborative Exploration Initiative over the next four years, which will help explorers discover new economy minerals and support future jobs in Queensland's resource sector. There are real jobs in the resource sector and North West Minerals Province. When this part of North Queensland is strong, so is the rest of the state. There are thousands of people already directly employed in this area, but it also creates jobs in other parts of Queensland. Through the Townsville Regional Recovery Action Plan the Palaszczuk government has supported the continued operation of the Mount Isa Mines copper smelter. This financial support underpins more than 1,000 manufacturing jobs in North Queensland, including the smelter itself, the Townsville copper refinery and Incitec Pivot's sulphuric acid plant in Mount Isa.

In Townsville the port is going through a \$193 million upgrade, which will help our resources sector grow. We are also backing the Mount Isa-Townsville rail line with major resources, which helps get our valuable resources from the North West Minerals Province to market.

**Mr Bailey:** Hear, hear!

**Mr STEWART:** Thank you. I take that interjection. As we heard from the Premier this morning, this government is also supporting CopperString 2.0, a project that my colleagues from Townsville and I are very passionate about. Not only will it create hundreds of jobs during construction; it will also provide cheaper and more reliable power for miners in the North West Minerals Province, which will help new mines and smaller mines open in the future along with those already operating. The Palaszczuk government is backing regional Queensland and the resources sector like we always have.

Our \$70 billion gas industry also continues to go from strength to strength. In this state we are doing the heavy lifting with gas production, both domestically and for export. We have always backed the LNG sector and we continue to invest in the industry. The Palaszczuk government is also committed to ensuring there is an adequate supply of affordable gas for the domestic market, which is critical for energy supply and advanced manufacturing.

In August, we announced a concept study into new gas transmission lines which may assist unlocking gas reserves in the Bowen Basin, examine the collection of fugitive emissions from coalmines and bring new gases to domestic and export markets. The Palaszczuk government will invest \$5 million into this study, and if the study finds that the project stacks up there are potentially 1,000 construction jobs available and countless opportunities for other industries. Not only would it boost the development of new gas production in the Bowen Basin; it would also make gas more available to Queensland manufacturers.

Gas is an essential part of Queensland's economy and it will continue to be so into the future. Despite the challenges of 2020, our gas industry has continued to perform. Just last month Origin Energy announced record production for the last financial year. In October, Senex Energy also announced its expansion of gas production at the Roma North project. This will see gas production from the project increase by 50 per cent with additional capital expenditure of around \$20 million. Earlier this year we welcomed Arrow Energy's commitment to its \$10 billion Surat Gas Project with 800 construction jobs and 200 permanent jobs. This is Queensland's largest gas project to start since 2011.

These projects demonstrate the importance of the natural gas industry to Queensland. Throughout 2020, to support the development of future gas projects the Queensland government has continued to make land available for gas exploration through competitive tendering. In May and June this year we released 17 areas for petroleum exploration across nearly 8,300 square kilometres of land. Five of these areas are subject to the requirement that the gas produced is to be supplied exclusively to the domestic market. These land releases create new opportunities for more gas projects to come online, aid our economic recovery and support jobs in regional Queensland.

This government's commitment to the resource sector is clear. We back all parts of it. We know that the resource industry has played a key role in keeping people in work during this global pandemic. Now, because of our health response we are able to focus on our economic recovery and the resources sector, and gas has a major part to play in this.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you have reviewed and approved my speech for incorporation, and as such I ask that the reminder of my speech be incorporated into *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

#### **Townsville**

The people of Townsville will also benefit from this budget in many ways.

Townsville has been through ups and downs in the last five years.

Last year we dealt with the devastating floods which ruined hundreds of homes and caused millions of dollars in damages. The city also dealt with the closure of Queensland Nickel in 2016.

Just as real optimism was returning to Townsville, like everyone around the world, we've had to deal with this destructive global pandemic. The way forward though is job creation.

This government has made no secret that our focus is on creating jobs and that's what this budget is all about.

In Townsville we're investing into road and transport infrastructure. Not only will this make our roads safer, but it will create jobs, which is essential to our economic recovery.

Mr Speaker, in this budget we are investing in Townsville Ring Road Stage Five, Riverway Drive Stage Two, which I know the member for Thuringowa will welcome, continued work on the Haughton River Floodplain as well as money for the second Bruce.

This equates to jobs, jobs and jobs, Mr Speaker, which Townsville, North Queensland and the entire state needs.

But we won't stop there for Townsville, the Palaszczuk Labor Government is backing DriveIT NQ with a \$10 million investment.

There is a huge motorsport community in Townsville and North Queensland. By backing this long-awaited project work will be created not only during construction but also through the lasting economic and tourism impact. The chairman of DriveIT NQ Greg Fitzgerald has said 147 jobs will be created when the facility was fully operational and \$1.4 billion injected into the Townsville economy over its 40-year lifespan.

DriveIT NQ will support a range of businesses like mechanical and tyre companies to Townsville's hotels.

There is huge potential for DriveIT to attract people to Townsville.

It will be a world class facility and there is serious upside for not just Townsville but all of North Queensland.

I was incredibly proud to work with the member for Thuringowa to advocate for this project and secure its funding.

Not only will DriveIT NQ benefit the motorsport community but it is an investment in road safety.

There will be opportunities for training Defence and emergency services personnel now in North Queensland.

Instead of having to head to Brisbane, driver training will be able to be done in the north now, which is important.

This funding will also drive North Queensland's events and adventure destination aims, especially after the NQ Dragway closed in 2012 and the Speedway in 2007.

Tourism, along with resources and industry is a major part of helping create jobs and helping Townsville grow.

That's why we're investing in the jewel in Townsville's crown: Magnetic Island.

In this budget we will invest \$3 out of \$7 million on improving Horseshoe Bay Road on Magnetic Island.

We are taking a collaborative approach and working with Townsville City Council.

Magnetic Island is not just a tourism destination. This solution will benefit everyone that lives on the island.

Local drains can become blocked up and often there's nowhere for the water to go, so when the big wet hits, it creates havoc on local roads. With this investment, our government can work with council to undertake some emergency repairs and look at a longer-term overhaul of the drainage systems on this part of the island.

This is in addition to the upgrade at Forts Junction on the Island, where work has already begun at the hugely popular spot.

Magnetic Island is a major drawcard for visitors to North Queensland and it's encouraging that more and more people are getting out and exploring their own backyards during this global pandemic.

With investment in important infrastructure like this road, it will benefit everyone on the island locals and tourists—now and into the future.

This is a government that backs Townsville and backs North Queensland with real investment and vital infrastructure.

We have a laser focus on creating jobs for people in Townsville in different ways.

That's why we're continuing to invest in the Townsville Hospital and Health Service too.

Already Townsville has world class health facilities, but we are backing in the Townsville Hospital and Health Service in this budget with \$16.7 million towards \$62.1 million worth of construction projects to improve facilities at the Townsville University Hospital site.

At Townsville University Hospital we are investing \$17 million for a new, state-of-the-art hybrid theatre, along with \$4 million to upgrade the Persistent Pain Management Service and the same amount to upgrade the outpatient department.

We are also looking to the future for Townsville University Hospital. This includes \$1.5 for a preliminary business case for a future major expansion of the hospital.

The Palaszczuk Government has a clear vision for Townsville, and we are backing it with real investment into vital services like health.

This is about making our community more liveable but it's also about helping our economy recover.

There will be construction jobs through all the projects and there will be ongoing jobs too at these new state-of-the-art facilities.

## Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the Palaszczuk Government has a proud record in supporting both the resources sector, and my electorate of Townsville.

We've built a new stadium that has been a massive drawcard for the city and we've stepped up and backed both stages of the Haughton Pipeline after the Federal Government's poor handling of this crucial piece of water infrastructure.

We're also backing the Port of Townsville and we will continue to back both our traditional and emerging strengths in the resource sector. That's how you get Queensland back on the road to recovery, Mr Speaker.



**Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (11.07 am): I honestly thought this moment would never come. The Palaszczuk Labor government was the only government in the nation not to hand down a budget. In fact, it has been over 530 days since the last budget.

Queenslanders were appeased with a 40-odd page glossy document full of motherhood statements and reannouncements. Finally the government has handed down a budget, but it certainly is not what was promised to Queenslanders or what Queenslanders would have expected. In fact, I doubt whether anybody except those in the Treasurer's inner circle had any idea that what we would be facing in Queensland is a debt bomb of \$130 billion. This budget is one of broken promises, higher debt and a lack of infrastructure investment. It is a continuation of the 'Labornomics' of the past and paints a bleak picture of what Queenslanders can expect from this Labor government for the next four years.

What a contrast it is, and could have been, to an LNP government. The vision for Queensland to be the economic powerhouse and stimulus program that a Deb Frecklington LNP would have delivered for Queensland was inspiring. I congratulate the member for Nanango, Deb Frecklington, and her deputy, Tim Mander, the member for Everton, on their energetic, diverse and well-directed campaign. I congratulate David Crisafulli, the member for Broadwater, and David Janetzki, the member for Toowoomba South, for their election to our leadership, and I commend them on their budget replies and the tone and direction they have set for the next four years.

I am sure government members will shout themselves hoarse over the next few years in a vain attempt to lay the blame for Queensland's poor economic performance at the feet of the pandemic. It cannot be forgotten that, even prior to this unprecedented event, Queensland's economic performance was terrible. Prior to the pandemic, the Labor government subjected Queenslanders to the highest unemployment rate in the nation, the highest number of bankruptcies and the lowest level of business confidence. The evidence is clear.

The Labor government always has and will continue to fail Queenslanders and our state's economy. In fact, even rusted-on Labor supporters know that Labor cannot manage the economy and the LNP comes back to fix it. This budget is further evidence of that. Thank God for the federal Morrison LNP government and their good fiscal management that gave the federal budget some flexibility to enable JobKeeper and JobSeeker programs to be rolled out to keep Queenslanders fed and many small businesses open.

The Treasurer has tried to pull the wool over Queenslanders' eyes but, unfortunately for the Treasurer, the LNP will not let Queenslanders be deceived. Ahead of the election, the Treasurer had assured Queenslanders that Labor would only borrow \$4 billion of additional borrowings in this budget and would restrain debt to \$106 billion, but just four weeks later this promise has been broken. The Treasurer revealed the budget includes \$28 billion of additional borrowings and a projected debt of \$130 billion—that is a sevenfold increase on the promised borrowings of only \$4 billion and is out to \$28 billion. This is the largest debt bill in our state's history.

What is \$28 billion worth? It is really hard for people to understand and I will try to give some context. If you won the lotto on Saturday night and picked up \$1 million, that would be life changing. This \$28 billion is like winning the lotto 28,000 times. It is an enormous amount of money. This is intergenerational debt and it will cost Queenslanders for generations and add no net worth to Queensland's value. What is worse is that these borrowings are not being used for the investment in income-producing assets or improving state assets. I commend the Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition on their budget replies and the tone and direction they have set for the next four years and for highlighting the wasted opportunity to grow Queensland's net worth.

I could continue to highlight how this budget will fail Queenslanders, but let us take the advice of Chamber of Commerce and Industry economist Jack Baxter. He said—

The 2020-21 State Budget ... fails to deliver the immediate measures needed to protect business ahead of the looming economic cliff ...

...

CCIQ called for a complete waiver of the COVID-19 payroll tax deferrals, as that would have provided businesses some relief concerning the payments that will need to be repaid early in the new year.

Instead, businesses are now in a situation where the deferrals, which are effectively a tax debt, coincide with the recommencement of payroll tax and the cessation of the JobKeeper stimulus. Businesses will struggle, and jobs are at risk.

Treasurer, let us give businesses and our farmers a break and give those payroll tax concessions.



Whilst there are enormous opportunities missed with this budget, unlike some of the other budgets I have had the opportunity to speak on in the past this budget will fund some projects within Lockyer. The budget does include a start to the \$654 million expansion of the Southern Queensland Correctional Facility promised in last year's budget. I once again stress to the minister that this project must maximise opportunities for local contractors and providers, and I recommend further efforts to educate our local businesses in these opportunities so our community can gain some benefit. While this investment is a good start, our community and its growing population need further assistance for additional services ranging from health to social and community infrastructure to cope with the impacts of this growth. Now is the time to invest in our community.

The Lockyer Valley Regional Council will also be the beneficiary of some funding for the installation of additional streetlighting for safety in Laidley and the construction of a multi-element playground in the Fairways Park at Hatton Vale. I congratulate all for their efforts to secure the \$1.6 million for this much needed regional park.

Four of my electorate's 34 schools will benefit from additional funding for the completion of much needed projects. Hatton Vale State School, Withcott State School, Lockyer District State High School and Glamorgan Vale State School are beneficiaries and we are grateful, but what of the other 30, Minister? The population growth in our area means our schools are under a great deal of pressure, and I ask once again that our region gains a higher priority in future budgets. Late last year the Palaszczuk Labor government finally conceded to pressure and agreed to begin air-conditioning more of Queensland schools—a great LNP led initiative.

One of the biggest concerns and missed opportunities with this budget is the lack of funding for our roads. Our Lockyer residents need to risk their lives on a daily basis on some of our worst roads, tackling intersections on the Warrego Highway, Brisbane Valley Highway, the Forest Hill Fernvale Road and others. There is no money for any of these roads. Minister, I once again ask you to contribute to the safety of these roads. Fortunately, we have secured \$60 million through the federal government and the efforts of Scott Buchholz. That \$60 million is 80 per cent of the \$75 million road safety upgrade program. An LNP Deb Frecklington government was going to deliver that additional \$15 million needed in this budget but, unfortunately, that will not be the case. I again ask the minister to give that \$15 million to the much needed \$75 million road safety upgrade.

Sadly, this government's infrastructure priorities lie elsewhere. While Lockyer residents take their lives in their hands using dangerous roads daily, the Palaszczuk Labor government focuses funding on inner-city pet projects to help residents in Brisbane get home to their families 10 or 15 minutes earlier. I hope they make the most of that valuable family time because it may well come at the cost of a family in Lockyer never being able to see their loved one again.

I call on the government to once again rethink its transport infrastructure priorities. Help me to ensure the safety of Lockyer roads, work with the federal government to fund their safety upgrade package for the Warrego Highway and join with me and the member for Nanango in funding real road safety solutions for the Brisbane Valley Highway. Save some money, stop the patchwork and bandaid solutions, and invest in real long-term solutions.

Queensland would not be the state it is today without the Lockyer Valley. The Lockyer Valley is the seventh most fertile valley in the world and the hardworking farmers who work the prime agricultural land it offers produce products renowned the world over. I am sure every single person in this House and their family have with or without their knowledge sampled something produced in the Lockyer Valley; it is world class. The reputation Lockyer's farmers have achieved and the renown their products receive have not come without hard work and sacrifice. Constrained by drought and the ongoing pandemic, Lockyer farmers have never had to work harder than they are now. This is why it is so disappointing to see this budget shorten funding for agriculture, water and drought relief. With attention so heavily focused on the coronavirus pandemic, it has almost been forgotten that Queensland is still in the midst of the most devastating drought in living memory.

Let us give our farmers a break and wipe out part A charges in the underperforming irrigation schemes. Stop charging for water that is not available until it is. More than two-thirds of our state remains drought declared, with little hope of relief on the horizon. Despite this, the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to give our state's farmers the cold shoulder.

This budget sees the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries budget cut by \$44 million and no action taken to help limit the costs of electricity and water for our farmers. This government has continued Labor's poor record on dams, with this year being the 15th since a Queensland Labor

government last constructed one in Queensland. This government has once again proven to Queensland farmers that only the LNP will provide them with the water security, drought relief and freedom from green tape that they need.

If successful at the last election, the LNP promised Lockyer farmers 50,000 megalitres of water from the Wivenhoe Dam system. While we may not have been successful, I make a promise now to the Lockyer and Somerset farmers that I will continue to fight to see this project come to fruition.

As I said earlier, this is a budget of broken promises, higher debt and a lack of investment. It is one in which Lockyer is largely ignored to the detriment of the community. Most of Lockyer schools will continue to rely on community donations for the projects they need completed. Our farmers will struggle daily in the fear that today could be their last with water and road users will continue to risk their lives on roads that are in desperate need of improvement.

Unlike this government, I will not break the promises I have made to the residents of Lockyer. I will continue to fight for the projects that Lockyer needs and deserves. I will not stand idle while the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to take the Lockyer state electorate for granted. This budget is bad for Queensland and for Lockyer. It cannot be supported.



**Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (11.20 am): I rise to support the budget bills introduced into the House by the Treasurer on 1 December 2020. Just like the budget of 2019, this is a Labor budget that delivers on the infrastructure, skills and services that Queensland needs. As we all know, this has been an extraordinary year. Through the Premier's leadership we have averted the worst of the pandemic, and this budget builds on the groundwork of the Premier in keeping Queenslanders safe.

Our economy is bouncing back and that is thanks to our strong response to COVID-19 and the leadership shown by the Palaszczuk government. Building on our \$1.2 billion Queensland Health COVID-19 response plan, the \$360.5 million allocation for the 2020-21 year will support a range of critical services to ensure Queensland remains COVID-safe. The funding will continue the operation of fever clinics, contact tracing, 13HEALTH and aeromedical services, the facilitation of quarantine in government arranged accommodation as well as covering the costs of PPE. It also provides contingency funding for future COVID-19 public health directions, including any necessary border control measures and other restrictions. I think the title of my budget speech could be 'Pete delivers for Toohey'.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you have reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech is incorporated into Hansard.

*The speech read as follows—*

#### **Health**

Our health care workers were at the forefront of the fight to combat the pandemic. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the health care workers at the QEII Hospital. Throughout this pandemic, they have been there for us. I recall in the early stages, the queues for testing. As a result of the efficiency and hard work and commitment of the staff at QEII, they were able to process all those wanting to be tested efficiently, and helped Queenslanders unite in the fight against the pandemic. I am very pleased to see that this budget will help QEII continue to play its vital role in the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. This budget commits to the Southside.

Under this budget, we see, across Brisbane and Redlands, 1 771 extra nurses and 580 extra doctors. We see a commitment to the QEII Jubilee Satellite Hospital—\$ 1 600 000 to commence planning across the Program for the delivery of 7 Satellite Hospitals to enable our acute hospitals to continue safely managing patients via alternative models of care, worth \$265 000 000.

We see a commitment to Metro South Internal Capital Projects—funds to complete delivery of internal capital projects and equipment purchases.

We also have the QEII Jubilee Hospital Interim Demand Strategy—\$12 100 000 to commence the re-establishment of a 24-bed ward on level 5 of the hospital.

There are the Installation of Ultraviolet Sterilisation lights across Metro South Hospital and Health Service facilities, to continue the installation of ultra-violet treatment lights across the South East.

We have funds for QEII Jubilee Hospital Lift Replacements to continue the replacement of four 5-stop traction lifts including motor room rectification, to complete the refurbishment of operating suites to rectify the heating, ventilation and air conditioning system and replace the end of life plant. As well as funds to complete the construction of two Chlorine Dosing Plants at QEII to provide testing and dosing to the facility.

Further, there is funds towards the end of life replacement of the mechanical services switchboards and associated exhaust fans on Level 3 and Level 6, to continue the installation of contemporary mechanical infrastructure to improve the high voltage and air conditioning systems in critical clinical and staff areas. Also funds to continue the replacement of the chillers, cooling tower, condenser pumps and associated mechanical services switchboards.

**Forensic services**

The Forensic and Scientific Services Coopers Plains performs critical roles for Queensland. Its biosecurity unit deals with Zika virus, Dengue, and over the last number of years has conducted research in the south east, working with the residents on the South Side, to collect larvae, and conduct analysis to determine mosquitos most likely to carry the viruses. This cutting-edge research is important. It is among many other important things the Centre does, and I am pleased to see a commitment in this budget to the security of that Centre: \$13 437 to complete the delivery of a new standalone CCTV system, to provide increased coverage and quality of security monitoring, worth \$1 300 736.

In this sitting there was a condolence motion to the late Hon. Tim Mulherin. During the motion Tim was acknowledged for his contribution to the State of Queensland. Tim was also responsible for the implementation of the Bio-security centre at Coopers Plains in his time as Minister. The Bio-security centre leads the way in such themes as peanut allergy. Also, research into new products before they are market tested. One of the projects is looking at the shelf life of avocados supporting our primary producers to export more fruit into overseas markets. On my many visits to the Bio security centre the staff always commented that they were grateful for the support that Tim had shown towards the centre.

**Education**

This budget commits to the front-line services—it commits to 1 623 extra teachers and 447 extra teacher aides across Brisbane. It commit funds to the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program for the refurbishment of the administration block; at the MacGregor State School—School Infrastructure Enhancement Programme for the refurbishment of H block for maintenance for 13 schools in the Toohey electorate in the 2020-21 year; works across 14 schools, funds to the Sunnybank State School Infrastructure Enhancement Program to repurpose the upper leave of A block to create flexible spaces (STEAM). Work is also continuing the Warrigal Road State School building project.

**Housing**

This budget commits funds to commence construction of 29 units of accommodation for the Joyce Wilding Centre. The Joyce Wilding hostel is an 18 room, 27 bed facility that provides short term accommodation for vulnerable women and children, meals and access to a range of health and social support. The hostel has been a long-standing accommodation refuge for vulnerable women and children since the 1970's. The centre is named after an activist for First Nations rights in Queensland. Joyce Wilding worked tirelessly in the 1950's and 1960's as a community worker.

As an established service in the Brisbane community, it is wonderful to see this commitment to the construction of 29 units and to the difference this will make the lives of women and children in need.

**Police**

This government is committed to keeping Queenslanders safe. This budget sees a commitment to provide 25 new mobile police beat vans across the state. Funds commitment to provide frontline police officers with an additional 1 400 QLiTE mobile tablet devices; funds to continue the body worn camera program and to provide more effective and efficient policing services to the people of Queensland.

It commits funds to continue Project Booyah, a two year early intervention program for at risk youth and to expand the RESPECT program into schools.

It also invests in our people, to our Long-Term Police Personnel Growth with additional finding for 2 025 police personnel: funds to commence the 5 year 2025 police personnel commitment.

It commits funds to Safe Night Precincts as part of a commitment to support the continued presence of police officers in Safe Night Precincts, and it commits funds to the continuation of Major and Serious Organised Crime Operations police work—to permanently fund that Major and Serious Organised Crime Operations.

**Justice and Attorney-General**

This budget commits funds over 4 years to provide domestic and family violence services; for Women, Violence Prevention and Youth Services as part of a commitment over four years to improve the safety and wellbeing of victims and their children, particularly those in high risk situations.

**Agriculture and Fisheries**

This budget commits funds to eradicate fire ants, an invasive pest which impacts agriculture, the environment and social amenity. This includes recently approved acceleration of treatments in the 2018-19 to 2020-21 years. Fire ants are an issue in my electorate the suburbs of Salisbury and Coopers Plains making an appearance from time to time so I like to take this opportunity to thank the Departments quick action to treat the affected areas and I welcome the funds committed to the eradication of fire ants.

**Employment, Small Business and Training**

This budget invests in our Queensland workforce: it commits funds to assist people to get job ready skills through funds for Skilling Queenslanders for Work in the Brisbane region.

**Transport and Main Roads**

This budget commits funds to prepare costings for the intersection upgrade at Griffith Arterial Road, Kessels Road and Riawena Road.

It commits funds to upgrade the intersection upgrade at Griffith Arterial Road, Kessels Road and Troughton Road.

It commits funds towards the fixing of the intersection of Griffith Arterial Road, Riawena Road and Orange Grove Road.

It commits funds to cycleway construction at Veloway (V1) Cycleway, Levington Road (Gateway Motorway) to Kingston Road.

It commits funds to the cycleway construction at Griffith Arterial Cycleway (Granard Road Cycleway), Ipswich Motorway to Balham Road.

It commits funds towards cycle planning for Griffith Arterial Road, Balham Road to Logan Road.

It commits funds to construct additional lanes in the Stage 1 Ipswich Motorway Upgrade Rocklea to Darra.

It commits funds for planning to the Ipswich Motorway upgrade.

It commits \$1 709 000 of \$146M total cost to the Boundary Road (Coopers Plains) rail level crossing, improve safety, funding commitment. This has been 40 years in coming. This initiative is very welcome to the community and I look forward to the day when this project is completed: it will make a very important difference to the safety and amenity of my area and I want to thank Minister Bailey for his hard work, and determination, in getting this commitment.

It also commits funds to widen and extend the Pacific Motorway, Eight Mile Plains to Daisy Hill.

I commend the Bills to the house.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order, members. The House will come to order before the next speaker.



**Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (11.23 am): I am pleased to follow the member for Toohey. I do miss sitting next to him in this parliament. I had a great time last time around.

This year has been an unprecedented one. The unprecedented global pandemic will have repercussions for global trade, culture and population movements for decades to come. We have seen astronomical COVID-19 infection rates in the United States and Brazil. Sadly, I saw yesterday that there were over 2,800 deaths, their worst day ever in handling COVID-19. In Europe we are seeing countries previously held up as role models for progressive democracies making disastrous health decisions and sabotaging their economies. In the UK we are seeing terrible outcomes on a health and an economic level. However, in Queensland we are seeing our outstanding health response feeding into our nation-leading economic response. I congratulate the Treasurer, his office and Treasury on a fantastic budget which will continue our strong economic response.

Locally, in Aspley there are some great north side wins funded in this budget. We have the Beams Road overpass, the volleyball centre of excellence at Craigslea State High School and noise barriers in Bald Hills just to name three. However, our sporting clubs are not being left behind in what has been a tough year for community sport. There are some great local sporting clubs in the Aspley area, so I was really pleased to see that during the campaign we were able to commit \$100,000 to the Aspley Hornets to help in their successful bid to join the national east coast second tier AFL competition next season. In 2021 they will be competing against the Lions, the Sydney Swans and the big boys from Victoria. I cannot wait to see the action at Graham Road under the new lights. This is a project for which I was also proud to secure the funding last term.

Of course, this goes with the new sports fields at Carseldine that we delivered last term at the site of Carseldine Urban Village, now used regularly by the Aspley Devils, Bracken Ridge District Cricket Club and Bridgeman Baptist Football as well as dozens of local families who use the playgrounds every day. We cannot forget the Northside Indoor Sports Centre, opened by the Premier in October. It is being used daily by hundreds of north side kids, teenagers and adults.

Returning to the budget more broadly, there is no doubt that this is a very challenging time globally. Economic connectivity has been dealt a massive blow over the last year for obvious reasons. Many supply chains are struggling to remain intact and the cost of doing business overseas, for exporters and importers alike, has dramatically gone up in all sectors. It is clear that COVID has caused a massive rethink about what we make here and what we import. It has been fantastic to see the gearing up of local PPE manufacturers, for example, and the retooling of industries to different purposes from what they are used to.

It is great to see Queensland building on our strong health response into a really strong economic response. This is a budget that has billions in infrastructure funding to boost jobs. Along with Western Australia, we are the only state to project positive economic growth this financial year, an indication that our outstanding economic recovery plan is working. I congratulate the Premier on her strong leadership and response to the pandemic and for putting Queenslanders first throughout this health crisis.

This budget, as the Treasurer has stated, is a budget that is about delivering on our election commitments. Of course, our biggest local commitment of 2020 is the Beams Road rail overpass. This transformational project will deliver long overdue relief for north side motorists. It has been spoken about for 20 years but has not been delivered until now. In 2012 we saw a Deloitte study from the former Newman government ranked it as the No. 1 priority level crossing in South-East Queensland on a cost-benefit analysis and yet nothing happened. It was only in 2017 when we committed to a feasibility

study on the level crossing that things started moving. Following this, I secured funding for a full business case in the 2019 budget. Because of the initial work of this business case, earlier this year we were able to fully commit the funding to get it done. In conjunction with the federal and local council funds committed, it is now fully funded, with construction starting in late 2021.

Other big road projects also funded in the budget include \$5 million for noise barriers in Bald Hills. I am really pleased that this election commitment will be rolled out. Bald Hills locals raise it as the No. 1 issue, although sometimes mosquitoes are the No. 1 issue, but that is a whole other story. Most have gotten so used to the noise they say it is like 'living next to the ocean without the sea breeze'. I am really happy to see the \$5 million fast-tracked in this budget to go towards this. This is, of course, on top of the \$4 million I secured in the 2019 budget for noise barriers further south on Gympie Road in Aspley. Preliminary work is underway there already, community consultation has been undertaken and we should see construction soon.

In the same part of town, I am really happy to see funding from the Works for Queensland initiatives going towards the extension of the North Brisbane Bikeway as well as funding to continue the construction of the Everton Park link road connecting Stafford Road and South Pine Road further south. I am really pleased to see that Bald Hills State School will be getting \$1 million to refurbish their administration building, something they have been after for some time.

We are backing Queensland and it is clear Australians are backing Queensland. They are voting with their feet with the highest forecast interstate migration in the nation. Everyone wants to move here. It is clear that the public are backing in the economic recovery plan, and it is great to see the business community and ratings agencies are backing in this budget, too.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you have reviewed and approved my speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

*The speech read as follows—*

(3rd party endorsements)

S and P Global Ratings, reported in the Australian on Wednesday, said Queensland was on quote "a solid path to fiscal recovery", end quote, and re-affirmed the State's AA plus rating as stable.

We are outperforming Victoria and New South Wales on every debt metric, and every economic recovery metric.

And I note that Mark Ludlow of the Australian Financial Review said this week:

"The LNP line on Qld budget—Labor said they would only borrow \$4b more—is laughable. The ALP didn't say that. The \$4b was to fund election commitments. If that's the best David Crisafulli has got it's going to be a long four years".

And the Queensland Resources Council was a big fan:

Queensland's resources sector welcomed today's budget, congratulating Treasurer Cameron Dick on mapping out Queensland's long road to recovery.

"Creating more Queensland jobs is exactly the right objective for this budget and this will be helped by the fact our resources sector is on the verge of becoming an energy and resources superpower," said Queensland Resources Council Chief Executive Ian Macfarlane.

The budget reply speech from the Leader of the Opposition sounded nice,... but it wasn't actually a budget reply speech.

The opposition are ignoring the fact that Queensland just recorded the strongest economic growth in 17 years as we rebound from COVID.

Data released just this Wednesday- the day after our budget was released- by the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed that Queensland's economy grew by 6.8 per cent between June and September.

That means we have the fastest economic growth in the country. We are setting the pace in Australia when it comes to economic recovery.

We beat Western Australia, South Australia, Tasmania, the Northern Territory, the ACT and Victoria.

Not only did our economy grow one-and-a half times faster than the national average in September, Queensland is the only state with an economy larger than it was before the crisis.

And all this is the more remarkable given the circumstances, both in Australia and Internationally.

The international monetary fund predicts that the global economy is expected to contract 4.4 Percent in 2020, compared with a global contraction of only 0.1 percent at the height of the Global Financial Crisis.

When you compare Queensland's economic recovery to date with many of our international trading partners, you can see just how stark the difference is.

While Australia's GDP fell 7 percent in the June quarter, Canada and the Eurozone fell by 12 percent,

Singapore 13 percent, France 14 percent, and The United Kingdom has experienced around 20 percent fall in GDP.

Given this is how the rest of the world is faring, understandably exports have taken a beating due to COVID-19. Overall our exports of goods and services are forecast to fall by 11 per cent in 20/21 before rebounding by 9 and three quarter per cent in 21/22.

The volume of coal exports fell 3.1 percent in 19/20, and are expected to fall further in 20/21 due to lower global demand, before rebounding by 9 and three quarter percent in 21/22.

Contrastingly, our metals exports are expected to remain stable this year and in future years, which is encouraging.

And while the drought continues to affect agriculture exports, in future years, beef, sugar, cotton sugar and others are all expected to increase from 21/22 onwards.

The volume of agricultural exports fell 8 per cent in 2019-20 as dry conditions persisted across the state. Improved conditions are expected to see an improvement in coming years, with crop exports increasing in the near term, followed by beef exports returning more strongly in later years.

Similarly, from 2021-22, cotton exports are forecast to increase substantially as improved rainfall and water storage support increased production.

Reflecting improving conditions, exports of other crops are expected to SIGNIFICANTLY increase this year, driven by increased production of wheat, chickpeas and grain sorghum.

Our services exports are however taking a battering. International tourism, for obvious reasons, just isn't viable at the moment, however this will hopefully turn a corner in the near future dependent on the actions of other countries, and our own of course.

International student numbers have obviously also taken a whack. Whilst a large numbers of students were already in Australia for the 2020 university year before international borders shut, the same can obviously not be said for the coming 2021 intake.

Discussions are ongoing with the federal government on this issue and I look forward to positive resolution.

So on a local level, on a state level, and on an international comparison level, this budget is a huge win for Queensland.

I commend the bill to the house.



**Mr DAMETTO** (Hinchinbrook—KAP) (11.28 am): Before I start my contribution to the Appropriation Bill and the state budget 2020-21, I would like to join the rest of my colleagues and congratulate you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your appointment to the Deputy Speaker role for this term. I look forward to working with you over the next four years. I am sure you will contribute a great deal to this House.

In my eyes this year's state budget is a standard Labor state budget. It looks after roads, education, schools and the like. We have seen some good wins in the Hinchinbrook electorate in respect of those things. We have seen money allocated for satellite dialysis through the regional and rural renal program. We are still waiting on a directive from the minister's office, but we are hoping that a funding commitment that was made during the state election campaign to ensure that people within the Ingham district and the Herbert district are able to access dialysis at Ingham hospital can finally be realised. This is a project that has been worked on by the community, the hospital, the advisory group as well as people within the community for some time now. Once again, it is good to see that we might have an opportunity for residents who live in Ingham and have to travel to Townsville three times a week to receive this lifesaving service, to finally receive this service in the care of their own home town. It is a shame it has taken this long, but hopefully this will be something that is delivered.

Another good investment in the Hinchinbrook electorate is in road infrastructure. Some \$70 million will go into the Bruce Highway and roads across the Hinchinbrook electorate. I will name just a couple. Some \$25 million will go into pavement widening and improvements along the Bruce Highway between Ingham, Halifax, Bemerside and the Cardwell Range. That will help a lot of those people who commute daily to deal with that treacherous section of road. Another \$8.9 million will be used for widening pavements between Hervey Range Developmental Road and Rupertswood. That is in the western part of my electorate up towards the back of the Traeger electorate. It is part of the National Highway and a lot of heavy vehicles head out that way. The Australian Defence Force also uses it to get up to a higher range. Any improvements to that section of the highway will be most appreciated by residents up and down that area.

Also, \$5 million out of this state budget will go towards the Townsville Northern Access Intersection upgrade. That will start the preliminary works for a dual carriageway along the Bruce Highway between Veales Road and Pope Road. A further \$90 million has been committed to complete the \$170 million spend. This is a project that is dear to my heart off the back of young Kurt Philpots losing his life 12 months ago on this section of the highway. It is great to see that this project has been accelerated and brought forward. I continue to work with the transport and main roads minister to better engage with the community in terms of delivering this project.

The Hinchinbrook electorate has also done well out of this state budget in the area of education.

**An honourable member:** Hear, hear.

**Mr DAMETTO:** I take that interjection. Some \$4 million will be spent on Hinchinbrook schools over the next 12 months. Some \$1.7 million will go to the Bluewater State School to replace the existing amenities block and install ramps for the administration building. I know that principal Trevor Buchanan will be quite impressed with that. There is \$700,000 for security fencing to encompass the whole school

grounds at Bohlevale school so that people cannot just wander in and out of the school area. It will keep our students a lot safer. I know that principal Michelle Donn will be quite happy to see that funding finally coming through. Some \$250,000 will be spent at Ingham State School on the refurbishment and modernisation of learning spaces, something with which principal Marianne Macdonald, who has just come back from leave, will be quite impressed by.

Like I said, this is a standard Labor budget. Funds are being spent on social infrastructure, education, health, roads et cetera. We would have liked to see more money allocated to things like agriculture and mining to ensure the breadwinners of this state have an opportunity to really flourish. A project that the KAP pushed very hard for during the election campaign and will continue to advocate for—after speaking to users in the mining industry and people who want to develop the Galilee Basin—is a rail line into the Galilee Basin. A visionary project such as this is the kind of project that we believe is needed to pull this country out of recession. We want to see projects like this really accelerate Queensland. This year we will be down \$12 billion on revenue. A project such as this will open up the Galilee Basin. A \$3 billion spend in upgrading the port as well as building the rail line will, after five years of use, equate to half a billion dollars of royalties coming out of the Galilee Basin. I know that members in this place might not like to hear of the benefits of coal, but the fact of the matter is that it pays the bills and keeps the lights on. Half a billion dollars of royalties plus the rail line paying for itself would be a great investment in the state. That rail line could return between \$10 and \$20 per tonne of coal coming out of the Galilee Basin. That would be 100 million tonnes per year.

We also have seen some money allocated for business cases and approvals for some of the water projects across the state. I see that there is around \$3 million to advance the Big Rocks Weir. That is great, but a lot of water falls in a short amount of time during the wet season in this state and we are not doing enough to capture that water. We are not doing enough to ensure we are building the nation-building infrastructure to enable industry to take advantage, not only in terms of black soil country but also in terms of the water we let run through our fingers every wet season. Money should be allocated to ensure the Hells Gates and the North Johnstone transfer projects are advanced. This will ensure water is redirected into Tinaroo Falls Dam—a dam we already have—to ensure the water is there and we can get it out to the end user at an affordable price.

Also, in a project that is dear to me and the Hinchinbrook electorate, I have been working with the Hinchinbrook Shire Council to secure funding from the state government to put together some studies for some weirs along the Herbert as well as for the Stone River system in the Hinchinbrook electorate. This will allow people in the Hinchinbrook and the Herbert district to irrigate. We do not have that opportunity—like the Burdekin—to irrigate. We have sugar cane there. If we can irrigate, we have an opportunity to go into other small crops.

In terms of other projects that I believe would help accelerate the Hinchinbrook district, we also are looking at funding for silos. If we went into crop diversification, we could start storing some grain and goods to make it more economically viable to transport these commodities. We have a problem in the Hinchinbrook electorate whereby the population of the northern beaches area of Townsville, which are in the Hinchinbrook electorate, is growing at an alarming pace. We need to make sure that the road and school infrastructure is there to keep up with that population growth.

In the north of the Hinchinbrook electorate it is a completely different story. We rely on sugar cane, bananas and the tourism industry. The problem is that we have a sharp population decline in places like Ingham, Cardwell and Tully Heads. We are looking to the state government for help. We are looking for it to make sure that money is allocated in future budgets so we can accelerate not only the agriculture industries but also our tourism industry. The only way we can build on the tourism industry and capitalise on the beautiful assets we have with the Palm Island Group, Hinchinbrook Island and the areas around Mission Beach is to build the necessary marine infrastructure to get access in and out of these places at all tides. Right now, if we want to get over to Hinchinbrook Island—one of the largest island national parks in the world, an asset that we should be showing off and be very proud of, especially with Thorsborne Trail being one of the top five trails in the whole world—we cannot get there unless it is a high tide. We want to be able to get out of places such as Dungeness and Cardwell's Port Hinchinbrook. If we do not open up the access to these places through industry-enabling infrastructure, we can talk about a tourism industry until the cows come home but it will never happen.

While going through the Capital Statement I noticed another couple of good wins. One surprising one about which I cannot wait to talk to the Deputy Premier is that last year \$4.3 million was committed for a new sewage treatment plant at Port Hinchinbrook so that the residents of Port Hinchinbrook can have the luxury of flushing the toilet without that effluent going out to the Great Barrier Reef. We have


had failings in the past in these terms. We are thankful for the state government's contribution through State Development to ensure that the Cassowary Coast Regional Council has the funds to make sure it can look after the existing sewage treatment plant, but it is failing. I did notice in the Capital Statement that there is \$1.1 million in this budget and \$5.3 million in ongoing budgets. This greatly exceeds the \$4.3 million that has been committed. Hopefully there is a little more money out there that the government has found and is happy to spend in this way because if we cannot find extra money to fund this project the costs will go to the end user.

It is great to see the state government putting its hand up to put in \$4.3 million, but the rest of the money is going to have to come from the council and then that money will be reclaimed through levies. Every year it is going to cost people in Port Hinchinbrook \$4,500 to flush their toilets. That is a ridiculous price and we need to work on bringing that down. There is also some rehashed funding for levy banks at Halifax along the Herbert River to ensure that flood mitigation happens. Some \$117,000 has already been spent on that project and an extra \$274,000 is needed to finish off that commitment.

I was very optimistic with this budget being brought down in that I was hoping to see a complete shift in the way we do things in Queensland—maybe I was being a little bit too optimistic—but we have not seen that with this budget. The KAP will continue to advocate for those big nation-building infrastructure projects. I look to what happened in the US after the Great Depression when President Franklin D Roosevelt built their way out of the recession. They built the Hoover Dam and dredged the Mississippi so they could get some decent ships up the Mississippi to open up the midwest country. These are the kinds of visionary projects that would not have had a business case. There would not have been an environmental impact study. There would not have been what I like to call the white-collar welfare that we are spending a fortune on every year and committing millions of dollars to studies that do not seem to accelerate any of these projects.

We have to hope that over the next four years this government has a change in gears. I am being optimistic here and giving the government an opportunity. Unless we do something completely different or significantly different when it comes to how we look at these nation-building infrastructure projects, we are not going to turn our economy around at any great speed. We are going to continue down the road we are going down. We are going to continue adding to the debt. That is okay if that is what the government wants to do just to keep the lights on and the wheels turning, but for Queensland right now coming out of the back end of a pandemic this is a real opportunity to grasp a different way of doing things.

As I said, I am being very optimistic and hope that over the next four years the state government talks to the KAP and works with us. We have an opportunity that the government does not. We talk to many end users such as farmers and those in the mining industry. They do not always go to the government but rather they come to us, so I say this to the government: please take this opportunity to work with the KAP. In closing, this budget does all the right things to keep the wheels turning, but we would like to see some more money spent on nation-building infrastructure projects and we will continue to advocate for them.

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.42 am): It is a pleasure to rise to make my contribution in support of the 2020 appropriation bills before the House. Firstly, I congratulate the Treasurer on his first budget—a budget delivered in extraordinary times following a worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. I also join my colleague the member for Hinchinbrook and many others in congratulating you, Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly. Having had the opportunity to work with you for three years on the health committee and another three years last term on the Ethics Committee, I know that you will do a wonderful job. My sincere congratulations.

This is a budget that delivers on our election commitments and a budget that charts our course from what has been a turbulent year to more prosperous, secure times ahead. Protecting Queensland jobs, delivering new Queensland jobs and providing access to the skills that Queenslanders need to retain or get a job remain the core principles that underpin everything this budget seeks to achieve. But of course budget speeches are, in the main, a recount of the investment we as a government are making in the people of this state.

Our government talks about bigger and better health facilities—more doctors, nurses and allied health staff; roads to help us get to our office on time and home to our families more quickly; more teachers and teacher aides and better education facilities to help our children have the best primary and secondary school years we can possibly offer them; and financial support for, and investment in, training, communities, jobs programs, our Made in Queensland trains, the arts and our Great Barrier Reef.



As I said earlier, this is a budget that delivers on our election commitments. In my community of Nudgee that means \$500,000 to expand and improve facilities at the after-school care at Boondall State School which aims to create a better learning and play experience for students and provides greater support for working parents who depend upon this vital service; \$150,000 to build a new prep playground for children at Virginia State School, my old primary school; \$300,000 to upgrade the administration building at Northgate State School; \$300,000 to build a new music and arts studio at Nundah State School; and \$100,000 in funding to resurface and irrigate the fields of the Kedron AFL football club. In addition, new safer stop, drop and go zones will be constructed at Boondall and Northgate state schools to keep students and staff safer as well as a park-and-ride expansion study delivered at Northgate train station and an accessibility upgrade of Banyo train station.

As the Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, the people whose interests I am charged with advancing are among the most important people in this state. They are the people who do not get such a great start in life. They are our children and young people who are part of a cycle of sadness that, as a parent myself, breaks my heart—and they are the ones I refuse to let be forgotten because every child deserves a life of opportunity and hope, not just my children and not just our children but every child across Queensland. That is why I am proud to be part of a government that will not let our most vulnerable children be forgotten. Keeping Queensland children safe from abuse and neglect continues to be a top priority of our government. That is why this year's budget continues to provide funding for programs and services to keep children safe right across the state.

We will spend a record \$1.475 billion on the delivery of child and family programs and initiatives this financial year. We will invest \$281.5 million on the delivery of youth justice programs and initiatives this financial year and a further \$97.6 million on capital works, predominately on the new West Moreton Youth Detention Centre.

We will invest in initiatives that continue to build a united, harmonious and inclusive Queensland, because Queensland does not have multicultural communities; it is a multicultural community. Key programs to be invested in for 2020-21 include \$1.3 million for the Asylum Seeker and Refugee Assistance program; \$2.43 million for Community Action for a Multicultural Society grants to 19 organisations; and \$2 million for the Celebrating Multicultural Queensland grants program.

Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, you have reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

Mr Speaker, this is the seventh year of our 10-year Supporting Families Changing Futures reform program—and we are committed to seeing it through in partnership with community organisations and for Queensland families.

We all know the best place for children is in safe, stable and loving homes and safe in their culture.

Wherever possible we want to divert Queensland families from entering the child protection system and early intervention is key to this.

That's why \$166.6 million will be allocated this financial year to continue building a family support system, providing earlier help to families and in turn preventing escalation to the child protection system.

We are also boosting our network of child safety service centres across the state by opening a new service centre in Ripley for the Southern Downs with \$2.1 million allocated for its fit-out.

We have also allocated an additional \$98.4 million to help manage increasing demand in the child protection system.

Deputy Speaker, COVID-19 has not only taken a toll on our economy and tourism, it has taken a toll on our most vulnerable.

The number of families with multiple and complex needs continues to grow, putting pressure on our system.

Almost three out of every four children coming to our attention are living in families with multiple risk factors, including mental health, domestic and family violence, and drug and alcohol abuse.

Many of these risks to children will and have been further compounded by unemployment and financial problems related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are focusing on achieving the best possible outcomes for families and children by investing in our kinship and foster care programs so children who cannot remain safely at home can be placed with families.

We are also focusing on supporting carers.

Between 2017 and 2019, the department delivered the first two years of a four-year, \$2.6 million foster carer recruitment campaign in partnership with Queensland Foster and Kinship Care.

While the 2019-20 recruitment campaign was partially postponed due to COVID-19, we know this is a successful way to attract more carers.

A shortened version of this campaign featuring a range of real-life carers speaking about their experience was held between July and September this year and resulted in a significant increase in expressions of interest.

We're currently developing the next phase of the campaign to roll out in 2021.

We're also investing \$65.5 million to build the base on which First Nations families, communities and community-controlled organisations will take the lead when it comes to responding to the needs of their own communities.

Our joint focus will be on true generational change. We'll do this by continuing our commitment to Family Participation Programs and Family Wellbeing Services—and, very importantly, by starting to delegate functions and powers for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who are subject to a child protection order, or at risk of entering the child protection system to a chief executive of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander entity.

While there is a lot more work to do, the safety and wellbeing of children will always be at the heart of everything we do.

Youth justice is another major focus of my portfolio.

In this space, community safety has always been our top priority and that is why this budget continues to provide funding for programs and infrastructure to prevent and reduce youth crime across the state.

We will invest \$281.5 million on the delivery of youth justice programs and initiatives this financial year and a further \$97.6 million on capital works, predominately on the new West Moreton Youth Detention Centre.

We've invested more than half a billion dollars in early intervention programs and new detention centre beds, which we know is delivering results.

There's been a 30 per cent drop in the number of young offenders across the state since 2010. And a 23 per cent drop in the number of charged offences by 10 to 17-year-olds in the 2019/20 financial year compared to the previous financial year.

Mr Speaker, we are working hand in hand with communities to address the underlying causes of youth crime and get kids back on track.

We launched a five-point plan to target repeat offenders earlier this year after consultation with and feedback from communities across the state.

That has meant a new partnership with police to deliver co-responder strike teams to target crime hotspots and a trial of On Country programs in Mt Isa, Townsville and Cairns.

In this budget we will expand the co-responder program from five locations to six locations to include Mackay.

In the past 18 months we've seen the establishment of Community Youth Responses in Townsville, Ipswich, Logan, Brisbane, Moreton and Cairns—locally driven solutions that include after-hours diversionary services, cultural mentoring, flexi-schools and integrated case management for more complex young people.

Communities told us they wanted programs to get kids back to school and into jobs and we listened.

We expanded Transition to Success—getting young offenders back on track through education and training in 22 sites across the state.

These measures and new programs have helped reduce the number of young people offending across the state.

We've also invested in new youth detention centre beds.

This year a 16-bed unit was completed at the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre and the 32-bed West Moreton Youth Detention Centre will be completed next year.

As a result, youth detention capacity will have increased by 33 per cent since the Palaszczuk Labor Government was elected in 2015.


While there is always more work to do, community safety will always underpin everything we do.

Mr Speaker, as I said earlier, the Palaszczuk Government is committed to investing in initiatives that continue to build a united, harmonious and inclusive Queensland.

Because Queensland's doesn't have multicultural communities.

It is a multicultural community.

2021 will spell a return to our much loved Celebrating Multicultural Queensland program with \$1.5 million for a record number of 211 events to be funded. COVID gazumped the program for 2020 but there will be some wonderful offerings for next year across the state, from Thargomindah to Townsville, and Rockhampton to Mt Isa.

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (11.46 am): I am pleased to rise in this House to support the Palaszczuk government's 2020-21 appropriation bills. It has been a year like no other. COVID-19 has presented challenges we could never have imagined at this time last year. Our Palaszczuk government has led the way in our state's health response that has seen our state as the shining light in economic recovery. This was confirmed in data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that revealed Queensland's economy grew by 6.8 per cent between June and September. We have the fastest economic growth in the country and our Palaszczuk government, through the appropriation bill and budget, continues to deliver an economic response for both my Redlands community and for the people of Queensland.

I am a passionate and tenacious advocate for my Redlands community. We have seen record investment in Redlands over the past three years. In my maiden speech in 2018 I said that a measure of success in this place would be determined by the legacy ultimately left behind, and I am extremely proud to stand on the track record of our Palaszczuk government in delivering for Redlanders and I am honoured to have been returned to continue to build on these achievements.

For my Redlands community and more broadly for the people of Queensland, this budget delivers in spades. In roads and infrastructure our budget is delivering a record \$56 billion of infrastructure investment across the forward estimates. For Redlands in terms of infrastructure and roads, that is great news. We have \$110 million committed to delivering for our Cleveland Redland Bay Road corridor. The heavy gear is there and the works are well underway at the Anita Street intersection on the stage 1 duplication. This was a road that was neglected by the LNP and politicised for over a decade, with broken promises left, right and centre.

**Dr Robinson:** You've been in government!

**Ms RICHARDS:** I am proud to be the member who is seeing the work being delivered. I take that interjection from the member for Oodgeroo. I am actually delivering.

**Dr Robinson** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Ms RICHARDS:** The heavy gear is also on site at the Old Cleveland Road on-ramp for its upgrade and further down the road for the Eastern Transit Way. These roadworks make a huge difference to many commuters who leave the Redlands each day for work.

Ongoing access to COVID stimulus funding is providing for South-East Queensland local councils, and for Redland City Council this means a contribution to date of over \$7 million which is delivering for the Southern Moreton Bay Islands communities with \$2.5 million in road green sealing.

There is our investment in the \$34.1 million Southern Moreton Bay Islands ferry terminals, a project undertaken in partnership and co-funded with Redland City Council. Tenders are in the process of being awarded. These terminals will be transformative for our islands and create a world-class arrival experience. Our government continues to fund the free inter-island ferry fares to make sure that our island communities stay connected.

Creating jobs for today and into the future is at the heart of our Palaszczuk government's 2020-21 budget. It is targeted and it is future focused and it ensures we position for jobs now and into the future. In the Redlands, ongoing efforts to diversify our local economy and create jobs has and will continue to be central to the work I undertake and I will continue to provide that advocacy for my community. It has been fantastic that through programs that our Palaszczuk government has initiated and restored we are supporting these endeavours. In particular I want to talk about the regional jobs committee. This is a fantastic investment in our local community. It is a committee that is being led by our Redlands Coast Chamber of Commerce. They have undertaken a fantastic report with RPS to look at the gaps analysis and how we can make sure that we have the right skills, the right training and are positioning our community for investment attraction.

In March this year at the start of COVID-19 we saw how quickly and nimbly we needed to respond. Our small businesses have had significant benefit through the adaptation grants and the QRIDA loan scheme. I have spoken in this House on numerous occasions about the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. It was a program that was cut by the LNP Newman government. It beggars belief that a government would cut a program that actually provides opportunity and pathways to employment. It has been fantastic in my local community. It leaves a community legacy whilst at the same time skilling people up.

On Macleay Island the Bay Island Community Services conducted a construction program. The local op shop was upgraded. If you are ever over on Macleay Island I can highly recommend checking that out. The clubhouse of our Redlands Rugby League Club was upgraded and it looks fantastic. I have been to many graduations at Running Wild. There is nothing more heartwarming than to see young people start out on their journey through Skilling Queenslanders for Work and then to see their confidence after completing the program. They have done fantastic work in the hospitality training space and also in conservation management.

Being a proud Queensland hydrogen champion I want to talk about our Palaszczuk government's investment in renewables. Queensland will remain at the forefront of renewable hydrogen with our Queensland government committing another \$10 million over the next four years to develop the renewable hydrogen industry in Queensland led by our hydrogen chief strategist Prof Ian MacKinnon and Michelle Gane at QUT. The minister and I had the opportunity to visit them at our Redlands research facility. They are doing incredible work out there with the pilot hydrogen plant.

Redlands is a big part of the Queensland hydrogen story. Our DAF Redlands research facility is currently home to QUT and international stakeholders. It is where the first export of Queensland hydrogen to Japan occurred and it is also home to the new pilot hydrogen facility that is nearing

completion. It is where the rubber hits the road for hydrogen. It is where we take the research from academia and translate it into a pilot that takes it forward to our Gladstones and our Mackays. I am extraordinarily proud of the work coming out of that facility. Just like the LNG movement over a decade ago, the hydrogen industry has the potential to be a multibillion dollar industry. We are investing in the research and training to ensure that we have people with the skills and expertise ready to meet the global demand of the hydrogen industry over the coming years.

I want to touch on the comments of the Leader of the Opposition in his budget reply speech yesterday where he spoke of the need for investment in research and development in the agricultural space. I want to remind the House and the member for Broadwater of the track record of the Newman government at the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Redlands research facility. They decimated it—there is no other word for it—in an attempt to position it for sale. The facility manager tells about the time all the staff were rounded up and told, 'It's your turn to go. It's your turn to go. It's your turn to go.' They left it on its knees. It was absolutely shameful.

Let me tell members what our Palaszczuk government has done in restoring and rebuilding what is today a vibrant and flourishing facility in agriculture, fisheries and renewables. We took members of the Redlands Coast Chamber of Commerce to the research facility to show all of our businesses what was happening. It is really exciting. We have QUT and UQ out there, along with a whole range of commercialising private sector stakeholders. They are undertaking cutting edge research from agricultural crop growing techniques and research to AgTech with its harvest robotics technology being developed out there. There is world-class research that looks at turf studies and trials for Wimbledon and FIFA soccer stadiums. Green Bio is working in the greenhouses developing state-of-the-art vertical growing techniques and systems. Track record is everything and so I remind this House that on this side we invest in research and development versus those on the other side who want to cut, sack and sell.

I am deeply passionate about education and extraordinarily proud to be the chair in this parliament of the Education, Employment and Training Committee. I know how important education is. It is transformative. It is what makes the difference in what our next generation looks like and to ensure a prosperous future. In the previous three years the Palaszczuk government has delivered, and we will continue to deliver as we go forward with this budget, air conditioning and solar for all our Redlands schools.

Two years ago we completed the library upgrade at Victoria Point State High School. It looks fantastic. It went from having daggy lime green and bright orange paint to something that looks like a state-of-the-art learning space. We have completed the hall expansion just in time for graduation, which was fantastic. The parents, teachers and students were absolutely delighted. The performance space that has been provided in the expansion is extraordinary. We are also about to deliver in this budget on the security fencing. We know how important it is to provide safe and secure environments for our schools, so that is fantastic.

We have a science block refurbishment at Redlands District Special School. I have spoken a lot about that school. It has a very special place in my heart. The \$9 million new learning precinct that will deliver the best possible education for these very incredible students is well underway.

Over Christmas at Thornlands State School we will see the refurbishment of the administration building. We have delivered new classrooms at Redland Bay State School and Bay View State School. We are upgrading our after-school-hours care facilities at both Victoria Point State School and Redland Bay State School. Macleay Island is also getting a library and admin upgrade. We have new playgrounds for Russell Island and Macleay Island state schools coming.

**Mr Power:** There is so much going on!

**Ms RICHARDS:** There is so much going on in the education space. I take that interjection. Last year we opened the YMCA vocational school. This is another facility that makes a huge difference to the students in my community, making sure that we can take them on a journey that sees them as great citizens in the Redlands and provides them with the opportunity to go on and get employment. That is a fantastic program. We have also piloted, on Macleay and Russell islands, the KindyLinQ program, another fantastic investment in the young people of Redlands.

A lot of students in my electorate head to the Alexandra Hills TAFE. That is outstanding. I again remind the House of the track record of the LNP on the TAFE at Alexandra Hills. I do not think it was too far off putting the padlocks on the gates. It was brought to its knees. We are investing in nurses and the trades. There is free TAFE and we have upgraded that to under 25s. This is a fantastic opportunity for my community.

We have talked about track record a lot. The track record of those on the other side of the House when in government was to close the Wynnum Hospital and not think about what that meant for the capacity of our Redlands Hospital. In the last three years we have upgraded the emergency department and delivered a state-of-the-art maternity department and we are going to go on to do a whole lot more: a new intensive care unit and 32-bed ward, a new hospital car park, we have the detailed business study underway for the full hospital expansion and we have a new satellite hospital coming to Redland Bay. That will service my island communities. It will deliver for our growing region in the Southern Redlands and I know Minister de Brenni will agree it is a fantastic opportunity for the growing end of Southern Redlands.

We have provided new equipment and pilot services in areas such as mental health, renal dialysis and ophthalmology. I am really proud of the investment of \$170 million to deliver better palliative care for Queenslanders. We all know how important that is.


Across the state we are growing our police force with over 2,000 new police personnel and delivering the tools that they need to protect Queenslanders. In the Redlands we are set to get a new mobile police beat. I know that members in my community have called for a police beat so this is absolutely fantastic news. Our police will be getting additional QLiTE devices and body worn cameras and we are continuing to fund very important programs like Project Booyah and RESPECT. These are great programs for our young people. This builds on the additional two police that we delivered for Russell Island, the new stingray vehicle that is out on our roads, and the police barge and new jet boat that actually make their response to our islands very rapid.

We are also delivering a new multimillion dollar fire station. Again I know how excited Minister de Brenni is about that, as it will be located very close to our boundary. Our Redlands community will be extraordinarily well protected. It will also provide better service and better comfort for my community on the islands, as they will know that they will have access to a world-class and state-of-the-art fire and emergency services response.

There is \$100,000 in funding to support the Donald Simpson Community Centre, an innovative seniors' centre. I know that the former minister, Coralee O'Rourke, loved how innovative the Donald Simpson Community Centre is. In the last term of government we provided funding of \$50,000 after funding was cut by the local council in its operational expenses. The Donald Simpson Community Centre has over 5,000 visitations annually. They have multiple innovative programs. They keep our seniors active and engaged in the community. I am extraordinarily proud of being able to support the centre.

We are also supporting our local sporting clubs. I give a big shout-out to the Redlands Rugby League Football Club and the Parrots, who will get \$150,000 for new change rooms. Tweet, tweet! That is awesome. The Sharks Junior AFL Club will receive funding to deliver new change rooms for our young girls who play junior AFL, which is very exciting.

To conclude, this budget will continue to build on the great work done in my Redlands community over the past three years and over the next four years it will ensure that we continue to prosper as a community. This budget delivers for our Redlands community. It delivers for all Queenslanders. I will be working hard to deliver on all of these exciting commitments for my Redlands community. I will always be a tenacious advocate to deliver more. I commend these bills to the House.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.01 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the 2020 appropriation bills. From the outset, I congratulate you, Mr Deputy Speaker, on being appointed to the panel of acting deputy speakers. I also congratulate Mr Speaker on his return to the high office of Speaker.

Many members have spoken already about the overall budget, their concerns with it and so on. I want to concentrate on my electorate of Theodore on the northern Gold Coast, located in the beautiful foothills below Tamborine Mountain.

**Mr Last:** Good country for growing avocados.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** It is very good country for growing a broad variety of orchard trees. I thank the member for his interjection.

One of my residents has asked me what we will get from this ballooning debt budget, so I want to talk about infrastructure for my area of the northern Gold Coast. When it comes to infrastructure, one of the issues that is certainly a sore point for many of my residents is exit 57 at Oxenford. Recently a resident asked me, 'Mark, are the individuals who designed exit 57 going to be designing the new Coomera Connector?' He has a point, because you cannot get a bigger fiasco than the interchange at Oxenford. The interchange at Oxenford is nothing more than an absolute joke.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Members, there is far too much noise in the chamber. If you want to talk amongst yourselves, please go outside.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** When it comes to the Coomera Connector, as a great example of poorly thought out processes they are proposing to build an on-off ramp interchange at Helensvale Road, which at the best of times is a traffic congestion nightmare. One of the largest schools in Queensland is located at the intersection of Helensvale Road and Discovery Drive. That school is within a few minutes walk of the proposed Coomera Connector.

The logic of placing an interchange at that location is concerning a lot of residents. The more appropriate location would be Hope Island Road, but a train station is to be located there, which will technically sanitise the area and make it very difficult to build a proper interchange on that road. Local residents are rightly concerned that the new interchange on Helensvale Road will add to the congestion, especially in the mornings and afternoons. As anybody who lives in the area will agree, you can be delayed by 15 to 20 minutes driving down Discovery Drive because of the sheer volume of cars that use those roads.

It is proposed that the Helensvale north train station be built on Hope Island Road, but they are talking about providing only 174 car spaces. Residents in the adjacent estates say that that is not enough. Those residents are concerned about the number of cars that will be parking in their streets after the new train station is built. They are demanding that at least 500 car spaces be built for individuals using the train service. Just down the road from that location is an education centre where there is not enough car spaces, so staff park their cars in the local streets. That is certainly causing a lot of heartache and headaches for local residents.

I return to the issue of exit 57. The Minister for Main Roads needs to swallow his pride and work with the federal government to find a funding package to fix that interchange once and for all. The federal government is willing to listen and potentially fix the problem. The interchange has become more confusing than ever and accidents have been caused by cars queuing on the motorway. I table a newspaper clipping from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* from November this year. The article is about a major pileup on the motorway because of cars queueing back from exit 57 at Oxenford. The work they did at the interchange has failed and it is continuing to fail. It is placing people's lives at risk. I table the document.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* online, dated 20 November 2020, titled 'Exit 57 Oxenford crash: Five escape serious injury at controversial M1 exit' [\[365\]](#).

Another issue in my area involves Charley's Crossing, which is located in Upper Coomera. One of Queensland's original cenotaphs is located at Charley's Crossing. I believe it is the oldest cenotaph on the Gold Coast. The Gold Coast city council gave approval for a new service station to be built in the area. That service station is now causing a traffic nightmare for people turning right out of Charley's Crossing. The cenotaph restricts the line of sight of motorists turning right. In addition, as vehicles pull out of the service station, which has been built close to the cenotaph, they face a blind spot. Potentially, there will be a fatal accident in the near future.

Many residents are screaming out for some type of safety upgrade at that intersection and there are a couple of options, such as building a roundabout or installing traffic lights. I warned Transport and Main Roads that the new service station would cause issues for motorists, especially those coming out of Charley's Crossing. Main Roads stated that the proposal was within the guidelines and that there was no problem as it would be safe for motorists to exit the service station. That is a load of rubbish. I live down the road from the service station and I see cars using that intersection every day. It is a dangerous intersection.

As I am talking about council and state responsibilities, I want to talk about my local rural fire brigades. Last year, my local rural fire brigades did a fantastic job fighting the bushfires in the Gold Coast hinterland. To their dismay, state funding to the Gold Coast city council for the burns team has been cut. In retaliation, the Gold Coast city council has removed from the rates notice the fire levee of \$1 per year. That money went towards helping my local rural fire brigades ensure that their facilities are kept in good order.

It is 12 months on from one of the biggest fire seasons we have had in a decade and the first thing they do is cut that important funding. I ask the Gold Coast city council and the state government to reinstate the burns funding and reinstate the levy to give our fire service, our local rural fire brigades, those great volunteers, the respect they deserve. They do not deserve to have their funding cut. They deserve to be respected and they deserve to be held in the highest regard for their service to our city.

Moving off topic a little, when it comes to local council issues, I wish the local councillors would agree to get Global Plaza sorted out. The upgrade to exit 57 has forced additional traffic through the local streets and therefore has caused a nightmare for local businesses around Global Plaza, Oxenford. Therefore, we desperately need the Gold Coast city council to fast-track any potential upgrade because it is hurting businesses, driving people away from the area. The Gold Coast city council also needs to fix up the sewage system there. Unfortunately, every time we get a downpour we have effluent flowing down the local streets. That is an absolute disgrace in a modern city like the Gold Coast.

Tamborine Oxenford Drive and Michigan Drive is an area I have been passionate about for many years. The government has agreed to fund a safety upgrade. In regard to the safety upgrade, I am curious to see whether it will be traffic lights or a roundabout. Irrespective, we need to ensure there are suitable sound walls to protect the interests of locals in that area. Being a major freight route for trucks, the installation of traffic lights will mean that trucks will stop and, because it is on a bit of a hill, there will be extensive noise generated when the trucks accelerate away from those traffic lights. If it is a roundabout, the noise will be similar but to a lesser extent.


Over the years, I have written to the department of main roads about a potential upgrade at Maudsland Road and Beaudesert Nerang Road. Again, I welcome news that they are going to sort out that issue. It is a very precarious intersection at the back of my electorate and I certainly welcome any assistance with that intersection.

Unfortunately, though, Henri Robert Drive, which is one of the access roads to Tamborine Mountain, has missed out on any funding. It desperately needs a slip lane for vehicles coming from the Canungra direction to turn left to go up Mount Tamborine. A slip lane is needed there because as vehicles travel across that blind hill they do not see any left-turning vehicle until the last second. There have been quite a few near misses in that area.

Another interesting topic is the John Muntz Bridge. For the last three years, the government has denied any responsibility for fixing up the riverbank upstream from the John Muntz Bridge. When I first started raising this issue there was certainly substantial erosion, but I find it interesting that the blame game went on for three years and just as the election campaign started to heat up the government finally committed money to go fifty-fifty with the Gold Coast city council. That is something the LNP had promised a long time earlier. I thank the Deputy Mayor of the Gold Coast, Donna Gates, for her stewardship in fighting for this funding and supporting me with this endeavour. For years, it just sat in the doldrums. There was a continual blame game between the state government and council.

Approximately 13,000 cars go down the Tamborine Oxenford Road every day, it being a major arterial link to Tamborine Mountain. Every time that road is severed, businesses on Tamborine Mountain, businesses in my electorate, suffer terribly. Also, residents are subjected to lengthy delays. If the government had corrected the issue when I originally told them to, back in 2017, it would be far less a problem than it is today. Since 2017, we have had multiple floods which have ripped away more riverbank, so more restoration works have to occur to fix it up properly. I welcome that commitment, but it should have been done years ago.

I had quite a few quarries in my former electorate of Albert. One of my biggest concerns is when quarries and residential estates are allowed to come together. The department needs to set a hard guideline to say that there should be a 1,000-metre buffer zone between residential properties and a new quarry. With the number of times the department has had to go out there to conduct dust monitoring and testing in relation to vibrations from explosives, it is costing the state a fortune. We need to come down on this to ensure that both the quarry and the residents have certainty in the future. There needs to be a 1,000-metre buffer zone. At the moment, there is just a guide which councils can bend to whatever they like. If the state prescribes a 1,000-metre buffer zone, then the residents and quarries in those areas will know what their rights are. This is something I am very passionate about. We need to change the legislation to make it so, to give certainty to residents.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (12.16 pm): I have been looking forward to this, particularly after that hard-hitting contribution from the member for Theodore! I rise to speak in support of the 2020 state budget appropriation bills. As the re-elected member for Thuringowa, I am humbled. It is with a great sense of pride that I get to once again represent the very good people of my electorate.

I have worked incredibly hard over the last two terms to deliver over \$150 million in job-generating infrastructure projects like—you heard it—Riverway Drive, stage 1.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** Members, I will get to stage 2 shortly. The new recently completed Kirwan Ambulance Station, the Kirwan State High School multipurpose hall and the new public housing complex all have disability access. Right now, there is a new one being built—you guessed it—on

Riverway Drive. That hard work in delivering projects was once again rewarded in the 2020 state election when the people of Thuringowa placed their trust in me to continue to deliver for them for a third term. With over \$108 million in funding commitments, this budget already delivers in spades. Over \$68 million announced will go towards those job-generating projects. That is not a bad start.

The Leader of the Opposition yesterday gave what I would consider the worst budget reply speech I have ever heard. It was all bluff and bravado with a dose of arrogance thrown in. It was pretty light on. Why? There was no delivery of an alternative budget. It was so light on, it sent two of their members to sleep. Some vision, indeed!

**A government member:** Which ones?

**Mr HARPER:** The members for Mermaid Beach and Southport nodded off. Some vision indeed, member for Broadwater.

After the Leader of the Opposition's question without notice this morning about getting infrastructure going quickly, here is his legacy as the former minister for North Queensland and former member for Mundingburra in the Newman government era: we received less than \$100 million in infrastructure. This government has delivered over a billion dollars in infrastructure for Townsville.

I want to respond to his carry-on where the member commented on restoring the relationship with the federal government. Let's look at what the federal government has done for us in Townsville. They promised the people of Townsville they would deliver stage 2 of the Haughton water pipeline, only to let us all down when they wanted to charge us and the state ended up having to fund it. They wanted to take away \$156 million in GST allocation. I suggest the Leader of the Opposition gets on the phone to ScoMo and says, 'Join us in delivering billions of dollars of infrastructure.' He should get on the phone to ScoMo in an attempt at bipartisanship and to help deliver jobs. But he will not; he does not care.

What about Townsville Ring Road stage 5? I was very pleased to see a \$20 million budget allocation for that project. I actually received the first funding allocation in 2018. I have waited two years for an announcement from the federal government. They have predicted funding for that. I hope the project starts soon. The funding is on the never-never—2022. I pushed for that.

I thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads because we are getting on with delivering Townsville Ring Road stage 5 that will create 400 jobs. It is a \$240 million commitment co-funded 80-20 with the federal government. My goodness they drag the chain, like they did with the North Queensland stadium, the jewel in the crown of North Queensland. That is what the LNP do in Townsville—they promise the world and deliver nothing. In the recent election I saw the LNP candidate for Thuringowa copy just two of my election commitments, which meant she was about \$80 million short of what our Labor government had committed to. Some \$68 million has already been announced in this year's budget.

What a great start to this term of government. These are real, job-generating projects that we need to help boost the local economy. I thank the Treasurer for making sure people in my electorate and in Townsville get their fair share. I note that 58 per cent of the \$56 billion allocated for infrastructure in the budget will be delivered in regions outside South-East Queensland.

The Upper Ross police facility, which I opened last year, will also be complemented by the announcement of a \$30 million, state-of-the-art police station at Kirwan. We need to build this because an extra 150 police are coming to the region. I thank the Premier and the police minister for all their support in delivering more police for Townsville.

Having already delivered over \$28 million for my local schools like Kirwan State High School and its hall and Heatley Secondary College which is undergoing a \$12 million upgrade as we speak—jobs on the ground right now—that will be further complemented by the \$7 million announced in this budget for the Thuringowa State High School hall. Members may recall that I started an MP petition in 2019. I commend the P&C and the Thuringowa State High School community for getting behind this. I thank the Minister for Education for her support. Together we did this.

It is, of course, our government that backed the people of Townsville, such as through the \$290 million Townsville stadium, our jewel in the crown and home to the mighty North Queensland Cowboys. They will move into their new centre of excellence in March 2021. We hope we see the Cowboys beating the Broncos again. It will happen. Now that we have managed COVID so well we can fill our stadium and watch the Cowboys games. I hope the Cowboys bring it home in 2021.

In North Queensland we have the largest port in Northern Australia. In fact, Townsville was built on the back of that very port, exporting billions of dollars in commodities to the rest of the world. We have invested heavily in our port over 20 years. A \$2 billion expansion is underway, creating more local jobs.



With our investment in the mighty North West Minerals Province, with millions backing exploration, CopperString 2.0, our rail and road corridor, and our resources sector are in good hands. We aim to capture rare earth materials like vanadium in Cloncurry or cobalt and other minerals to back our vision to create over a thousand jobs in North Queensland at the Lansdown industrial estate where this government has backed battery manufacturing. All of these minerals will be needed to help bring that project to fruition.

Lansdown is the home of Drive It NQ—a motorsport and driver education precinct which I have been passionate about delivering since I got elected. We are going to deliver it because we received \$10 million to land that project. It is going to boost tourism and the local economy. I was talking about this with Minister Hinchliffe only the other day. Drive It will deliver not just jobs but more money in terms of events. We cannot wait for that to be finished. We cannot wait to have the minister up there. In 2019 I received \$5 million for the required highway intersection upgrade.

I was interested to see the Katter member for Hinchinbrook post on social media—‘Delivered for Drive It, \$10 million’. It was Labor members in Townsville who delivered that. We worked hard and we got it down.

**Mr Stewart:** You worked hard.

**Mr HARPER:** I will take the interjection from the member for Townsville. Thank you very much. We did do that.

It is abundantly clear that our North Queensland University Hospital delivers world-class health care. As a tertiary receiving hospital, we look after people right across North Queensland from the west to the cape, providing specialist care. It was our government that delivered over a billion dollars to our health and hospital service in 2019. We have done it again in this budget. There is over a billion dollars. I am pleased to see more funding will ensure our hardworking nurses, doctors, paramedics, allied health and administrative staff have not only the best facilities but also additional staffing so that they can keep delivering dedicated, professional health care. We thank them for the outstanding role they played during COVID-19.

The Kirwan Ambulance Station is now built. The staff moved in a few weeks ago. I know that because I am one of those paramedics, registered under AHPRA. As a volunteer at the Kirwan QAS station—I will be doing some shifts over Christmas—I can tell members that the staff are very happy to be in their new home. That was a \$5 million investment. With \$40 million committed to the Kirwan health campus we are backing the delivery of health care in Thuringowa. I thank the former health ministers and the now Treasurer for that funding. I look forward to working with the health minister on delivering even more health announcements for the Townsville HHS.

Our schools are the heart of our community. To date we have delivered not only a new school in Townsville, but in Thuringowa we have delivered over \$25 million in school projects for our primary and secondary schools. There is so much going on. There are local jobs on the ground. I was so happy to see money allocated for Thuringowa high.

I have saved the best for last, my favourite project, Riverway Drive stage 2. Members will have to hear about this for four more years. I know government members will be excited to hear updates on Riverway Drive. Those on the other side might not be. We have a really good story to tell. I think it is great. Over \$40 million has been invested by the private sector in building new supermarkets and garages—you name it, it is all happening on Riverway Drive. I cannot wait to see what stage 2 will deliver. I have to thank the Premier, the Treasurer, the former treasurer and the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for their steadfast support of that major project. We have delivered and done the heavy lifting for the \$43 million stage 1.

We have \$20 million committed for stage 2. It was the Minister for Transport and Main Roads who worked directly with federal Minister McCormack to get \$75 million of infrastructure funding. The member for Herbert did not know anything about it. We dealt directly at that level. We are going to deliver that funding. That is what happens when governments work together. We will see jobs created out of that.


It is clear that our economic plan announced in the lead-up to the election is for all in Queensland. Queenslanders got behind us. They voted for a state Labor government in the recent election as they understood what it meant to keep jobs going by delivering real job-generating infrastructure in Queensland. They understood that we had to borrow to build. We told them that. It is just like the federal government that will go into deficit by over a trillion dollars. The other side gets up and moans and whinges. They have not changed. They have their heads down. There is no excitement. Get a bit of energy.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** That is the way, fire up! The reality is that COVID-19 affected every country across the globe. They borrowed money. We borrowed money. We will build infrastructure.

However, the LNP did not go down that path and I have to talk about that. I would not miss this opportunity, because I worked hard to ensure that the people of my electorate of Thuringowa get their fair share in this budget, unlike the LNP candidate for Thuringowa who was a staggering \$80 million short in funding commitments. All they did was copy a couple of my commitments. What about Katter's, One Nation and Palmer? What did they commit? They committed nothing. That is why they are not representing Thuringowa here today. They committed nothing in the entire lead-up to the state election.

What is the difference between a Labor MP and others? We are poles apart. It is clear that our state government has listened and is committed to delivering. I commend the Premier, Treasurer, Deputy Premier and all of the ministers for their steadfast support and enduring leadership in a pandemic, for being true to the people and for being an authentic government who listens and cares and is compassionate and kind to all. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (12.29 pm): I rise in support of the Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill 2020. This bill sets out the path for recovery that the people of Queensland and the people of the Hervey Bay electorate voted for. At the last election they said they wanted a strong economic recovery after a year of uncertainty, and yesterday we heard that the Queensland economy is well on its way.

With this bill, the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered a strong plan for growth and recovery by ensuring that our economy rebounds whilst the rest of the world unfortunately must deal with the containment of the COVID virus. As the honourable Treasurer said in his budget speech, this year has been a year that has been anything but certain. With the COVID-19 pandemic sweeping the world, this budget builds on a health response to COVID-19 that has led the world.

The election commitments in this budget deliver for all Queenslanders and, in particular, for the people of the Hervey Bay electorate. Whilst delivering on our commitments, this budget delivers on the promises made during the election campaign and delivers for the Hervey Bay electorate with our plan to unite and recover for Queensland jobs.

Jobs, Jobs, and more jobs—this is in stark contrast to those opposite who firstly did not even believe that there was an issue with COVID-19. They then wanted to keep the borders open and then flip-flopped until it dawned on them that the pandemic was real and, as always, they came late to the show. They then tried to con the electorate with shallow promises that would have cut services, sold off assets and sacked the hardworking women and men who work on the front line to keep us all safe and deliver the services we all need.

This budget has clearly defined priorities for Queensland and for the Hervey Bay electorate. They were safeguarding Queenslanders' health, supporting more jobs, backing small business, supporting Queensland manufacturers, building Queensland infrastructure, growing our regions, investing in new skills, backing frontline services and protecting our precious environment—and creating more Queensland jobs.

This budget has delivered for the people of the Hervey Bay electorate. At the last election, I said to the people of the Hervey Bay electorate that, if elected, I would work tirelessly to make the Hervey Bay electorate the centre of learning excellence in the Wide Bay. This budget commences that vision with the Palaszczuk Labor government announcing in this budget that schools in the Hervey Bay electorate will receive additional funding.

Included in the 2020-21 budget, Hervey Bay State High School will receive a further \$8.64 million of the \$11 million committed towards the completion of the performing arts centre and additional classrooms. This great addition to our school community will be utilised to develop our next generation of talented artists and performers, with the additional classroom space welcome in this continually growing school.

Some other highlights in the area of education for the Hervey Bay electorate include: \$230,000 toward play and learning spaces at the Hervey Bay Special School; \$2.43 million of \$5.40 million for classrooms at the Hervey Bay State High School; \$500,000 towards the refurbishment of the administration building at the Kawungan State School; \$200,000 towards the refurbishment of the J block learning spaces at the Pialba State School; \$250,000 towards the replacement of shade sail, reshape grounds and artificial turf at the Sandy Strait State School's prep playground; and a further \$250,000 towards the upgrade of the C block learning spaces for the music space expansion at the Torquay State School.

Further to the school improvements, the Hervey Bay electorate will receive important funding for the Hervey Bay TAFE with nearly half a million dollars towards maintenance investment in training infrastructure. The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to training our young Queenslanders for free in high-priority courses that we know will lead to jobs. The honourable Treasurer announced on Tuesday that we will provide more young Queenslanders with free TAFE and free apprenticeships. The Palaszczuk Labor government has already provided free training for year 12 graduates and pre-apprenticeships for Queenslanders under 21, supporting greater training opportunities for more of Hervey Bay's young people. Now we are going further, by extending that to Queenslanders aged under 25. That means that more of Hervey Bay's young people will be able to get world-class vocational training for free. That is a great outcome.

Also included in the budget for the Hervey Bay electorate is more funding for the Back to Work Regional Employment Package. In the Hervey Bay electorate this has so far supported 1,019 jobs through funding of \$10.308 million to date, with at least \$651,750 committed so far in the 2020-21 financial year.

With health, the Building Better Hospitals commitment is a key priority for the Palaszczuk Labor government which will help address growing demand by enhancing public hospital services in the Hervey Bay electorate. The investment from this budget in the area of health services will add to the delivery of much needed new health infrastructure in Hervey Bay.

In acknowledging that mental health is a growing concern in our regional communities, I am pleased to see the Palaszczuk Labor government has committed over \$7½ million in 2020-21 towards a new adult acute mental health inpatient unit at the Hervey Bay Hospital. This new acute mental health inpatient unit is currently underway and will create more than 140 construction and health jobs. That means more work for our tradies, for our apprentices and for our nurses. I am very pleased that this has been announced for the Hervey Bay electorate.

This is Hervey Bay's first mental health inpatient facility, marking the beginning of a \$39.6 million investment to more than double mental health bed capacity on the Fraser Coast. For the first time, there will be mental health inpatient capacity at Hervey Bay. That is great news for our local community. I commend the Palaszczuk Labor government for its attention to this area of public health. This is all a great outcome for the people of the Hervey Bay electorate.

Further to this investment, frontline services will continue to be strongly supported in the Hervey Bay electorate. As promised, this 2020-21 budget commits \$2.766 million of a \$3.242 million commitment to complete the construction of a new ambulance station in Urraween. This additional station will improve the provision of ambulance services for Hervey Bay and will bolster the response time to call-outs for the Hervey Bay electorate.

With roads, the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to build the infrastructure needed for a growing Hervey Bay electorate. In this 2020-21 budget, the government has committed a further \$176,000 out of a \$182,000 total commitment to install a new pedestrian refuge at the intersection of Booral Road and Garden Drive in Urrangan. This is a very high traffic intersection. This refuge will make crossing these busy roads a little easier and enhance the safe passage of pedestrians coming and going.

Further to these road projects, in partnership with the Fraser Coast Regional Council, the Palaszczuk Labor government has committed \$1.2 million out of a total of \$3.5 million across 11 projects that include roundabouts, footpaths and raised priority crossings, as well as shared paths—all things that lift the liveability and safety of the people of the Hervey Bay electorate.

Growing the regions is important to me. It is where I live, and it is what drove the passion in me to come to this place—so that I might be able to advocate to improve the lot of all regional people living in my fine electorate of Hervey Bay but also, through my experience, help drive the policies for our regions, moving them forward into being the great places they are to work, rest and play. One of these programs that does this in spades is the Works for Queensland program—a \$600 million funding program to support local governments with job-creating projects outside of South-East Queensland.

My role prior to entering this place was as a regional manager responsible for the local rollout of this excellent program. Over the period of this Palaszczuk Labor government, I have seen firsthand the jobs created and sustained by this excellent program. I do not think in the five years that I was involved with the program a single mayor or councillor in the regions has had anything to say other than that this was a brilliant program and made a vast difference to their rural and regional communities. I am certain that they are all glad that the Palaszczuk government was re-elected because this great program would have been gone under an LNP government. It is with this sort of well-thought-out focused program that only the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to deliver for the regions.

This 2020-21 budget has allocated another \$200 million to bring the total funding in this program to \$800 million. For the Fraser Coast region, that means 14 local projects have been funded under the COVID Works for Queensland program. These projects will enhance infrastructure in the Hervey Bay electorate and enhance the lives of everyday people in the electorate.

We all know that homelessness is a concern in most of our cities and towns throughout Queensland. It is no different in Hervey Bay. I have been told by many that homelessness is a problem that needs to be addressed. While we understand that you cannot resolve all of the issues that revolve around this matter in my region, the Palaszczuk government recognises this and has committed \$1.9 million towards the delivery of specialist homelessness services. These specialist services will go towards making the lives of local homeless people better.

During the recent campaign I visited many small businesses in Hervey Bay. They told me that because of the actions taken by the Palaszczuk Labor government, after COVID their returns to the same point of the year were around 700 per cent up—yes, that is 700 per cent—all because the Palaszczuk Labor government took the actions needed to protect small businesses in Queensland during that period. Small businesses in the Hervey Bay electorate know that the Palaszczuk Labor government provided the support needed through the Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grants and payroll tax relief as well as free or low-interest job support loans. The Palaszczuk government is committed to backing businesses and backing Queensland jobs.

Yesterday in the House we heard little from the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Broadwater, in his reply. He had no plan for Queensland. The Leader of the Opposition talked down the economy, he complained about debt and he complained about deficit. He complained about everything, but he did not say what he would do differently. The comments made by the Leader of the Opposition in his reply would have sent shivers down the spines of all hardworking men and women of the Public Service in the Hervey Bay electorate. Who can remember what the last LNP government did when they occupied the benches—


**Mr Saunders** interjected.

**Mr TANTARI:** That is right; I will take the interjection from the member for Maryborough. We can remember what happened in that area when the last LNP government occupied this side of the House. The opposition leader sat in their cabinet with his colleagues ruling red lines through the livelihoods and careers of all those who had no ability to fight back as he cut and sacked the very people who put their backs into their jobs and, through thick and thin, provided the bit extra asked of them time and time again. What else would you expect? As far as that lot on the other side of the House is concerned, they are just numbers on a piece of paper. Who in Hervey Bay will those opposite target next time around? Will they cut nurses, midwives, teachers, teacher aides and frontline staff like they did last time around? According to the Leader of the Opposition's reply, he will. He will be having a look at the Public Service. Fear those words, as we know what that means.

**Mr Pegg** interjected.

**Mr TANTARI:** That is right. The problem is that the LNP has not learned their lesson. They are still running the Campbell Newman playbook, which is to cut their way to a surplus. Compare that to the Palaszczuk Labor government's budget, which has the endorsement of rating agencies and industry and is delivering results for Queensland with the strongest economic growth in 17 years.

During the last election campaign I said to the people of the Hervey Bay electorate that I would bring a new vigour and focus to our unique regional electorate. I said that the Palaszczuk Labor government would build the infrastructure, programs and services needed to create jobs for us and our children's future. My focused determination is to get more jobs, have better infrastructure and provide enhanced services for the Hervey Bay electorate, and that is what my time in this place is all about. As I have said in this place previously, I have started wearing the paint and varnish off ministerial doors to ensure the Hervey Bay electorate gets its share from our government. In this budget the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered on the promises and commitments it made. In doing so, this government is keeping the Hervey Bay electorate safe and strong. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr BERKMAN** (Maiwar—Grn) (12.43 pm): I rise to address the appropriation bills for the 2020-21 budget. While I will be supporting the bills and welcome the inclusion of some positive measures—like a new school for my electorate—I want to spend a little time on why I feel this budget is a bit disappointing overall.

After listening to members' contributions on this, I am getting the impression that the government is selling this budget on two key grounds: firstly, that we have lower debt than other states; secondly, the handy campaign line, 'There are no new taxes.' This is almost funny, because it quite neatly points to some of the biggest problems with Labor's approach. When they say 'no new taxes', what that really

means is no new taxes for their mates in the banking, mining and property industries. When they say 'lower debt than other states', what that translates into is less investment in infrastructure, social services and job-creating projects than the other states.

This budget, like every other budget, is about who gets what. In Queensland, the property developers, big banks and multinational mining corporations get no new taxes, but ordinary people consistently get higher fees for health, transport and education, lower wages, few jobs and growing housing insecurity. The biggest failure of this budget is its failure to tackle the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of those mining corporations, big banks and property developers.

Thermal coal is in decline and Queenslanders are losing royalties revenue. We could do so much more to expand the mining of those minerals we need for a massive renewables expansion and give ordinary people a fair share of the wealth it generates by raising royalties. Instead, Labor has frozen royalties to keep coal and gas on life support. There is no better example of why we need to take on big corporations rather than leaning on ordinary people than the sorry situation with Labor's health promises during this election.

Queensland has done a great job—a world-leading job—in suppressing COVID-19 thanks to our incredible frontline workers, the Chief Health Officer and—I will say it again so there is no confusion—thanks to the government's leadership as well. Unfortunately, Labor is asking health workers to carry this huge load on our behalf while failing to support them. Before the election they froze their wages just as we were tipping into a recession. I was proud to stand here and vote against those measures. Then during the election the government proposed what sounded like a big expansion: thousands of extra frontline workers. In fact, they almost promised as many additional frontline workers as the Greens proposed in health, but then it all came unstuck. As it turns out—and this budget confirms—their promise of 5,800 nurses, 1,500 doctors and 1,700 allied health professional by 2024 is based on no new money. That means that Queensland Health and our hospitals will need to cut \$270 million of healthcare spending from their other work every single year. That is \$1.08 billion over the next four years.

I will be talking to the nurses, midwives and doctors in my electorate and beyond about how these cuts could affect their work. I want to ask the government where exactly they expect that money will come from. They will demand the opposition outline their cuts to reduce debt but dismiss the question themselves with glib promises of so-called efficiency savings. Frontline workers know what that means. Maybe it is fewer hospital parking concessions or less administrative, logistics and policy support—less of what they need to do their jobs. Especially during a pandemic we should be giving them the resources they need, not asking them to do more with less. As my colleague, the member for South Brisbane, said here in Tuesday: Queensland is a wealthy state, but we need to make sure that wealth is shared.

There is a very similar story in education. Yes, they are building new schools across Queensland, and that is very welcome, but instead of taking on big mining corporations and raising the revenue we need, they are asking teachers to also do more with less. In particular, the flagship promise in the budget for 6,190 new teachers and 1,139 teacher aides over the next four years is actually funded from the existing education department budget. That means no new money. This one is truly puzzling, because it is just not clear to me how they are planning to add more than 7,000 extra staff—very welcome extra staff, I should say—without spending any extra money. This is all while Queensland is the worst state or territory in the nation at funding our public schools up to the national benchmark, which is the Schooling Resource Standard, SRS. Instead of getting our public schools to 100 per cent of the SRS by coughing up our state contribution of 80 per cent, Queensland is stuck at 69 per cent with no increase to that proportion over the next three years.

The Greens believe that we should fully fund our public schools, cut class sizes, abolish school fees for state schools and create free breakfast and lunch programs so that no child has to learn on an empty stomach. Once again, unless we make big corporations pay their fair share we will not be able to provide the things every Queenslanders needs to live a good life.

Perhaps one of the most fundamental building blocks of a good life is a safe, secure home, but right now tens of thousands of people in Queensland do not have that. Based on previous growth rates, we can estimate that there are around 47,000 people on the social housing waitlist in Queensland, although I suspect we will find that it is more than that when the register for the last year is finally released. There has never been a better time to invest in social housing. The Victorian government acknowledged that when they announced a social housing stimulus package with their budget. I had hoped to see Queensland Labor do the same and follow suit—but no, there is no new money for social housing in this budget and the government plans to deliver just 470 social homes this year.

Building homes for around two per cent of the current waiting list is so absurd that it almost obscures the gravity of this situation—that there are tens of thousands of real people registered and waiting for a home with no end in sight. In a wealthy state like Queensland, no-one should be without a home, but instead of building more homes they are building more prisons.

As I have said in this place I do not know how many times before, building new prisons will not fix overcrowding and hiring more police will not make anyone safer. To build and operate the new and expanded prisons, the government are planning to spend more money than they will spend on social housing. Yes, to clear this up if the Treasurer is confused, that includes money on prisons—and they are prisons—for children as young as 10 years old. That is on top of their plan to spend \$325 million on extra police.

Keeping people, especially young kids, locked up does not solve the causes of crime, poverty and discrimination. In fact, it traps more kids—disproportionately Indigenous kids—in a cycle of criminalisation. This should be a moment for boldness and to leave the old law-and-order politics behind. As we all saw, the electorate roundly rejected the LNP's shameful and racist policy for a youth curfew in Cairns and Townsville, and their scare campaign did not work. That should be a sign to Labor that things need to change in Queensland. I am reiterating the Greens' call for a moratorium on new prisons, both youth prisons and adult prisons, and for the government to raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14. We need to build homes and communities, not prisons.

One thing that is welcome in this budget is the \$500 million for the Renewable Energy Fund via CleanCo as previously announced and the \$145 million for grid upgrades to create three renewable energy zones. However, what is missing is a detailed and comprehensive strategy to build 100 per cent publicly owned clean energy as quickly as possible. I can tell the government one thing: they will not get there by approving new thermal coal and gas projects. Getting to 50 per cent renewables should be easy—and we could even get there with a target but no plan, as we have at the moment—but getting to 100 per cent will need planning, especially to make sure workers with good paying jobs at coal power plants and coal mines in South-East and regional Queensland are not left behind.

Despite countless warnings that thermal coal and gas are in decline, Labor and the LNP cling to these old, polluting industries—no doubt out of a sense of debt or obligation to the corporations funding their campaigns and perhaps out of a misplaced attempt to reconnect with a working class base that seems to be abandoning them all too quickly. What communities and workers across Queensland really deserve is honesty about the transition ahead—a plan for good steady jobs, affordable housing, free education and health care to support them—but that is not the plan this budget supports. It is more useful to the retirement plans of millionaire bankers and coal CEOs than anything else.

I turn briefly to national parks and protected areas. This budget delivers just \$7.6 million per year, or \$28 million over four years, to expand our national parks and other protected areas, which is well below the \$135 million called for by the Queensland Conservation Council and only around one-tenth of the amount called for by other experts. I am referring there to the 2018 Queensland Treasury Corporation report—a report that the government tried to bury—that made clear that capital investment of \$225 million would be required to reach even 13 per cent of Queensland being in protected areas and that this would require \$25 million to \$80 million in annual funding for effective maintenance.

Former environment minister Enoch described the sum that is being committed as an 'initial' investment—a down payment. How depressingly disappointing it is to now learn that the plan for the next four years includes no extra money. It is a down payment and no-one is there to pick up the rest of the bill. It looks like we are nowhere near on track to meet the nationally agreed target of 17 per cent for our protected areas here in Queensland. Bold investment to restore and protect biodiversity through expanding protected areas would be a brilliant way to keep people working as we recover from COVID, and it is more vital every year as climate change pushes more species to the brink. I urge the government to increase this commitment.

I was also pleased to hear yesterday that the government will not increase public transport fares in 2021, but I still marvel at the apparently purely ideological attachment to ticketing and fares. The total cost to the state government of delivering public transport in South-East Queensland went up in this budget from \$1.55 billion to \$1.74 billion for the coming year, thanks to a drop in fare revenue due to COVID. Even before fare revenue dropped, the state government was already subsidising about 80 per cent of every single trip, and now that figure would be far higher. That is before we consider the \$371 million Labor are spending on a new privatised ticketing system. Considering both these things, the case is now even stronger for making public transport free, as the Greens proposed before the

election. All told, it is actually cheaper for the government to make public transport free. We could save on the cost of ticketing, cut back on wasteful road widening, cut pollution and transform our city in the process.

I am very happy to see that the budget contains \$65 million for a new school in Brisbane's inner west near my electorate. It is a wonderful feeling to stand here and say that after years of getting up in this place to explain why we need a new school to address overcrowding. The west side is growing rapidly, and we need long-term planning and infrastructure like schools to keep up. One thing I would note immediately is that, while the commitment so far is just for a primary school, there is no denying we also need more secondary capacity. Ensuring that the community is involved in planning and heard in making decisions about the location of this school will be my priority over the next two years and I am looking forward to working with the department to help make this happen.

The other crucial side of school overcrowding is outside school hours care. Right now capacity is not keeping up with demand and too many parents are missing out which affects their ability to work and their families' financial stability. Despite a pre-election commitment for more OSHC funding at Indooroopilly and Ironside state schools, I could not see this in the budget papers and I will be following this up in estimates this coming week to make sure it is delivered as soon as possible and not delayed.

There are a few other local projects funded in the budget I want to acknowledge here as well. The government has allocated \$500,000 to redesign the Indooroopilly Shopping Centre bus station over the next two years. It will be important to make sure this upgrade improves pedestrian access across Musgrave Road and Station Road. It is great to see the state will also be jointly funding the design of the shared path along Witton Road in Indooroopilly near Ambrose Treacy College. This is a really important stretch to link up the new proposed riverwalk at Indooroopilly and the Centenary cycleway. It is great to see that is moving forward.

I would with more time like to address the failure again of this budget to address train station accessibility, particularly at the Taringa train station which so desperately needs an upgrade. Despite \$244 million in funding for the Centenary Bridge duplication and motorway upgrades, we still see no funding to commit to build priority bus lanes along the motorway. This is despite that being proposed in the Western Brisbane Transport Network Strategy dating all the way back in 2009. I am disappointed to see nothing in the budget for the state to work with the Brisbane City Council to buy back the ABC site in Toowong and to help make those vitally important green bridges in inner Brisbane happen. I will keep making the case for that.

In closing and in general, long-term planning and big, bold ideas for Queensland's post-COVID future are hard to find in this budget. When the government told us there would be no surprises in this budget, they were not lying—but I almost wish they had offered just a few surprises. More of the same means more unemployment, more homelessness, more child poverty and more inequality while the big banks, property developers and mining corporations get more profits and continue to run the show.

This budget really is full of missed opportunities. I will avoid exhaustively recounting the Greens' election platform here again; members can read it all online if they would like some more ideas. Just a few of those proposals—like 100,000 public homes, free school meals, 100 per cent publicly owned clean energy, a local manufacturing revival and free public transport—would have transformed everyday Queenslanders' lives for the better. To do that, this budget would have had to take on the big banks and mining corporations that run the state. Unfortunately, this budget reads more like a repayment of their investment in Labor this election than a budget for Queenslanders who are really struggling.

Debate, on motion of Mr Berkman, adjourned.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Hart): Members, because you have been very quiet during the last two speeches, you can have an extra minute for lunch.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 pm to 2.00 pm.

## MOTION

### Order of Business



**Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Acting Leader of the House) (2.00 pm): I move—

That government business order of the day No. 1 be postponed.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

**DISABILITY SERVICES AND OTHER LEGISLATION (WORKER SCREENING)  
AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading**

Resumed from 3 December (see p. 331), on motion of Mr Crawford—

That the bill be now read a second time.



**Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (2.01 pm), continuing: When we last adjourned I was quoting from the bill's explanatory notes, so I will continue with the quote. It states—

This includes the delivery of a nationally consistent worker screening framework, through a shared approach between the Commonwealth and the states and territories.

Having agreed to the establishment of the quality and safeguarding framework, all federal, state and territory jurisdictions work together to develop the intergovernmental agreement on nationally consistent worker screening for the NDIS, which was signed by the state of Queensland on 3 May 2018. Accordingly, this legislation currently before the House will allow Queensland to adhere to this commitment.

The objectives of this bill are to—

1. Support nationally consistent worker screening for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Nationally Consistent Worker Screening for the NDIS ...
2. Enable Queensland to operate a state disability worker screening system for certain disability services that it continues to fund, or deliver, outside of the jurisdiction of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission (NDIS Commission);
3. Streamline and strengthen the legislative framework for disability worker screening in Queensland; and
4. Ensure the blue card system operates effectively and efficiently alongside the disability worker screening system and the strongest possible safeguards are maintained in relation to persons working with children with disability.

The introduction of this bill means existing legislation will be amended including amending the Disability Services Act 2006 to replace the existing yellow card framework with a new framework for both NDIS worker screening and state disability worker screening, and amending the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 to ensure that the blue card system operates effectively and efficiently alongside the disability screening system and maintains the strongest possible safeguards for children with disability.

This bill also proposes to amend the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000 to provide the power for a police officer to require production of a person's disability worker clearance card. This amendment restricts the operation of the right to property as it provides a new confiscation power to police officers.

The bill will also amend the Evidence Act 1977 to provide that the Police Commissioner or the Director of Public Prosecutions is authorised to supply a copy of a section 93A transcript to the chief executive (disability services) and for the chief executive (disability services) and the chief executive (working with children) to share transcripts with one another; and the chief executive (disability services) does not commit an offence by using a section 93A transcript for the purposes of making a disability worker screening decision. There will also be consequential amendments made to the Guardianship and Administration Act 2000.

Before continuing, at this point I would like to address the commencement of this proposed worker screening scheme or, rather, the delay in its commencement. In her introductory speech, the then Labor minister stated that 1 July 2020 was the intended commencement date for NDIS worker screening under the intergovernmental agreement. Given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the minister has advised that this start date has had to be postponed, stating, 'It would not be sensible to implement such a significant reform in the context of a global health pandemic.' I also note the minister's assurance that—

Until commencement, the strong screening processes under the current yellow card system will continue. This means that NDIS service providers can continue to apply for a yellow card, a blue card or a yellow card exemption.

Since the commencement date has been delayed, this legislation will now commence by proclamation and will allow for a final date to be negotiated and agreed to by all jurisdictions. Whilst there have, unfortunately, been instances where the COVID-19 pandemic has been used as a justification for state Labor government delay or, worse, inaction, in this instance the LNP sees this postponed commencement date as a reasonable measure, especially given the considerable disruption and impacts that continue to be experienced by everyone within the disability services sector.



To that end, can I again commend the outstanding work and effort gone to by Queensland disability service providers to ensure the continued and safe delivery of services during this pandemic. I would also like to place on record my appreciation to the Queenslanders with Disability Network, who made a submission on this legislation, for their assistance and initiative in developing and sharing a range of resources and tools for the disability services sector specifically tailored to responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

I do note regarding the commencement by proclamation and as per the committee report, the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors has advised that there will be 'clear communications that explain how the transitional provisions will work and what this means for workers and employers'. It is absolutely crucial that the minister and his department ensure such clear and timely communication takes place. As we have seen with the transition to the NDIS, strong communication and a clear understanding of requirements by all within the sector as these reforms continue to be rolled out is essential not only to great service delivery but also to safe service delivery. As the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability report released in January this year made clear, abuse of Australians living with a disability is prevalent and widespread.

Several concerns were raised by the committee, particularly in regard to the impact of screening on ensuring equitable access to entry for workers in this sector. Concerns were expressed by the Queensland Human Rights Commission regarding the possibility that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons in regional and remote communities may face hurdles to participating in this field. Specifically, the Queensland Human Rights Commission was concerned that the proposed dual system of a disability worker screen check and blue card check could add more barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons participating in this sector. As they articulated in their submission to the committee—

The Bill creates additional impediments by requiring both a disability worker screening check and a blue card for people wishing to work with children with disability. While there is provision for joint application processes ... there will still be two separate screening units, applying different tests, and potentially seeking different information, increasing complexity and reducing accessibility of the process.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people may therefore be delayed or prevented from working. This can have negative impacts on already thin markets for disability service providers in rural and remote areas, and can increase the risk of abuse and neglect for people with disability. It also exacerbates problems with sourcing culturally appropriate supports for First Nations people.

I note the committee's report recognised these concerns of the Queensland Human Rights Commission and welcomed the advice from the Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors that specialised processes for individuals in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other remote communities would be developed. Again, we would welcome an update from the new Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships on how the development of such processes is progressing.

This House understands that an inadequate supply of NDIS accredited workers, especially in Queensland's remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, would exacerbate an already difficult market with regard to service provision. Similarly, this legislation proposes to implement a no-card, no-start approach requiring workers to undergo the new NDIS worker screening and obtain clearance before commencing work for a registered NDIS provider. However, regarding this approach, the legislation's explanatory notes state that the no-card, no-start rule will not apply to applicants who are workers of unregistered NDIS providers or who are in non-risk assessed roles with registered NDIS providers and who are already providing services to a participant. On this, it must be said that the Labor government must act with the utmost caution and care when implementing this approach. It is incumbent on the government to ensure that the system in place is one which is as simple, fair and straightforward as possible without sacrificing quality outcomes.

I also want to draw attention to another stakeholder concern regarding the potential cost that will be borne by applicants undergoing the worker screening before they commence. In the committee's report the Queenslanders with Disability Network stated that there will be a financial barrier created for those who are on income support yet are applying for worker screening approval in order to gain employment as a disability support worker. The QDN in its submission captured this issue succinctly by stating—

We strongly urge the State Government to keep the cost of worker screening applications low to help attract more people to work in the disability sector.

The LNP backs this suggestion, especially in the light of the current economic downturn experienced by Queenslanders before COVID-19 and deepened by the pandemic and associated recession. We urge the government to ensure an NDIS worker screening program is fair, consistent and in line with other jurisdictions. That includes the application cost and fee structure. The government must be mindful of those who are facing significant economic challenges at this time and who wish to gain employment in this vital sector. If the cost is set too high, there is no doubt this will have a serious and negative impact on the NDIS sector at a time when the government should be doing everything in its power to create and grow jobs and to support disability service providers and clients. We must have a heightened awareness of the impact of rising cost-of-living pressures on our citizens.

As Queensland's disability sector knows all too well, there have been a number of issues in Queensland over the past five years in relation to the government's implementation of and transition to the NDIS. I am sure all members have had constituents contact them with regard to confusion, concern and anxiety among those most reliant on the successful rollout of and transition to this scheme. One example last year was when the NDIS implementation was used as an excuse to axe the Taxi Subsidy Scheme for 10,000 Queenslanders living with disability. Fortunately, the LNP was able to force Labor into backflipping on this decision. I wish to acknowledge the work and advocacy of the member for Moggill, the former shadow minister, in securing this outcome. We were able to achieve this because we listened and worked collaboratively with many organisations and service providers within the sector—organisations such as the Endeavour Foundation, which was an outstanding advocate for its members.

I draw the House's attention to the statement of reservation issued by my colleagues on the committee when examining this bill. Essentially, these reservations centre on the security of information, including its storage, and the protection of that highly sensitive information in terms of interjurisdictional access. I believe that my colleagues were well justified in expressing these concerns, especially when we look at the Labor government's history when it comes to ICT—a less than stellar record—particularly the introduction of new ICT products and services. Most will remember the bungled health department payroll system, where hardworking frontline nurses and hospital staff were underpaid or not paid at all, and a system called ieMR, Integrated Electronic Medical Record, designed to manage patient records electronically. These are life-and-death issues. It is important to get it right.

The committee members' concerns relating to the right to privacy, information sharing and confidentiality of applicants through the NDIS worker screening process have been echoed by the Queensland Law Society and the Queensland Human Rights Commission, who were quite vocal on this issue, with the emphasis on the need to ensure that an applicant's privacy is given priority as this screening process is implemented. Such concerns were well articulated and canvassed in the statement of reservation by the former members for Caloundra and Nicklin, with further questions raised regarding the protections and mechanisms that exist or will be put in place to safeguard against the unauthorised use of personal information or access to it.

Some of the concerns raised were also in relation to information sharing, privacy and confidentiality of people applying for a worker screening. Applicants are entitled to sufficient protections to their privacy to the extent that is reasonably possible, including protections that guard against both human error and intentional misuse. Hence the commission emphasised that it is important that privacy is given priority in implementation. The government needs to ensure that the process is balanced with an individual's right to privacy. The government also needs to ensure that only people with the appropriate authorisations can access an applicant's file and to put in place a system that records the date and who has accessed a person's file. Given the sheer scope and significance of developing and implementing Queensland's nationally consistent NDIS worker screening system, it would again be appreciated if the minister could respond to such concerns on behalf of the Palaszczuk state Labor government.

In concluding, I urge members to consider their roles as advocates for those who need our support in accessing the world-class medical and disability support they deserve. We owe it to those citizens to provide this safety net in screening workers so they feel safe and supported whilst accessing a service that demonstrably improves their quality of life and that of the families who support them, often without pay, recognition or respite. I again thank all members of the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee for their examination of this legislation, the support provided by the committee secretariat as well as all organisations and stakeholders who submitted to the inquiry.



**Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.16 pm): I support this bill. It is nice to be able to speak to this bill the day after the International Day of People with Disability. How wonderful it was yesterday to have the Sporting Wheelies Association come in to Parliament House and show us some of the fantastic

work they do. It was particularly poignant for me because I used to work with a kindred organisation called the Queensland Recreation Association for Sport for people with an intellectual disability. We worked very closely with the Sporting Wheelies.

I have spoken in previous speeches to this House about my thoughts on how people who have a disability can be empowered to live a meaningful and fulfilling life with just a few adjustments and some support. Central to that process is making sure that, whatever services people with a disability are involved in, they are deeply involved in the design of them and are consulted. That has certainly happened in relation to this bill. We need to not do things to people; we need to do things with people and do them together. That is very important.

As I was driving to parliament yesterday, I was really pleased to hear Professor Paul Harper being interviewed on ABC Radio. Professor Harper is a respected human rights lawyer based at UQ.

**Ms McMillan:** Ex-student of Cavendish Road.

**Mr KELLY:** I take that interjection. Is the member reading my notes over my shoulder? He is an ex-student of Cavendish Road, a very proud Cavroadian! He is also a Paralympian. It was really interesting to hear him reflecting on International Day of People with Disability. He talked about the need for society to move towards viewing all people in a context of diversity rather than disability. I thought that was a very interesting thought to put out there. Professor Harper has low or no vision and has risen to the top of his profession in law and participated in the Paralympics.

The NDIS is a key part of providing those adjustments and support for people with disabilities to live fulfilling and meaningful lives. Yes, there have been some challenges as that has rolled out but they are certainly working through those challenges. It is really delivering some good outcomes for people. I know there were people right across the political spectrum who joined the Every Australian Counts campaign for that to become a reality.

From an economic perspective, it is a really exciting program. We are moving away from government departments determining what is good for people to allowing people with a disability to make self-determinations about what they need in their life. It is a very interesting movement. There are many economists around the world watching this as it is fairly unique.

Key to the success of the NDIS for many of the services are the workers who support people with disabilities. It is not just intellectual disabilities; it is a whole range of disabilities. Once people are in a care and a caring relationship—a carer/caring relationship—there is the potential for people to unfortunately also suffer from abuse, neglect and sexual abuse. We have seen that time and time again across a whole range of institutions and situations where there are carers. That is why people like myself who are in the nursing profession and other caring professions—the member for Surfers Paradise would be aware of this from his work in the dental profession—operate under a strict code of ethics to try to achieve the highest standards. However, we do need systems in place to protect people who are potentially vulnerable.


Generally speaking, when someone needs some degree of care, they will have a degree of vulnerability. For years I managed organisations that provided services for people with intellectual disabilities and I saw just how potentially vulnerable people are when we put them into one-on-one situations. Sadly, as the name suggests, we are hearing that quite regularly through testimony being put before the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability which is documenting the harrowing experiences of, sadly, far too many people with a disability in our community. The rates of sexual abuse, physical abuse and mental abuse of people with disabilities of all types far exceeds the rates for people without a disability, so it is quite concerning and quite disturbing.

It is good to see a national approach being taken to the screening of workers. This will prevent the sorts of stories and situations we are hearing revealed at the royal commission. The one that stuck with me the most was the young man with an intellectual disability who obtained a volunteer position. He was very happy. His family noticed a real change in his demeanour, in his confidence and in his ability to socialise. Unfortunately he was sexually abused by one of his co-workers who was in a supervisory position above him and that young man has now spent the last 15 years socially isolated at home. That is a terrible outcome for that individual.

This bill anticipates that the ultimate responsibility for the screening of workers rests with employers, but I can tell members that from my time as a manager of organisations that had staff working with people with intellectual disabilities we need tools to be able to do that. When I cast my

mind back to those two decades or more ago when I was involved in this, we just did not have these sorts of tools, and they would have been invaluable in terms of being able to screen staff. This bill provides really invaluable tools for NDIS providers to be able to screen their staff properly.

I am pleased to see that there is a range of both private and not-for-profit organisations moving into the space of providing NDIS services. They are bringing new investment into the area, which is great. We are seeing even more services than would be delivered if we just left it to government. I would hope that those providers, particularly the private sector providers, come in with a good spirit and realise that the way to deliver good services is, firstly, to make sure they screen their workers well and they get people with good intentions and, secondly, to ensure that they invest in the training of those workers and the wages of those workers so that it becomes a sector where we have highly qualified, well-remunerated people. That will also go a long way to stemming the abuse. For now, screening is certainly an extremely important step forward. I support the bill and commend it to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (2.23 pm): Today I rise in the House to voice my support for the Disability Services and Other Legislation (Worker Screening) Amendment Bill 2020. Like my colleagues before me, I also want to reference the fact that it was great to see the Sporting Wheelies and Paralympians here at Parliament House yesterday for International Day of People with Disability. It is sensational to see the goals of that organisation in seeking to create a more inclusive society, particularly in terms of making it inclusive for those young children.

While I have been very fortunate, as a young child I had callipers for about three or four years at the start of my schooling days, and things have changed. I experienced a bit of heckling in the playground from time to time. Some of my school mates thought it was fun to push me over, because I was not all that stable on my feet, but I have been fortunate enough that the issues that I had as a child have not continued with me through life. Yesterday it was great to hear and share some of the stories of how children with disability are being supported in school and being given the opportunity to participate and that specific sports are being developed that are friendly for them to participate in.

Yesterday we were also chatting about the inclusiveness of the last Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast and in South-East Queensland. Was it not great to go to a sporting event where people with disability were able to participate and compete at the same time and in similar heats as other athletes? It was a great message to the world and a real credit to Queensland that we were able to host an event that was just so inclusive. There were some athletic events at Carrara that I was fortunate enough to go and see with some amazing results. Just to see the support of the crowd for those people with disability participating was incredibly moving and again a great credit to our state and to our region for hosting that event.

At the swimming at the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre one minute you were watching events with athletes participating in their races and then after three or four races there would be a whole squad of people with disability competing. Frankly, it was hard to tell the difference at times. I am not particularly all that well informed or good at remembering the names of sporting heroes and people who participate in these things, but it just seemed to fit so well. I would love to see the Olympics move that way as well, but I am told that that is not the case. Anyway, I digress.

In rising to speak in support of this bill, it is important to highlight just how important it is to have this national approach. As a former assistant minister for child safety, at the time I had the pleasure of working with Tracy Davis and the department of communities and child safety. We visited many disability service providers across the state. At the time we also undertook a lot of work in terms of blue card and yellow card reforms. One of the particular challenges was that almost 10 years ago there was not a lot of information sharing between the states. There were issues of privacy and all sorts of other legislative impediments to being able to source information consistently from around the nation. In a sense we needed to open the borders, to use a more common analogy, to that information flow so that people could not game the system—that is, you could not have someone who was a known problem in Victoria moving to Queensland and then wanting to seek access to people who were vulnerable.

Fundamentally, the reforms that are proposed in the legislation are all about protecting people with disability so that those people with disability can live free from abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation, and that also includes financial abuse and exploitation. Sadly, there are many occasions where people with disability are taken advantage of. This legislation seeks to ensure that we protect those people from the sorts of people who would seek to take advantage.

From a technical perspective, the legislation will also make amendments to the blue card legislation with regard to working with children risk management and screening. I want to take a moment to applaud all of those people who work here in Queensland within the blue card department and in the

children and families commission and also the people within the department of communities who have carriage and responsibility for the yellow card system. I know that this will be an interesting season for them as they massage these changes through, but I know that these changes will be very welcome.


The public servants who work in this space have a very challenging and unique job to do. They have to make some tough calls. It is not as simple or as seamless as people would believe it to be. At one point the applications would be run through the system and they would be sent off to the police for police checks. I believe those systems are more automated these days. I do not know if the figures have changed, but the rejection rate was about one in 10. It could be that someone had a criminal record. Perhaps they had a big night out in Surfers Paradise when they were 17 and urinated in a pot-plant and should not have. All of these exceptions have to be investigated thoroughly. There is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes to make sure that we get to the bottom of the screening process to not only make sure that we are not restricting people unnecessarily but also make sure that we do not let just anyone get a yellow or a blue card.

When we start to think about this in the context of some of the more far flung parts of Queensland, some of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the north and the west of the state, some of those screening processes become even more complex. I note that in the last term of parliament members of Katter's Australian Party raised this issue a number of times. It is still a very complex issue. There are challenges around assessment with kinship carers and family and extended family in those communities. The people who work behind the scenes in our department do a lot of hard work and hopefully these reforms will not only make that task a little easier but also ensure much better outcomes for people suffering with disability.

It is important to highlight that there are many great organisations around the state that provide services to people with disability. I have a particular passion for the organisation called Youngcare which has done incredible work over the last decade to see young people with disability, who were previously left in a nursing home, often with people two, three or four times their age—not an age appropriate environment—given the opportunity to live in an incredibly well supported environment where there is lots of fun and laughter, great support and some really good people around them, such as the magnificent facility at Coomera.

In relation to the opening of the borders, it disappoints me that the legislation does not go further. I think it will come eventually. We need the opportunity to set up better information sharing with New Zealand. We have a significant number of Kiwis living in this country who work in the disability sector, in our child support areas and nursing homes. I am sure that the assessment process around their suitability for yellow and blue cards can be challenging at times and I wonder if at some point that would become a consideration in terms of information sharing not only between the states but also perhaps between Australia and New Zealand.

We have indicated that we will not be opposing this legislation. It is a sensible step forward. It provides national consistency. I believe that the sharing of information between states affords greater protection of those most vulnerable in our society.

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.33 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Disability Services and Other Legislation (Worker Screening) Amendment Bill 2020. The objectives of the bill are to support a nationally consistent worker screening framework for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the Intergovernmental Agreement on Nationally Consistent Worker Screening for the NDIS. It will enable Queensland to operate a state disability worker screening system for certain disability services that it continues to fund or deliver outside of the jurisdiction of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission. It will streamline and strengthen the legislative framework for disability worker screening in Queensland and ensure the blue card system operates effectively and efficiently alongside the disability worker screening system and the strongest possible safeguards are maintained in relation to persons working with children with disability.

The NDIS provides the necessary means for all Australians under the age of 65 who have permanent and significant disability with the support structure they need to enjoy an ordinary life, to achieve their goals, have greater independence, community involvement, employment and improved wellbeing. There is no doubt that NDIS provides the necessary steps to invest in people with disability early to improve their outcomes later in life. This is a service that requires support workers to provide the day-to-day tasks, such as household cleaning, assist with finding employment, participate in exercise and manage household budgets. It addresses the disadvantages faced by people with disability by bringing disability support into people's homes but, most importantly, it empowers and allows people with disability to engage and actively participate in everyday activities that we able-bodied people take for granted.

I want to commend all those wonderful people carrying out these important roles to provide the necessary support and quality of care to people with disability. Clearly this scheme would not work effectively without the right people in place to make it work. Sadly, we know that people with disability are at high risk of harm and prone to poor treatment, abuse, neglect and exploitation. There is absolutely no question about the type of people we want in these roles. We want only the right people to take care of our most vulnerable and this can only be achieved with strong processes in place and worker screening is an important part of making sure that we get the right people to do the right job every single time.

This key piece of legislative reform is absolutely necessary in that it will strengthen the disability screening processes in Queensland to protect the rights and liberty of people with disability. The bill provides a tighter scope that screening will be mandatory for workers of registered NDIS providers in risk assessed roles, including people working with children with disability; that there will be greater consistency of safeguards for children where people working children with disability will require both an NDIS clearance and a blue card. The application process will mean that application for NDIS clearance will be made by an individual worker through an online application process. Employers will still be required to verify they are proposing to engage the individual.

The bill also implements a no-card, no-start policy for applicants requiring screening to ensure people have a clearance before providing services to people with disability. The bill proposes a revised information sharing framework to enable the chief executive to request information from prescribed entities for the purpose of disability worker screening. It also provides for a state disability worker screening system to maintain current screening for disability services outside the jurisdiction of the NDIS commission and provides transitional arrangements for people who hold blue cards, yellow cards or yellow card exemptions on commencement or have pending applications for a blue card, yellow card or yellow card exemption where a decision has not been made.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Bush): I apologise, member for Cook. I will need to interrupt you there and ask you to take a seat. Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House, and the time limit for this stage of this bill having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.38 pm), in reply: I would like to thank all members for their contribution to the debate on the Disability Services and Other Legislation (Worker Screening) Amendment Bill 2020. I thank in particular members of the former committee for their examination of the bill and again thank the stakeholders who made submissions to that inquiry. One of my highest priorities as the new Minister for Seniors and Disability Services is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of people with disability. This bill is an important part of that.

This bill is important as it will enhance safeguards for people with disability, including a strengthened identity checking process, a stronger framework for disqualifying people convicted of concerning offences and a stronger decision-making framework that focuses on risk and considers a broader range of information.

There were a number of issues raised during the debate that I will briefly address now. The members for Moggill and Surfers Paradise raised the issue that the new disability screening framework may be a barrier to employment in some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. I acknowledge that pre-employment screening may have a particular impact for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Those concerns are well known and were well canvassed in the report by the Queensland Family and Child Commission in relation to the blue card system. That is why we are developing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategy and action plan similar to the one designed by Blue Card Services.

That strategy and action plan is being designed to build the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ensure clear communication about screening requirements and how to participate in the process. The development of the strategy will include communication material specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It will reach into remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and assist people to complete their applications. It will have enhanced collection of data about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants so that we can monitor and take necessary steps to adjust our strategy to increase engagement by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It will have strategies to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to inform our decision-making.

My department is working closely with Blue Card Services to develop consistent and targeted messaging across both screening programs, including education, culturally considered communication material and on-the-ground partnerships with peak community organisations. My department is also designing supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to ensure that, from application to outcome, there is ongoing assistance and consideration, with a cultural lens.

There is also a lot of work being undertaken more generally under the NDIS to build the capacity of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to participate in the NDIS and to build the capacity of service providers to participate in the NDIS market, particularly for those in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and in rural and remote communities. For example, there are particular projects focused on thin markets being undertaken at a Commonwealth level, with trials to occur in Queensland with a particular focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In addition, as part of the negotiation on the full scheme bilateral agreement for Queensland, the Commonwealth government agreed to provide Queensland with \$1.5 million over two years to build the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to provide services under the NDIS. That work is being led by my department.

Members also raised issues around the dual system of disability screening and blue card checks and that they may create barriers to entry into the sector, again particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. I will take a moment to address that. There has been a significant focus on achieving greater national consistency under both checks which has guided reform. The focus of this bill is on ensuring a nationally consistent approach for screening of people with disability, including children, under the NDIS. It is important that children with disability are afforded the highest protections and safeguards. As a result, the bill provides that people who work with children with disability require both a disability clearance and a blue card.

The bill recognises the need for both the disability worker screening and the blue card systems to interact and to ensure processes are as streamlined and as efficient as possible if a person requires two checks. The bill provides the ability for a joint application process. People who require both a disability clearance and a blue card will be able to apply for both at the same time. A joint application process will be available with one online form to ensure the least burden on individuals applying for both checks. A person who wishes to apply through this joint application process will pay a combined fee. The usual blue card fee will not apply.

Blue cards issued as part of the joint application process will be issued for a period of up to five years to align with the NDIS clearance period. This will continue to reduce the duplication of screening. Also, under the new information sharing framework, Disability Services and Blue Card Services will have the ability to share information between the two screening systems. This is intended to streamline the process of sharing information, given that both systems will use the same types of information to assess an applicant.

Members discussed the importance of the fees for applications. Stakeholders also raised this issue during the committee's consideration of the bill. The setting of fees is a matter for the Queensland government through the usual approval processes. The bill provides for fees to be set by regulation, which will require Executive Council approval. Under the intergovernmental agreement Queensland has agreed that fee structures should support a cost-recovery approach. I can advise that volunteers will continue to be processed free of charge. There is also an opportunity, in moving to a five-year validity period, to reduce the fees when considering them on an annualised basis. A five-year period means that people need to renew their clearances less frequently and, therefore, will potentially pay less overall.

As mentioned earlier, there will be a combined application fee for an NDIS check and a blue card so that an individual does not need to pay two separate fees. Fees for the state disability worker screening check will be consistent with current fees, subject, of course, to the ongoing application of the government fees and charges policies as the validity period will continue to be three years.

The members for Moggill and Surfers Paradise are correct in noting that stakeholders raised concerns over the bill's impact on privacy and confidentiality, particularly in relation to the information sharing framework. Officers of my department responded to those concerns throughout the committee process. I will take a moment to address those issues now.

Information sharing plays an important part in informing the risk assessment process. The revised information-sharing framework in the bill builds on the current information-sharing abilities and ensures consistency of information across both the disability screening and working with children checks, and

supports national commitments. The purpose of these provisions is to enable the most current, relevant and comprehensive information to be considered in order to determine if a person poses an unacceptable risk of harm to a person with disability.

The bill enhances the need for information sharing with the need to maintain confidentiality and privacy around an individual's information. The bill does this by placing clear limits on when information can be obtained, how information can be used and limiting the information that can be shared, the purposes and circumstances in which information can be shared and the parties with whom it can be shared. Employers can be notified of key outcomes, for example, the issue of a clearance or exclusion or an interim bar or suspension being issued. However, the bill does not enable any other information to be shared with employers. The bill includes strong offences and penalties if these information protections are breached.

Other protections within the bill maximise transparency and enable affected persons to respond to adverse decisions. The bill requires the person to be given a show-cause notice prior to an adverse decision being made. Applicants will be asked to consent to the obtaining, use and sharing of their information as part of the approved application form. Supporting information will be published on the department's website so that individuals clearly understand how information is collected and used. Under the intergovernmental agreement, interstate screening units must have appropriate information protections in place. The bill works alongside the Commonwealth and state information privacy legislation, such as Queensland's Information Privacy Act, and NDIS and other Commonwealth legislation that restricts the collection, use and disclosure of confidential information.

Members opposite raised issues around the development of ICT systems to support the implementation of NDIS worker screening in Queensland. The ICT system ensures confidentiality and security are maintained by implementing a range of security controls and measures in accordance with Queensland government standards. These include undertaking independent testing to test the solution against external attack and ensure it is configured according to industry best practice, employing data encryption protocols, deploying web application firewalls and external user authentication. The Queensland government's Digital Projects Dashboard, which is available online, confirms that this project is tracking on time and on budget.

I note comments in the House about the need to support as many Queenslanders as possible in accessing the important support and services offered through the NDIS. That is why, as part of the government's full scheme bilateral agreement with the Commonwealth, Queensland negotiated \$20 million of Commonwealth government investment to further support NDIS participation across the state in acknowledgement of the slower than anticipated transition of new participants in Queensland.

In January 2020, the former department of communities, disability services and seniors established the multidisciplinary assessment and referral team in Queensland locations where NDIS uptake has been below predicted levels. An assessment and referral team is comprised of specialist clinicians and case managers to provide proactive outreach and support through intensive case management to support Queenslanders to navigate NDIS access processes. Teams are focused on cohorts transitioning more slowly. As of June 2020, these teams had received 1,059 referrals for assistance to access the NDIS. Some 91 per cent of participants who had received an access decision after submitting an NDIS access request with support from an assessment and referral team have been successful, with over 70 per cent of those previously on a negative pathway.

In conclusion, yesterday was International Day of People with Disability. It provides an opportunity for all Queenslanders to think about how they can make their communities and businesses more inclusive for people with disability. While International Day of People with Disability looks a bit different this year due to COVID-19, it is important for us to recognise and celebrate the achievements and contributions that Queenslanders with disabilities make to their communities.

I am very proud to be the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services. This bill is another important step that delivers on government's commitment to implementing the NDIS and, more importantly, to strengthen the safeguards and prioritise people with disability. I commend the bill to the House.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.


### **Consideration in Detail**

Clauses 1 to 70, as read, agreed to.

Schedule 1, as read, agreed to.



### Third Reading

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.52 pm): I move—


That the bill be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

### Long Title

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.53 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.


## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

### APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL

#### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 499, on motion of Mr Dick—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Corrective Services and Minister for Fire and Emergency Services) (2.53 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate and put on the permanent record my support for the appropriation bills. This is a very good budget, a Labor budget, which delivers for Queenslanders by continuing to invest in the front line but also supports Queensland's recovery from COVID-19. It invests in the economy. It invests in jobs. The last election shows, and this state budget proves, that it is Labor that invests in our economy, Labor that invests in jobs and Labor that invests in Queensland.

Before I touch on some aspects of the budget, I want to pick out a particular point that the Leader of the Opposition made during his budget reply. The Leader of the Opposition said that he was going to be different. If he is going to be different, he should start with consistency. One of the things he pointed out, without providing context, was the time between the delivery of the 2019 budget and the delivery of the 2020 budget. He feigned outrage. He said that the delay was too long. The context around it is that we had a global pandemic, we had to wait for the federal government to deliver their budget and we also had a state election, as every state did.

On the point of consistency, let us have a look at the scoreboard. There was a delay, as every jurisdiction around Australia had a delay. The Leader of the Opposition was outraged that the time between the two Queensland state budgets was 539 days. He said it a couple of times in his contribution. The delay between the two federal government budgets was 553 days—14 days more. I am happy to sit down with the Leader of the Opposition, channel his outrage and write a letter to Josh Frydenberg saying, 'How outrageous! How outrageous that you delayed your budget in a year of COVID-19, in a year of a global pandemic. How outrageous!' If the Leader of the Opposition wants to be different, he needs to be consistent. Already he is failing.

It is also normally the proper course during a debate on the budget for each contribution to refer to the counterpart's contribution in the debate. I note that the member for Burdekin made a contribution to this budget debate, but, unfortunately, there is a very limited amount that I can respond to. When it came to the Queensland Police Service appropriation, there were less than 200 words; when it came to the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services budget appropriation, there were less than 100 words; when it came to the Queensland Corrective Services appropriation, there were zero words. It is very

difficult to have a debate when your opponent makes no contribution at all. As we saw in question time this morning, the member for Burdekin needs to get out there and work a bit harder. He has been missing all week. He needs to step up. If he is going to put in a good performance at estimates he had better start working hard, because we have not seen any great contribution at the moment.

Let us get into discussing this fantastic Labor budget. It is a Labor budget that invests in Queensland, supports the economy, supports the front line and supports jobs. Nowhere else do we see this fantastic Labor investment demonstrated better than in policing. The Palaszczuk government, through this budget, is embarking on an historic investment in policing in Queensland. It is the biggest investment in policing in three decades. This investment will deliver more than 2,000 extra police personnel by 2025, and this investment has already begun. We already have recruits at the academy, delivering on this commitment.

This commitment supports the Police Commissioner's vision for Queensland. She asked the government for these extra resources and we are delivering. The commissioner wants the Queensland Police Service to have an enhanced capability to not just respond to crime but also disrupt and prevent crime. This government supports the commissioner, and that is why we are making this historic investment.

This budget also supports a \$300 million police capital works pipeline over five years. The infrastructure program will see the construction of new police facilities in regions right across the state. The rollout has already started. The five-year program has started with Beaudesert, Biloela, Nambour, West End, Aurukun, Pormpuraaw, Clermont, Pimpama and Warwick. Many more projects will be delivered over the forward estimates. This new investment will complement the increase in police personnel numbers, but it will also support important construction jobs right across the state.

The record police budget also supports a number of other important initiatives, including the delivery of, probably a world first, mobile police beats. People tell me that this is a world first. We are very excited to be rolling out mobile police beats. They are an innovation of the commissioner. She was very keen to introduce these. It is a means of delivering a heightened police presence in local communities. The government will deliver 25 mobile police beats over the forward estimates, which are effectively police stations on wheels that can be quickly deployed wherever they are needed. Again, I am pleased to say that we are already delivering on those mobile police beats—one for Pine Rivers and one for Buderim. We are delivering more over the years to come.

Over the next five years the Palaszczuk government will also deliver additional equipment for the front line. That includes 5,000 new QLiTE iPads. For the first time ever, it also includes the rollout over the forward estimates of more than 12,000 integrated, load-bearing ballistic vests for our police officers. This initiative will boost officer safety and enhance their ability to protect others. These specialised vests are far superior to the ballistic vests currently worn by police. They are a combination of ballistic vest, load-bearing vest and reflector vest to deliver the best protection. The integrated, load-bearing ballistic vests would be sourced from a Queensland supplier where possible, sustaining local jobs and supporting local businesses. The Palaszczuk Labor government will also deliver over the forward estimates extra body worn cameras as well as extra police vehicles.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the professionalism and dedication of our police during the COVID-19 pandemic. They have kept Queenslanders safe. They have been on our borders, in our airports and at quarantine hotels. They have been on the frontline and they have been the first line of defence against COVID-19. Well done to our police. Their efforts are nothing short of remarkable.

In supporting their efforts, this budget has also allocated an extra \$360 million this financial year to assist with the delivery of the government's COVID-19 response plan. This funding is available to Queensland Health, the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Fire and Emergency Services to support their COVID-19 work. With this budget and those that follow, the Palaszczuk government is ensuring that the Queensland Police Service has the personnel and resources to do what they do so exceedingly well—that is, keep the community safe.

Another frontline agency that keeps Queenslanders safe is Queensland Corrective Services. They too have stepped up during the pandemic. We have seen around the world the loss of life that follows when COVID-19 gets loose in a prison or custodial environment. Queensland Corrective Services was quick to see the very real danger the virus posed and implemented a response plan that could quickly escalate to meet the threat level. I pay tribute to our Queensland Corrective Services staff, custodial officers and community corrections personnel for their excellent work during these tough times. Because of their hard work, today our corrections network is COVID free.

We are also investing in the infrastructure our corrections network needs. It is undergoing another historic transformation. In addition, one of the two privately operated prisons transitioned this financial year—on 1 July 2020—to public operation. By the middle of next year—on 1 July 2021—the last private prison in Queensland will transition to public operation. This has been an extremely complex process, but Queensland Corrective Services continues to manage this challenging process extremely well. The transition to public operation of all facilities in Queensland—there will be no privately operated prisons in Queensland anymore—reflects the findings of Taskforce Flaxton which observed that a hybrid corrections network with a mix of public and privately run correctional facilities was suboptimal. In addition, the evidence also demonstrates that publicly run corrections facilities deliver superior outcomes, especially in relation to staffing and prisoner safety.

The safety and security of Queensland's prisons will be even further enhanced during this financial year with a range of significant investments to boost capacity. The government allocation for the department reinforces the government's commitment to the safety of Queenslanders and reducing the rate of crime in the community. Significantly, this budget provides more than \$100 million to kickstart construction on the Southern Queensland Correctional Precinct stage 2. This project is the second largest Queensland government building project in the state after Cross River Rail. Building works will begin next year and on completion this \$654 million piece of infrastructure will be world class and will have supported hundreds of construction jobs each year during construction. Once completed there will be approximately 500 full-time, permanent jobs to operate that connectional facility. We will also finish the Capricornia Correction Centre over the next financial year. That is investing not only in jobs in the regions but permanent jobs once the prison is operational.

We have seen on Fraser Island just how important a role our firefighters play in keeping the community safe. Like police and corrections staff, our firefighters are right there on the front line keeping us safe, looking after people, looking after property and looking after the environment. The Palaszczuk government will always ensure Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has the personnel and resources to do their job. This budget supports the recruitment of an extra 357 firefighters over five years. New facilities and new vehicles are also funded.

Our marine rescue workers are also on the front line supporting community safety. These tireless volunteers go out every day keeping the community safe and helping people in need. They too will be supported over the forward estimates with a multimillion dollar investment for replacement vessels. Looking at the La Nina flavoured forecast for a severe weather season, all of our frontline emergency staff will be very busy.

Day in and day out Queenslanders know they have an elite front line when it comes to community safety and a front line that they can always rely on. That is why the Palaszczuk government invests in these heroes to support them and the good work that they do.


When it comes to the Morayfield state electorate, again it is a Labor budget that delivers for the Morayfield state electorate and again it is a Labor budget which delivers for the Morayfield community. It would be remiss of me not to highlight the significant investment in infrastructure and services for the community that I represent.

When it comes to education, I note that the Caboolture Early Years Centre will receive a \$1 million refurbishment. Stage 2 of the Lee Street State Special School, which includes a brand new hall, will also kick off. Morayfield East State School will get something that they have been wanting—a new security fence. Morayfield State High School will get a new school hall. They are very excited about that. That is something that I have been working on for a number of years.

We will also see improvements to bus station infrastructure as well as spending on the Bruce Highway really gear up. Minister Bailey, you would be excited about this. Some \$52 million will be spent on upgrades north of Caboolture, which is very exciting. There is also investment in TAFE infrastructure. The new Caboolture watch house will also be finished in the next financial year. There will also be significant investment in public housing. We see some additional accommodation units being delivered as well as also the provision and further support of domestic violence services, something which is very important in the community.

Finally, I want to highlight significant investment in health infrastructure. We will see the major redevelopment of the Caboolture Hospital really kick off in this financial year. We have more than \$70 million being spent locally, kickstarting that infrastructure project. This is a massive redevelopment. The jobs that it will support during construction, as well as the delivery of an improved health facility for our community, will be well received. In addition, there is money in the budget to support a new satellite hospital at Caboolture.

This is an outstanding Labor budget that delivers on all our priorities and keeps the community safe. Well done, Labor.

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (3.08 pm): I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bill introduced by the Treasurer and Minister for Investment, the Hon. Cameron Dick. This is a great jobs budget, and I am pleased to be able to respond to another good Labor government budget supporting Central Queensland. This budget clearly follows our COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review and our government's economic recovery plan which focused on protecting our health, creating jobs and working together. This budget will bring jobs for all Queenslanders—for none more so than my constituents in the Rockhampton electorate.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech on the budget for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated in *Hansard*.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Member for Rockhampton, in accordance with standing and sessional orders, your speech will be incorporated into the record.

*The speech read as follows—*

### Education and Training

New classrooms, multi-purpose halls and facility upgrades will be part of a \$52.4 million investment in new, modern school facilities across Central Queensland.

The funding is included in a \$1 billion Great Schools, Great Future education policy to modernise schools and support more than 3,100 construction jobs across Queensland.

School infrastructure projects like:

- Crescent Lagoon State School, Install A Block lift
- Crescent Lagoon State School, Provide equitable access to amenities and B Block
- Crescent Lagoon State School, Hard roof shade cover to the existing Prep Play area
- Glenmore State High School, Covered STEM Amphitheatre
- North Rockhampton State High School, Provide equitable access to multi-purpose hall stage
- Port Curtis Road State School, Replace septic system
- Rockhampton State High School, School Security Fence

With the emerging aquaculture industries, I am pleased to see \$2.5 million to build a new aquaculture research facility at Rockhampton State High School to give our school leavers a boost into the jobs available in this growing sector.

As the Central Queensland Region continues to prosper, we will see over the next four years more than 450 new teachers and over 100 new teacher aides that will be employed in the Region.

We all know that the future prosperity of Queensland depends on having the right skills for the future. Over the next four years our government will provide \$200 million investment in the future skills requirement across the state. As part of this funding our Government will provide more young Queenslanders with free TAFE and free apprenticeships, under a \$21 million plan to extend the opportunity to under 25s. This is about giving our young adults the skills they need for our future.

### Infrastructure

Our Government will deliver a record \$1.1 billion for infrastructure in Central Queensland. We have already seen roads and transport projects across our region, supporting more than 1,000 jobs as part of Queensland's plan for economic recovery.

We will continue to deliver fully-funded upgrades for the Bruce Highway, Capricorn Highway and create new opportunities for local business in construction, engineering and freight.

We're transforming the Bruce Highway through projects like the Rockhampton Northern Access upgrade and we will start building the massive \$1 billion Rockhampton Ring Road in 2022.

Our government will prioritise upgrades between Rockhampton and Gladstone and continue to increase its annual investment in Bruce Highway upgrades to more than \$2 billion by 2023.

Some of the current roads projects that have received part funding of the total spend as quoted (including investments jointly funded with the Australian Government) include:

- \$1.065 billion to plan and build Rockhampton Ring Road
- \$158 million for the Rockhampton Northern Access upgrade to duplicate the Bruce Highway to four lanes through Parkhurst
- \$75 million for the duplication of the Capricorn Highway between Rockhampton and Gracemere
- \$35 million for widening and intersection upgrades on Lawrie Street at Gracemere
- \$19 million for overtaking lanes on the Capricorn Highway between Gracemere and Emerald

### Health

Again this budget will see record funding of \$661.3 million for Health in Central Qld. The Central Queensland Hospital and Health Services work across a large region and do an amazing work. I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the staff at the Rocky base, they do an excellent job in what can be a very challenging environment. It is important you get good quality care when you use our local hospitals.

Over the next four years we will hire more frontline health staff in Central Queensland including 285 nurses, 47 doctors and 47 health professionals.

The expansion of the Rockhampton Hospital will enhance health services for Central Queenslanders and will also support local construction jobs. This will include the Rockhampton Hospital cardiac hybrid theatre, and the expansion and refurbishment of Rockhampton Hospital mental health ward.

#### **Police**

Major centres like Rockhampton will benefit from the Palaszczuk Government's historic investment in community safety by delivering an extra 2,025 police personnel across Queensland.

It will mean at least an extra 150 police personnel will be deployed to each police region across the state, including the region Rockhampton is part of.

In addition, the Palaszczuk Government will deliver 25 mobile police beats across Queensland.

At least one of these new mobile beats will be deployed to the Rockhampton area.

#### **Browne Park redevelopment**

I am pleased that funding is in this year's budget for the Browne Park Redevelopment—\$25 million—Upgrade which includes replacing the old Jack Crow stand and building a new stand with around 4000 seating capacity to cater for international level competitive matches of differing codes and multipurpose facility hosting music and similar events. This construction will support 60 local jobs over an 18 month construction period.

The Capricornia Correctional Centre will receive \$48.5 million in 2020-21 of \$243.2 million total spend for an extra 398 cells to provide additional prisoner capacity at the Centre. This funding will ease overcrowding and boost staff safety. Once completed next year an additional 232 permanent positions will have been created.

#### **Art Gallery**

The Rockhampton Regional Council will receive \$2 million out of \$31.5 million total spent to provide funding for the construction of the new Rockhampton Art Gallery. This funding was part of the Building our Regions Program. This project is due for completion next year and has supported 104 construction jobs

#### **CQU**

Central Queensland University will receive \$8.4 million for a Rockhampton campus consolidation and a new TAFE Centre of Excellence.

#### **Rookwood Weir**

There is \$115 million in 2020-21 out of a total of \$352 million to continue the construction of Rookwood Weir. This project on the Fitzroy River will add up to 76,000 megalitres to Central Qld water supply. It will support the growth of the Agricultural Industry to allow for expansion in areas like broad acre cropping.

#### **Small Business**

We know that small business is the backbone of the Queensland Economy and employs around 42% of all private sector workers. Our Government will back Queensland small businesses to drive economic recovery with a \$140 million strategy to lift their competitiveness and resilience.

That's why we have already provided \$2.3 billion in tax relief, grants, electricity rebates and loans to support businesses to keep 334,000 Queenslanders in work through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are delivering a \$140 million strategy to back small business.

This strategy will support:

Private investment with an initial \$100 million from the Backing Queensland Business Investment Fund. The \$100 million will be used to invest in small to medium sized businesses that have significant growth potential in Queensland and which will utilise funds to create significant Queensland based jobs;

\$30 million to improve small business skills capabilities including grants and mentoring opportunities; and

Funding for the newly established Queensland Small Business Commissioner, to help businesses evolve and advocate on their behalf.

#### **Country Racing**

Country Racing in Central Queensland will share in an overall \$35.2 million commitment over four years that will provide a purse for prize money and maintenance of tracks and facilities.

I congratulate the Treasurer and Minister for Investment, the Honourable Cameron Dick, on a budget for all Queenslanders. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.10 pm): The Gold Coast is one of Queensland's second largest cities. You would think it would stand to reason that we would get a reasonable portion of the infrastructure spend out of the state government budget. Yet here we are looking at yet another state Labor government budget that fails to deliver for the Gold Coast. A city that has 15 per cent of the

state's population only gets four per cent of the total capital works in this state. I cannot express how disappointed I am at the fact that we are seeing the state debt rise to \$130 billion with the Gold Coast getting next to nothing to show for it. Whilst overall this is terrible for the Gold Coast, it is actually not all doom and gloom for Currumbin.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Members on my left and members on my right, I cannot hear the speaker. Please keep the conversations and interjections across the chamber to a minimum.

**Mrs GERBER:** I want to be the kind of representative for my community that acknowledges when the government commits to something that my community has called for—because this is what government should do. Let me first acknowledge some of the promised projects that are desperately needed in my community which I am quite pleased about. Some of these involve capital investment in our local schools like a shaded play area and manual arts block extension at Elanora State High School. Other much needed projects that both schools and P&Cs have extensively talked to me about include: a school entrance upgrade at Currumbin Valley State School; a tuckshop upgrade and the renovation of the amenities block at Elanora State School; an upgrade to the after-school care facilities at Currumbin State School; and a refurbishment of the administration facilities at Tallebudgera State School.

I am also very, very pleased to see that the Labor government matched the LNP's commitment of \$2 million earmarked for the Currumbin Beach Vikings Surf Life Saving Club which will include disability access. Labor also came to the table with funding for an upgrade to Currumbin Creek Road, as well as an upgrade to the intersection of the Gold Coast Highway and Toolona Street in Tugun. The community should be very proud that together we were able to achieve this. It just proves what can be achieved with strong representation and when the government actually listens to the opposition and the community. I must also take a cautious approach here. I must not get too excited because all of these projects are not fully funded for this year, so I will have to keep pushing to ensure the government delivers these projects for my community.

It is also incumbent on me to point out those commitments which this government is wholly failing to deliver on. First is the \$40 million satellite hospital for the southern Gold Coast, announced by Labor during the election campaign as going to be in Tugun—something I notice the government appears to be shying away from now in the recent budget it has handed down. In fact, if you look at the Gold Coast Regional Action Plan—and I can table a copy for the benefit of the House—you can see that item 22, and I have circled it, the satellite hospital, which was stated during the campaign as going to be in Tugun, is located in southern Robina on that map. That is a far cry from the Tugun location my community was promised. Either we in Currumbin are going to get duded on this or the government does not know where Tugun is. Either way, I will not let them get away it.

*Tabled paper:* Document, undated, titled 'Creating jobs on the Gold Coast' [\[366\]](#).

It gets worse. When you delve into the detail—and the devil is always in the detail when it comes to Labor—it appears that the promise of a satellite hospital will not even be delivered before the next election in four years time. The \$40 million in funding for this satellite hospital is part of a \$265 million program for seven hospitals across Queensland. Do not get me wrong: more hospitals for more communities is a great thing, but in this case you have to look at the detail.

In this financial year the Palaszczuk Labor government has committed only \$1.6 million to the whole program. If you divvy \$1.6 million between seven hospitals, that is a measly \$230,000 to set up a whole satellite hospital in Tugun. That is to acquire the land, the planning and the architectural design. It is not a lot of money to do all of that. One has to ask: when will Tugun actually get its satellite hospital, if it all? Maybe Labor is going to reheat this one as an election commitment in 2024 and try to spin it off as something new. It really is very disappointing because this could be a great thing for our community.

Next up, there is the 148-hectare eco-parkland in Currumbin Valley. It has come to light that at the time Labor made this announcement during the election campaign the Palaszczuk Labor government had not even consulted with the landowners that they are proposing to acquire the land from in order to build this ecotourism site. Nor did they have the capacity to commit more than \$500,000 out of the \$15 million this project is going to cost. There is not even a clear indication in the budget papers of which government project this commitment will be funded from. If it is not clearly funded then the community should be very, very worried that it may not happen.

I have been a fierce advocate for ecotourism in the electorate of Currumbin. I called for it. I called for more projects during the election campaign at the Greater Southern Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce debate and at other forums. Ecotourism is something that I want to see happen in

Currumbin. It not only protects our natural assets but helps drive business and jobs in Currumbin. I want to see it happen, but taxpayers and the Currumbin electorate deserve to know how and from where this project is going to be funded so they can be assured it is not just mere puff.

What we are seeing here is the Palaszczuk Labor government hiding funding for projects on the southern Gold Coast behind smoke and mirrors. For over five years the Currumbin electorate has been neglected. Now, when we finally have some commitments, none are actually fully funded for this year. Some of them are not even funded for the years to come. It is the icing on an already stale cake.

Sadly, across the whole of the Gold Coast, it is the same for so many vital pieces of infrastructure. The second M1—perhaps the most important congestion-busting project for our city—has all but stalled under Labor. The Palaszczuk Labor government made such a fuss about this commitment, but this financial year they are spending a pitiful \$12.9 million on this road. That is a far cry south of the \$1.5 billion price tag and even less than the \$17.6 million they spent on the project to 30 June 2020.

The budget papers show that hardly any funding is allocated until 2022-23, with about half the project cost not being spent until 2024-25 and beyond. Ultimately, this means that on Labor's watch the second M1 will take eight years to build and meaningful construction will not start for another 18 months. In the time it will take Labor to have meaningful construction on the second M1, the LNP had built the entire first M1.

We see the same thing with capacity building on our heavy rail network. Despite promising additional rail stations, the bulk of the funding is not being allocated until 2022 or 2023 or later. I will continue to fight for a heavy rail station at Elanora. Time and time again Labor play fast and loose with the truth of their commitments—commitments that will not happen for many, many years.

Mr Deputy Speaker, as you may know, this is my first state budget process in this House, and as such you can hear that I am very passionate about my community. I have pored over these budget documents. I started with the Gold Coast Regional Action Plan, a glossy four-page brochure. I thought, 'Yes, this looks exciting. This could be good.' Then I downloaded last year's Gold Coast Regional Action Plan and I compared them. Guess what? I was shocked to see that nine of the initiatives are rehashed and recycled from last year's plan. There is no new money and no new announcements. For example, the \$286,000 announced for the Tweed Coolangatta Junior AFL Club is not a new announcement. It has been recycled from last year. It is not new spending for our city. It is creative accounting and tricky marketing that is trying to mask the fact that they have absolutely no economic plan for the Gold Coast.


During the state election campaign the LNP campaigned for more police. We campaigned for 10 additional police officers for the Palm Beach Police Station to protect the northern part of the Currumbin community as well as a \$1 million investment to combat hooning. On this side of the chamber the LNP gets it when it comes to providing extra funding to tackle crime, and that is why I am calling on the Palaszczuk Labor government to come to the table and match the LNP's commitment for additional police and anti-hooning technology on the southern Gold Coast. Work with us to make our community safer.

I know my community wants their fair share. They do not want promises that are never fulfilled or punted off into the distant future. People are sick of this kind of politics. I would like to stand up in this House today and rave about all the great things Currumbin is going to get and leave it at that. The brutal truth is that it is all smoke and mirrors. There are no commitments that are fully funded for this year or even years to come. The Palaszczuk Labor government needs to stump up and put their money where their mouth is. If they are going to get Queenslanders into \$130 billion worth of debt—debt owed by each and every family in Queensland—they need to deliver on their commitments and build the infrastructure they have committed to. They cannot just leave it sitting off in the forward estimates and then pull the wool over the public's eyes by reannouncing it as an election commitment when the next election rolls around.

Shamefully, what this budget represents more broadly is a complete breach of the trust of the people of Queensland. Going into the election campaign, it had been over 500 days since the Labor government delivered a budget. When selling its policy commitments to Queenslanders, Labor said they would only increase debt by \$4 billion. Now, after the good people of Queensland re-elected them, we find out that they are actually going to borrow \$28 billion. It takes a special kind of 'magic pudding' economics to add two and two together and get 28. Queenslanders have every right to feel ripped off, because this additional debt is not being used to build roads. It is not being used for wealth-building infrastructure. The Leader of the Opposition was correct when he said it was being used to put fuel in cars and pens on desks. They are borrowing billions and billions to pay for expenditure that is completely unsustainable.

This month on the eve of Christmas over 214,000 of our friends, neighbours and colleagues are without jobs, which is a challenge this Labor government has not even come close to tackling. In October this year unemployment was 7.7 per cent—the highest in mainland Australia. That is 214,000 people who will struggle to pay their bills and keep a roof over their families' heads. This Labor government would have you believe this is all due to COVID-19. It is simply not true. Even before this pandemic began Queensland had the highest unemployment rate in the nation. We need a government that is focused on getting Queenslanders into work. Despite all the plans and initiatives spruiked in these budget papers, Queensland's unemployment rate is still only forecast to get down to 6.5 per cent. That is worse than New South Wales and Victoria. The government needs to do better than this.

I will continue to fight to keep this Palaszczuk Labor government accountable. I will hold them to account on their local spending commitments to ensure they are delivered this term in the way my community wants. I will fight for our fair share in the Currumbin electorate.

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (3.25 pm): I rise to speak in support of this fantastic budget. It is interesting to follow the member for Currumbin. She probably thought that was a forensic analysis of the budget, but it ranged all over the place. One really important component of the budget she neglected to mention is support for small business. I love supporting small business in Currumbin. Earlier in the year I had a great catch-up with the member for Currumbin's predecessor. We supported small business in Currumbin. I can tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Members, I know that the member for Stretton is being somewhat provocative, but I could not hear him then so please cease the interjections.

**Mr PEGG:** It is certainly one more coffee than the current member for Currumbin—

**An honourable member:** Who paid?

**Mr PEGG:** We went Dutch. I take that interjection. It is one more coffee than the current member for Currumbin has had with her immediate predecessor. I do encourage the member for Currumbin to break some banana bread with her predecessor very shortly. I believe it was Kirramisu. It was a fantastic cafe. She may learn a thing or two, particularly when it comes to budget matters.

When we have a look through the budget papers there is one glaring thing missing: the death tax that Clive Palmer went on and on about during the election campaign.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I take all of those interjections. The reality is that, no matter how much the member for Currumbin or others search throughout the budget papers, there is no death tax. In fact, not even those opposite would be silly enough to introduce a death tax in this state. That was a big fat lie from Clive Palmer and his party. When you have a party that is effectively a super PAC that purports to be a political party, we have some serious issues in this state.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I take all of those interjections from the minister. Clive Palmer and his friends amongst those opposite. I exempt the member for Nanango from that. I know that she is no Palmer fan.

**Mrs Frecklington:** Hear, hear!

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I take those interjections. Unfortunately—

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

**Mr PEGG:** I am very happy to withdraw in this particular circumstance. I will move on. Earlier in the week the member for Broadwater was criticising this budget and this government for the amount of borrowing and debt, but today he said that he wants infrastructure projects brought forward. That would mean that that would increase the borrowings and increase the debt, so the member for Broadwater cannot have it both ways.

The member for Nanango was never foolish enough to make those kinds of remarks in previous budget replies. You would have thought that the member for Broadwater, who had been on the CBRC under Newman—

**Mr Harper:** Newman!



**Mr PEGG:** I take that interjection from the member for Thuringowa. I would have thought he would have learnt a thing or two from those mistakes but clearly he has learnt nothing. He cannot have it both ways. He cannot be against borrowing and debt and then want increased spending, unless he wants to sell assets or increase taxes. Maybe that is the agenda.

We have a new shadow Treasurer in the member for Toowoomba South. He took over from the member for Everton, the Twitter ref. I know that the member for Toowoomba South has high hopes for himself, but I am not sure how many others have high hopes for him. He talked about net worth. The main angle that the member for Toowoomba South used in the budget was to talk about net worth. The problem with that metric is that it fails to count our most important asset, and our most important asset in Queensland is of course our people.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I take all those interjections from the member for Logan. It is our young people who we are investing in with schools to educate them, it is our locals who need high-quality health care, and it is our frontline workers—our doctors, nurses, teachers, teacher aides, police officers, fire and emergency services workers and first responders. If the member for Toowoomba South thinks net worth is what it is all about, he has made a really inauspicious start to his shadow treasurership. What he should be focusing on is what this budget focuses on—that is, investing in Queenslanders, investing in our future and investing in our frontline services.

I would have thought the LNP would have moved on from the interesting policies they took to the election. Who can forget that they put their most important economic policy on the front of the how-to-vote card. They did not put a picture of the member for Nanango on it; they wrote '300 bucks off your rego'. We are in a global pandemic and we are facing some of the biggest economic challenges in living memory, and what is their signature economic policy? It is 300 bucks off rego. I am not sure whether the member for Toowoomba South has junked that policy yet, but it beggars belief. We have a global pandemic and we are facing some of the biggest economic challenges in living memory, but what do the LNP come up with for a solution and what do they put on the front of their how-to-vote card?—'300 bucks off your rego'. That tells us all we need to know.

Speaking of the global pandemic and COVID-19, I think it is important to note that there are effectively two Queenslanders. There are those like the people in this chamber who have economic security and who, despite the challenges this pandemic has caused, are still getting a steady income and are able to undertake their work and employment and there are those who are on JobSeeker or JobKeeper, who may have already lost their jobs or may know that when that support ends they will not have their job anymore. It is incumbent on all of us in this chamber to think about those people and do what we can to support them. This budget certainly takes some measures to do that with its investment in infrastructure and frontline workers and its support for small and medium business to create jobs in Queensland.

That is going to be extremely important going forward. All of us in this place need to bear in mind those who are facing economic insecurity and do what we can to alleviate that and create jobs and create a more prosperous society for us all. State governments have more limited policy levers than the federal government, but it is incumbent on governments all across Australia to work on that.

There is a huge commitment to manufacturing in this budget and I am really pleased to see that. I know that the Assistant Minister for Train Manufacturing is very enthusiastic about that. There is huge public support for investment in industry and investment in manufacturing.

**Ms Boyd** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I take that interjection from the member for Pine Rivers. Even before the member for Maryborough's longstanding enthusiasm for supporting manufacturing and industry, there had always been wide public support for that. What had happened, particularly at the federal level, is that throughout the eighties and nineties there was a bipartisan consensus about some of the trade agreements that were made.

People clink their wine glasses together and celebrate those, but we do not hear about the jobs that are lost, the industries that are destroyed and the families that are dislocated. People always talk about retraining and the ability to get other jobs, but the reality is—and I saw this firsthand myself before I was elected into this place—that when some places close and workers are made redundant, some of them unfortunately and very sadly never work again. It is wonderful to see the work that this government has put into support manufacturing and support our industries. Unsurprisingly, Queenslanders are very supportive of that, and I think Queenslanders have always been supportive of that.

The Palaszczuk government has recognised that and has actually taken some action. There are a whole heap of industries that people said would never come back—they said they would never be supported and that jobs would never come back—but they are starting to come back and they will continue to come back, and that is fantastic.

In the time remaining, I want to talk about some of the fantastic initiatives in the Stretton electorate. One of the big ones is the \$30 million upgrade to Beaudesert Road.

**Ms Enoch** interjected.

**Mr PEGG:** I take the interjections from the member for Algeester and I thank the minister as well because this is something we have been working on for some time. This will mean three lanes each way, six lanes from Illaweena Street to the motorway. This will be tremendous for locals getting where they need to go and doing what they need to do. As part of that, the Illaweena Street and Beaudesert Road intersection, which is a really difficult intersection, will be upgraded, but I issue a word of warning to Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner and Angela Owen. They really love mucking around with Illaweena Street for some reason, but I say this to them: 'Don't muck around with the intersection upgrade. You've caused enough havoc and nightmares on Illaweena Street already.' I send this warning to Mr Schrinner and Ms Owen. If they muck around with this intersection, I am going to sic the Stretton mums onto them again, and you do not want to mess with the Stretton mums, believe me. You would think they would have learnt that already.

Speaking of Stretton State College, we have a commitment for additional classrooms and a new building with 10 classrooms including specialist learning spaces. That is in addition to the performing arts centre and the new classroom block we have delivered. At Runcorn Heights State School, a new classroom block is under construction. That will be ready to go for day 1 of term 1 which is fantastic news. At Sunnybank Hills State School, the students and teachers are already using the new classroom block, and that has been very well received. There has also been support for a range of schools across my electorate. We will continue to support them because not only do they provide a fantastic learning environment for our young people but they also support local jobs. That is very important at all times but particularly with the challenges we face at the moment.

There is a huge commitment, as the Minister for Police mentioned earlier, to increase the number of police in our community and the number of mobile police beats and to make sure the police have the resources they need to do their job. That is very important. The member for Toohey would probably recall when the former shadow minister for police, the member for Toowoomba North, who we might hear from shortly, came out our way and talked about how important it was to have per capita policing. Even though the Labor government had increased the numbers substantially, it was all about per capita. Of course—

**Mr Watts:** That is not true, 610 based on a population.

**Mr PEGG:** Of course, then we got the commitment. Maybe the member for Toowoomba North got robbed by the member for Ninderry when he took over his role after the front yard party. Of course—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Members on my left, order! Members, there are 55 seconds left on the clock.

**Mr PEGG:** There is a huge commitment to police: 2,025 new police personnel over five years. After talking tough in our local community, as the member for Toohey knows, what did the LNP come up with? It was 170 police over four years for the whole of greater Brisbane including Redlands. As the member for Toowoomba North would know, that would equate to no per capita increase.

**Mrs Frecklington:** It is extra.

**Mr PEGG:** It is good to see that the member for Nanango is defending the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Ninderry. I do not think they have too many supporters amongst those opposite, so it is great to see the member for Nanango step in.

In conclusion, I commend this budget to the House. It is a tremendous budget under challenging circumstances. I commend the budget to the House.



**Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.40 pm): The Treasurer said in his statement that this budget delivers some certainty for Queensland in a year when certainty, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, has been in short supply. We have heard those opposite try to play down the COVID-19 pandemic. They even today called it a scare. We know they did that from day one. They called for the borders to

be opened in June 64 times. We saw how they ganged up with Prime Minister Morrison and Premier Berejiklian. It was the opposition and their southern backers, 'Team New South Wales Blue'. They attempted to force our borders open.

However, Queenslanders stuck together. Our Premier held strong. We knew we needed first to keep Queenslanders safe. On the other hand, the LNP kept fighting for 'Team Blue New South Wales'. They put up billboards. They said, even in June, that thousands of southerners needed to book their winter holidays on the Gold Coast. If we had buckled under the pressure from the opposition and let thousands of people come here from uncontrolled southern hotspots, we would have had every chance of devastating our whole economy.

The LNP wanted certainty for southerners—certainty for people from Sydney and Melbourne, where COVID was not able to be controlled—but of course they wanted risk and uncertainty for Queenslanders. Honourable members should think about that. They were putting the interests of southern holiday-makers above the interests of Queenslanders. They were putting Queensland workers' jobs at risk, joining the New South Wales Liberal campaign to gang up and coerce Queensland to take risks for Queenslanders' health. The LNP wants to be the backers of 'Team Blue New South Wales'. However, we know that, just like the State of Origin, we are beating New South Wales. Southerners may have written us off, just like they did our Origin team, but Queenslanders are scoring tries on the economic scoreboard. I will share just a few examples. The most recent final demand figure for September was 6.8 per cent.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** Sorry, I will repeat that for those opposite. The most recent final demand figure for September was 6.8 per cent. We are leading the nation, which was 2.3 per cent lower. We also know that we have lower debt than New South Wales and 11.6 per cent growth in household consumption when Australia as a whole has 7.9 per cent. Of course, Queensland is the only state with an economy larger now than before the crisis. The national economy has contracted by 3.5 per cent. More importantly, we know that more Queenslanders are working now than before COVID-19. We are the only state that can say that. Just like our maroon boys on the field, all Queenslanders are winning on the economic scoreboard.

We learnt the strategy of the LNP when the member for Mermaid Beach told the House that the LNP's gross failure to protect Queenslanders during the COVID-19 pandemic would be a distant memory in a few years. I do not think Queenslanders will forget so quickly. I also know that during the next few years the Premier, the Deputy Premier and our Treasurer will be on the issues that we faced. Once again they will be smart and strong, will resist outside coercion in order to do the right thing for Queenslanders, and will deliver safety, security and growth for Queenslanders.

During the election I spoke with the Treasurer at the Kingdom Life Centre, the home of the Park Ridge Baptist Church. I said that some have falsely said that we need to choose between the economy and the health of our community. This is not the choice we have. Instead, we cannot have a strong economy with a raging pandemic. Instead, I said to the audience of the Kingdom Life Centre that no-one could have the confidence to invest, to purchase, to take the risk to start a small business, to take the plunge to buy a new home, to take on a new employee—to take on any of these investments—if our health is not controlled.

The Treasurer delivered the certainty of a Palaszczuk budget that delivers a strong health investment. It delivers not just health infrastructure like the Logan Hospital extension and car park but also the health workers—the cleaners, the wardies, the nurses and the doctors—and I want to thank them for all their hard work.

The Treasurer delivers economic certainty for Queensland, and the health minister, the Deputy Premier and the Premier deliver the health certainty we need. We need the confidence and certainty of a government that continues to keep Queenslanders safe. We have had one of the best health responses in the world and we have certainly delivered throughout this period in terms of both our health and our economy.

In Logan this budget funds the testing centres we set up at the Logan Hospital and the Browns Plains Community Health Centre. It also funds the next stage of construction and expansion of the Logan Hospital and completes the funding of the Munruben and Yarrabilba ambulance stations. It has the certainty of delivering education for Logan students, funding the new community TAFE in Yarrabilba, a new primary school in Greenbank-North MacLean opposite Pub Lane. We are building the new Park Ridge State School administration building, which means mums with prams and disabled people will finally be able to visit the office without going up old-fashioned stairs.

We are funding a new classroom in the growing Yarrabilba State School and Logan Reserve State School. We are building the new Hive Community Centre at Yarrabilba between the fantastic Yarrabilba State High School and Sam Damiano. Speaking of Sam Damiano, the Palaszczuk Labor government backs choice in education, supporting through capital investment the construction of Sam Damiano senior college and the current construction of the new library at St Clare's in Yarrabilba. The budget delivers the certainty of world-class learning spaces for Logan families. However, it is worth remembering that during their time in government, the LNP delivered no new state classrooms in the entire electorate of Logan. There were zero new classrooms.

We are investing in extra police and police resources, including a continued commitment to body worn cameras, the QLITE tablets and the new mobile Police Beat vans. I want to recognise the fantastic work of our local police officers, especially those at Browns Plains Police Station, Jimboomba Police Station and the new Yarrabilba-Logan Village station.

We are investing in Logan roads, with the largest investment in the four-laning of the Mount Lindesay Highway from Stoney Camp Road through to Chambers Flat Road and four lanes from Johanna Street to South Street. We have completed the fantastic sections of four-laning between Rosia Road and Stoney Camp Road, which the member for Scenic Rim was pictured at recently. There is also a new, higher northbound bridge and four-laning between Camp Cable Road and Johanna Street in Jimboomba.

These are vital projects that the LNP cut from their roads budgets when they were in government. We also need to remember that during their time in government, the last LNP government delivered no new funding on the Mount Lindesay Highway north of Jimboomba. There is nothing to show for that.

**Mr Krause** interjected.

**Mr POWER:** The member for Scenic Rim interjects. He remembers the two turning lanes that were valued at over \$600,000 that no longer exist because of the North MacLean safety project, so there was nothing north of Jimboomba. I thought they would have learnt from that. All they have learnt is that they cannot cut from the Mount Lindesay Highway. That is why I was shocked when, just two days before the election, the member for Everton came out—and that was after the majority of Logan voters and indeed the majority of Scenic Rim voters had already voted—and announced that they were going to cut \$37.5 million in investment and they were going to dump the section of four-laning between Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat road, the project we were jointly funding with the federal government. They were going to cut the funding for the largest section of four-laning construction in the history of the Mount Lindesay Highway.

The Minister for Main Roads has delivered certainty for the future on the Mount Lindesay Highway, but the LNP would deliver uncertainty, risks and cuts. Their desperate, risky push for a surplus was to be paid for by the drivers of Logan. Logan residents know we simply cannot trust the LNP on roads funding. They cut it when in government and now they would secretly cut the funding for a vital four-laning project between Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat Road.

I have to note that the LNP members have made a false assertion in their claim that the debt is greater after the election. They are simply misleading the House. As the chair of the Economics and Governance Committee I can say that this was made absolutely clear in the COVID-19 economic review. It is on page 15. It has already been tabled, so members can easily access that. It was made absolutely clear that it negatively affected the revenues of the states and the Commonwealth alike while at the same time increasing expenses. The fiscal balances on page 15 report on the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Further, the member for Everton asked directly about the future deficits in 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Treasurer made it absolutely clear that there would be further deficits in this state, as all states' revenues were reduced from the COVID-19 pandemic. I urge members to read pages 15 and 16 of the committee's report and to stop misleading the House. We should not mislead Queenslanders during this period of recovery. Misinformation, whether health or economic, is risky for our economy.

The budget shows that Queensland is economically recovering and that every Queenslanders has contributed to the world's best COVID-19 economic response. Now the Palaszczuk government is giving certainty in backing Queenslanders. I want to see Queenslanders lead the world's best COVID-19 economic recovery.



**Mr KRAUSE** (Scenic Rim—LNP) (3.50 pm): At the outset, in speaking to the budget I would like to thank the electors of Scenic Rim for returning me as their representative. Fighting for our fair share is what I have always done and will continue to do in this parliament, starting with this budget. We need

a better deal for our families, farmers and small businesses. They are the engine room of our local economy in all parts of the Scenic Rim electorate—from Beechmont in the east to Grandchester in the west. Over 90 per cent of our businesses are small businesses that give people the jobs and the incomes that keep our community thriving.

Queensland, we have a problem. Queenslanders are \$28 billion more in debt than we were told about by Labor when we went to the election—a broken promise of seven times more debt than they committed to. It did not take long for Labor to smash a key commitment. In doing so they are impacting every Queensland—every man, woman and child and even those who are not yet born—who will face the prospect of dealing with Labor's debt in the future.

Queensland is heading towards being the jobless and bankruptcy capital of Australia on a long-term basis. We were there already, even before the economic shock of COVID-19. We were also at the bottom of the pile, with lowest business confidence. How can business invest and put people into work when it has no confidence and no confidence in this government?

This budget locks in high unemployment, high bankruptcies and borrowing just to keep the lights on in Queensland and petrol in the police cars and fire trucks. Analysis outlined in the *Australian* today shows that up to two-thirds of Queensland's new debt will be used to fund day-to-day expenses of government. I table the article.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Australian*, dated 4 December 2020, titled 'State debt to pay for daily "expenses" not investment' [367].

The article states—

Economists said Treasurer Cameron Dick's intent to borrow to cover day-to-day expenses, instead of infrastructure, would rack up "bad debt" and was misinterpreting the advice of Reserve Bank governor Philip Lowe, who has encouraged governments to borrow to fund job-creating infrastructure in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

This \$28 billion broken promise is bad debt. It is bad policy and it is not a tool for recovery as claimed by the government. Despite all the debt and spending, Labor's own forecasts show that Queensland will continue to have almost the highest unemployment rate in the nation, in fact the highest in 2023-24. It is no wonder Labor did not want a budget before the election. It was a cover-up, and the people of Queensland have been deceived.

Taxes will rise in the future, without a doubt, adding to the nine new or increased taxes placed on Queenslanders in the last term by this Labor government that is addicted to spending and borrowing. Remember as well all of the raids on public funds conducted by Labor during the 2015-2017 period? All those logs are now hollow because they have been raided by this government. Queensland, we have a problem: high debt, more deficits, high unemployment and businesses going broke at the highest rate in the nation. Labor's own forecasts predict that none of this will improve over the next four years, and it is condemning our state to the economic doldrums and the wooden spoon of the nation for the foreseeable future.

All of this must be done, I assume, on the heroic assumption that at some undefined and unknowable time in the future Queensland's economy will miraculously grow in an exponential way to reduce the size of this debt relative to the economy, to reduce the size of the unemployment queue and to bring rivers of gold into government to reduce the deficit here in Queensland.

**Mr Stevens:** We're going to win the lotto.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It is a bit like buying a lotto ticket, as the member for Mermaid Beach refers to. If this does not occur, there is no easy road ahead for Queensland. We are seriously exposed to future economic shocks such as inflation and the prospect of massive interest rate increases that will send the interest bill on our debt through the roof, gobbling up funds that would otherwise be used to fund services here in Queensland. In short, this budget is taking a massive gamble with the future of Queensland's finances.

I take issue with the Treasurer's statement that Queensland's interest bill is less than its revenue from investments. That can only be true when taking into account revenue from our government owned energy assets. This is a completely disingenuous claim, bordering on the fraudulent, for a couple of reasons. First, much of the revenue comes from government owned energy corporations and straight out of the back pockets of Queenslanders, especially our farmers and small businesses. I would say that somewhere between 30 and 50 per cent of every electricity bill goes to this government. It is like a tax on power, if the Treasurer wants to claim that as revenue.

These electricity charges and this electricity tax smother our small businesses—bakeries, cafes—our farmers and our irrigators. If it really wants to boost the economy, the government should look at reducing these charges. On behalf of all the farmers, families and small businesses in my

electorate, I will continue to call for reform in this area. Just like the government is addicted to spending and debt, so it is addicted to getting this power tax year after year. As the economy contracts in areas that use a lot of electricity, the government will get less in the door. There are reports of that in today's media as well. I table an article in relation to that.

*Tabled paper:* Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 4 December 2020, titled 'Govt paying through the nose for mistakes' [368].

The article states that if the government owned corporations were 'a private enterprise, the board would have called in administrators already and the chief executive given the chop'. That is exactly due to the mismanagement of our government owned energy generators. Why does the government not slash the cost of power to all these businesses that want to use electricity? Maybe it would get more economic activity and more revenue in the door, because the revenue from those generators is falling as the sectors that use a lot of power are contracting. It is not good that people do not use a lot of electricity when you own the key electricity assets in Queensland.

Secondly, for the past five years this government has tried to claim that the only government debt that mattered was general government sector debt, not debt of the state owned companies. You cannot have it both ways—ignoring the debt of the companies but then claiming their revenue. That is exactly what the Treasurer has tried to do, and it is exactly what some of his predecessors tried to do. It is like shifting debt from one credit card to another but, ultimately, Queensland taxpayers will end up paying the bill.

There is no shortage of projects that need to be completed to increase productivity across the entire state. We have a backlog of road repairs and maintenance of over \$5 billion, water projects that would produce increased productivity and new road infrastructure to improve efficiency in the economy. In that vein, I turn to issues in the Scenic Rim electorate that need to be addressed and how this budget does and does not do that.

In relation to the Cunningham Highway in the Willowbank part of the electorate which borders Ipswich and Ipswich West, the LNP committed to \$32.5 million of state funding in relation to future planning and projects at the Amberley interchange near Willowbank. There was no commitment from Labor in the campaign. In the budget papers it looks like there has been a small cut to this funding, which is now framed on an 80-20 basis with the federal LNP government. Incidentally, the federal government has had money on the table for this project since 2018 but cannot spend it due to the complete failure to act on the part of this government.

There is \$330,000 from the state for a business case for the Amberley interchange. I do not know what to say about this, because this interchange has been assessed and assessed over the last 25 years, yet there is \$330,000 for yet another business case. It just needs to be designed, funded and fixed, especially because this government is giving a free pass to the Ipswich City Council and dump companies to put in three new dumps and whatever other industrial development there will be using the Cunningham Highway at Willowbank. This is a dangerous intersection. It is a dangerous intersection for all the RAAF personnel who cross it daily. Someone else will be killed on this intersection.

**Mr Lister:** I remember it well.

**Mr Stevens:** You survived!

**Mr KRAUSE:** I know that people in the past have died. I myself have had close calls when turning on to the Cunningham Highway at Willowbank. There is no time to waste. The comments I hear during this budget debate from members of the government who say, 'You lost the election, suck it up' are completely outrageous when it comes to issues such as the Amberley Interchange at Willowbank.

**Mr Harper** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It shows the arrogance—and I hear it again. I think that was the member for Maryborough who said, 'You lost.'

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I apologise, member for Maryborough.

**Mr Harper:** No, Thuringowa.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It was one of the members over there. The member for Thuringowa owned up, so at least he owned up to it.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Gerber): Direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It just shows the complete arrogance of those members that when I talk about dangerous intersections like this they basically say, 'Just suck it up.' This interchange is not in a Labor seat, but that does not mean that it should be ignored for 25 years. We are all Queenslanders and we

are all Australians. Most of the people who traverse this every day actually live in the Labor seats of either Ipswich West or Ipswich, so why does the government not fix it, because it may be a member of a family in Ipswich or Ipswich West who is going to cop it at that interchange eventually? In this four-year term we need to see that interchange addressed, especially if all of those dumps are approved.

I note the future projects funding set aside for the Cunningham Highway, but it is also interesting to note that there is no future projects commitment to the Mount Lindesay Highway in the budget, only those already announced. In the election campaign the LNP committed an additional \$40 million in state funding to go forward with the federal funding to continue works on the Mount Lindesay, but where is the future commitment from Labor?

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Mr KRAUSE:** It looks like the member for Logan is happy to rest on his laurels. That is not good enough, member for Logan.

**Mr Power** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Member for Logan, you are warned. I warned you and now you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr KRAUSE:** There is much more work to be done and we need to see TMR push ahead as fast as possible to plan new works and to seek funding for them from the state and the federal governments. This Labor MP, the member for Logan, must think he is the luckiest MP in the world. He is in the party that created all of the problems on the Mount Lindesay Highway—

**Mr POWER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Before when I responded, obviously I responded to the member directly addressing me, and he once again does it not in accordance with the standing orders.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What standing order? There is no point of order. Resume your seat, member for Logan.

**Mr POWER:** The standing order, Madam Deputy Speaker, is that you address the chamber through the chair. He was addressing me when he spoke.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I will take advice. I have made my ruling, member for Logan. There is no point of order.

**Mr KRAUSE:** This Labor MP, the member for Logan, must think he is the luckiest MP in the world. He is in the party that created all of the problems on the Mount Lindesay Highway by allowing too much development in the corridor, especially Yarrabilba and Flagstone and Jimboomba.

Remember the Cusack Lane development that was signed off by then planning minister Jackie Trad back in 2015 to cram even more density into Jimboomba? And now, the lucky man that he is, the federal government is stepping up to the plate to fix Labor's mess by making the Mount Lindesay Highway part of the national network. Thank goodness for the federal government! Thank you Scott Morrison and Scott Buchholz for stepping up to the plate where this Labor government and the Labor Party and his predecessors as members for Logan have failed dismally for our community along the Mount Lindesay Highway. Since 2016 the federal government has allocated nearly \$100 million to this road and I thank it greatly for that, even though it lets Labor off the hook for the problems that it created.

In this budget I am pleased to see funding to duplicate Johanna Street to South Street in Jimboomba. It is the Jimboomba bottleneck, and I have been urging the government to get on with the design for this—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members will cease their interjections. I have warned a number of people. I will start warning people under the standing orders.

**Mr KRAUSE:** I have been urging the government to get on with designs for the Jimboomba bottleneck since 2018 and now, with 80 per cent federal funding, it is funded. This comes in addition to federal-state funding for the Greenbank Road improvements—80-20 federal-state—and four lanes from Stoney Camp Road to Chambers Flat Road, another project that I had to push the Labor Party to get on to the agenda.

Now I urge the government and the main roads department to keep going with plans for improvements and start the process for widening the road to Beaudesert and, even more importantly, to plan for overpasses and interchanges where lights stand now. It is vital for our local economy. It is vital for economic development around Bromelton and Beaudesert and all around that region to remove



those traffic lights and put in efficient interchanges for the future. Yes, the member for Logan is one lucky MP, with the federal government getting on board with the Mount Lindesay, and his Labor government should do more to make the Mount Lindesay Highway a better road and to leverage federal government funding opportunities.


I want to address the member for Logan's baseless claims of planned \$37.5 million cuts to projects on this road. It is totally false. The election commitment from the LNP was to provide an extra \$40 million in funding on top of existing projects. In fact, I was the one who pushed hardest to get federal and state funding commitments on the projects on the Mount Lindesay. The member should hang his head in shame for repeating these baseless claims in the House. I table a copy of a Facebook post which shows that our commitment was \$40 million in addition to other projects already on the agenda.

*Tabled paper:* Extract, dated 6 August, from the Facebook page of the member for Scenic Rim, Mr Jon Krause MP, titled '\$40 million extra and a fast-track to improve the Mount Lindesay Highway!' [\[369\]](#).

I note in the budget there is funding to fix parking issues at Beaudesert State High School, and I hope that this budgeted money really includes funding to improve the entry and exit issues at Beaudesert State High School. It is something I have been raising with the government for over five years. Hopefully—finally—it is listening and going to fix it. Because it is an easy thing to fix, it should not have taken five years to do it. I note there is also funding in the budget for the construction of the south-west pipeline connecting Cedar Grove to Beaudesert onto the water grid. This is something that the member for Nanango and I called on the government to do almost a year ago to the day. It brings water security for the Beaudesert district but importantly should also allow more allocations for irrigation from Maroon Dam and the Logan River for our local farmers.

There are so many issues that need to be addressed in the Scenic Rim electorate. Time does not permit me to go into all of them, but suffice to say that the township of Canungra has again run dry of water and the treatment plant there has been shut down. There has been too much development in Canungra without sufficient investment in infrastructure, especially water and road infrastructure, and I call on the government to bring forward Seqwater's work in planning for water security but also to stop the addition of new land for residential development in that area.

In relation to Ipswich Boonah Road there is some funding for wide centre line treatment, but the rehabilitation of that road, particularly from Yamanto to Peak Crossing, needs to be brought forward. It is still a couple of years away. When that occurs, there should be an overtaking lane built there. In relation to school buses, our school buses are being starved of funding, and that should be fixed as well.

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (4.06 pm): I rise to speak on the appropriation bills 2020. I want to congratulate Premier Palaszczuk, Treasurer Cameron Dick and the cabinet for delivering a budget that supports regional Queensland. Because of the Palaszczuk government's strong response to COVID-19, my region has been able to keep our industries in operation. Our coalmines have stayed open, unlike mines in some countries overseas. Our cane industry has begun and nearly completed the 2020 sugar crush. Our engineering businesses at Paget have been busy filling contracts in the mining industry and manufacturing orders. These businesses employ Queenslanders and keep the Queensland economy moving.

The Palaszczuk government has been investing in manufacturing since we were elected. We have created opportunities right across Queensland. My electorate will be the site of one of Queensland's newest rollouts of manufacturing hubs, a \$2 million injection focusing on the manufacturing of biofutures made from crops and protein grown within the region. The primary producers in my region have the potential to partner with many manufacturers to turn their produce into value added commodities. The Palaszczuk government will also invest a further \$1 million to deliver a business case to potentially make the Mackay, Isaac and Whitsundays region a hub for future foods and bioplastics.

A biohub will value-add to our existing agricultural industries and sector by diversifying the customer base, creating a higher value use for produce and reducing levels of produce waste. Mackay and the Whitsundays would be a world-leading biohub for new foods and new food products. Agriculture supports thousands of jobs and is the cornerstone of our economy, but we must look to new foods and new products to safeguard jobs in this industry. For example, our region is renowned for producing high-quality cane. By partnering with the private sector, we could be a global producer of bioplastics and other products.

Future foods is also emerging as a global, multibillion dollar industry. We believe we have found the ideal location for a Queensland biohub to create new food and food products and enter new export markets—right here in Mackay. This will not compete with traditional, animal based protein products,



but complement the rich and strong farming history of this region. The government is now working to identify and partner with potential industry investors, innovators and commercial operators who have the capability to deliver in this space. Plant based alternative foods and products like bioplastics that are made out of food waste have the potential to create thousands of jobs in this region. A Mackay future foods biohub will provide another exciting opportunity for our food production and processing sectors.

A University of Queensland researcher is looking to turn sugarcane waste into face masks and other PPE clothing for health workers on the frontline against COVID-19. Dr Nasim Amiralian has been awarded a \$300,000 Advance Queensland COVID-19 Industry Research Fellowship to develop antiviral nanofibres that can be used to provide greater protection to the face masks, medical gowns and other clothing used by health workers. All this will be made out of sugarcane.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*.

*The speech read as follows—*

Hannah from Ocean International Hotel, and Carmel from Saige and Sohl ladies fashion and shoe store are just two of the 618 businesses that have accessed a Small Business Adaption Grant; \$5.5 million has been delivered to the Mackay-Whitsunday Region to help businesses through the COVID-19 disruption and adapt their businesses for a different way of doing business. Both businesses used their grants to go digital. They are value adding to their profit by doing business online as well as keeping their traditional business base in operation.

In relation to health, COVID-19 has had an impact on community mental health. Mackay's Step up Step Down facility which opened last year has been well used. People have told me their personal stories of how the facility has kept them out of hospital. The \$500,000 refurbishment of Mackay Community Mental Health provides a safe clinical environment for clients that also protects their privacy. This is part of a \$6 million upgrade that is timely to boost mental health services during the pandemic.

Turning to education, all students need to have access to quality education regardless of their economic background. Education is a leveller. It is a passport to a young person's future. It can open the doors to a range of exciting possibilities for career choices. To have quality education schools need to have programs and working conditions that will attract new teachers into the profession. The Great Teachers Great Future program will see new teachers and teacher aides employed. The Mackay Whitsunday region has seen an increase of 5.8 per cent of additional teachers. The program will invest nearly \$20 million to set up a Turn to Teaching paid internship program to attract aspiring teachers from other fields of work. These new teachers will add to our excellent teaching pool and continue to meet important teacher student ratios, keeping our teaching and learning conditions in classroom at a highest standard. Students need up-to-date modern teaching areas. Pioneers SHS students excitedly showed me the spaces where they are getting upgrades to their science and robotic laboratories of nearly \$1 million. Some of the other upgrades include an external repaint of Victoria Park SS, funding to provide equitable access to core learning areas and a refurbished administration block; Fitzgerald SS will refurbish block 2; and there are another 14 schools receiving maintenance upgrades. I am also pleased to report that the Mackay schools breakfast programs have been funded to continue to provide a service to ensure students wellbeing.

In relation to employment and training, not all students and adults are looking for a university degree, they are more suited to working in trades. Today's tradespeople are highly qualified and skilled. Our training facilities need to keep pace with the ever changing demands from employer groups to meet demand. When I engage with the engineer sector in my region they tell me how their businesses are evolving to keep up with modern demands. Their machinery is changing. I have seen robotic welders in operation at Paget businesses. The world of trades is an exciting place and in high demand. That is why we are extending our free TAFE for under 21s to under 25s. Central Queensland is experiencing a trades shortage. Small and large businesses are wanting to put on more apprentices. This boost gives businesses the confidence to engage additional apprentices. I am excited \$7.5 million will expand heavy automotive facilities at the Mackay Ooralea Trade Training Centre at CQU. Mackay is a service centre for the Bowen Basin. Mining companies and contractors need training facilities in Mackay. Previously apprentices in heavy automobiles needed to travel to other centres after their first year to complete their training. Having training close to where apprentices live will reduce the cost of training and put less stress on apprentices needing accommodation away from home. Making it easier to access training will increase the rates of retention and completion qualification.

My region has seen the success of centres of excellence producing high-level training to support local development and industry. The Mackay Resource Centre of Excellence was delivered as a 2017 election commitment to the Mackay electorate. The concept was so innovative, the Mackay Regional Council jumped on board to add additional funding to make the centre a true centrepiece of innovation for the mining and also sugar industries for training and research and development. The \$3.4 million new agriculture centre of excellence to be established at Bowen TAFE and the new \$2 million aquaculture training centre to be established at Cannonvale TAFE will cater for the combined Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region. Our young people and mature workers wanting to gain new skills or upgrade can stay in our region. These combined centres of excellence give our region's residents future career choices. They back in the industries of our region to give them the confidence to expand and grow knowing that training in the region will meet future demands as their industries grow.

For many reasons some people find themselves in a situation where they have no work history or skills that would get them into paid employment. Skilling Queenslanders for Work funds skills development, training and job opportunities for disadvantaged Queenslanders through a suite of targeted skills and training programs. Seventy-three per cent of participants find work, take on further training or return to school around 12 months after exiting a program. Often graduation ceremonies in Mackay have had to be cancelled because participants are all employed and cannot get time off work to attend. Another 140 Mackay-Whitsunday locals are set to benefit from the next round of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. The programs will include Innovative Disability Employment; Mackay's PCYC "Get Set for Work"; Energy Skills Queensland's "Career Start Rail Skills". These graduates will possibly go onto build the train tracks or drive the trains to be made in Maryborough.

For the economy to grow and expand we need to have a good transport supply chain. We have built the Mackay Ring Road stage 1. It is great to see freight and sugar trucks out of the centre of town. The road also delivers the workers from the northside of Mackay to Paget faster and safer on a direct route to work. \$45 million for the Bruce Highway North Access upgrade being delivered jointly with the Federal Government is delivering additional lanes to connect the old Bruce Highway to the Ring Road, also easing congestion of the intersection of the Mackay Bucasia Road. Walkerston bypass is the next piece of road to upgrade the Bowen Basin pit to port supply chain. The road will also deliver a safer road network for the people of Walkerston. The tender applications are out and weather permitting work will start early 2021. It will be great to see more locals working on more local road projects.

The Great Barrier Reef Arena precinct is a project that is supported by a \$10 million contribution to the \$24 million final costing. The project will not only build the arena that will attract major cricket and AFL games, the arena will cater to large concerts that Mackay has reputation for being able to attract. The venue will deliver the capacity for live televised events and professional level player dressing, medical and coaching facilities. Mackay has already hosted Big Bash games attracting larger crowds than those in Brisbane. Imagine what we can achieve with upgraded facilities. Our accommodation places, restaurants and retail will benefit from the travellers from across Queensland that will attend the events. While in Mackay visitors will be able to enjoy our local islands. Cruise company Pure Escape will introduce a new full-day tour to nearby Cockermouth Island in the South Cumberland islands group. We're partnering with Pure Escape to deliver new attractions that will boost our tourism industry and create local jobs. This project will offer tourists an exceptional all-inclusive, eco-friendly day tour on the company's 17-metre custom-built catamaran to view these hidden treasures off the coast of Mackay. The project is estimated to add 5,600 tourists and approximately \$1.9 million into the local economy.

Locals and visitors love to fish in our region. Fish stock have increased since we introduced the Seaforth net free zone. Locals and visitors like to get out on the water. The \$700,000 upgrade to the River Street Boat ramp will make it easier and safer for boaties to get out on the water. Tourist and visitors to our region are attracted to our outdoor living and activities. The amount of \$500,000 to Mackay Regional Council will go towards the planning and development of the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail. This bike trail will attract more visitors to our region.

This budget is forward planning for Mackay and its regions. It has kept the Mackay economy moving. It supports training and apprenticeships. It has vision to develop new industries for our region diversifying our current industries. This budget delivers for regional Queensland. I commend the bill to the house.



**Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.11 pm): I rise today to give my support to the 2020-21 Queensland budget. I would like to thank the Premier and the Treasurer and his whole team for their hard work on delivering this budget in unprecedented circumstances. This has been a tumultuous year and the Queensland economy has taken a battering. Workers, families and businesses in my electorate of Ipswich have faced major disruption to the way they live and work and, sometimes, untold hardships and loss of livelihoods. I make mention of our local Ipswich Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the great work they have done locally to support our small businesses in particular.

The Palaszczuk government has supported Queenslanders throughout all of this. We responded swiftly by being the first to declare the COVID-19 pandemic a public health emergency. We then focused on safeguarding Queenslanders' health and managing our economic response by delivering the COVID-19 fiscal and economic review and our economic recovery plan earlier this year. The 2020-21 budget builds on that response. We have made it through this crisis together, guided by the strong leadership we have in place. Because of our successful health response, Queenslanders' lives have returned to some semblance of pre-COVID normality which means that we can focus on our economic recovery, something which other countries affected by COVID-19 can only dream of.

The budget handed down on Tuesday by the Palaszczuk government builds on our key objective to unite and recover for Queensland, to create more jobs, support small business, increase local manufacturing, drive infrastructure and build up our frontline services. In Ipswich, my main priority is to support local jobs and back local business investment. I am also focused on making sure Ipswich gets the infrastructure and frontline services we need to manage our rapidly growing population. Furthermore, I am focused on supporting our community and making sure it gets the support it needs to make Ipswich an attractive, vibrant and worthwhile place to live and work. This is a budget that promises to deliver on all the election commitments announced for Ipswich in the lead-up to the state election. It is a confidence boosting program of investments in infrastructure and frontline services that will create local jobs and support local businesses.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation, and as such I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

#### Health

Mr Speaker, COVID-19 highlighted the fact that we cannot have a functioning economy without safeguarding people's health first. In the lead up to the state election we showed that we would invest in the healthcare needs of Ipswich locals through our additional investment of \$46.5 million for Stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion. This \$46.5 million will provide new and expanded hospital and health facilities providing Ipswich people access to top quality health care.

As part of this investment, \$11 million will go towards expanding the Ipswich Hospital's Emergency Department delivering more paediatric treatment spaces and a dedicated mental health area, \$9.3 million will be invested to deliver a dedicated obstetric theatre, and \$1.7 million will be used to expand capacity for renal dialysis and nephrology services.

It will also allocate \$24.5 million for an Alcohol and Other Drug Withdrawal Management and Rehabilitation Service to accommodate the growing demand for rehab services in the Ipswich and West Moreton region.

This facility will deliver 10 withdrawal management beds and 35 residential rehabilitation beds as well as offer a complete suite of evidence-based treatment services for people with severe substance abuse issues.

I also welcome the investment of the \$40 million Satellite Hospital to be built in Ipswich. This is part of a \$265 million commitment by the Palaszczuk Government to deliver seven Satellite Hospitals across South East Queensland to meet the growing demand for healthcare services in our rapidly developing outer-urban areas. The new Satellite Hospital in Ipswich will be tailored to meet the needs of our community and will include ambulatory and low acuity day therapy services such as renal dialysis, chemotherapy, complex wound management, and urgent care for minor injury and illness. For patients who don't live close to a major hospital, it will mean greater access to healthcare services closer to home and will take pressure off our nearby major hospitals.

This suite of health investment is on top of the \$43.2 million of ongoing funding allocated in 2020-21 for Stage 1 of the \$146.5 million Ipswich Hospital Expansion, and \$691 million allocated for West Moreton Hospital and Health Services.

#### Education and Training

Mr Speaker, since 2015, the Palaszczuk Government has invested around \$28 million in Ipswich electorate state schools to build classrooms, playgrounds, and learning facilities. We have also employed an additional 693 teachers for schools across the Ipswich region. So I'm pleased to see in this Budget \$500,000 invested in Silkstone State School in my electorate so that it can undertake badly needed facility upgrades.

Silkstone State School, established in 1882, is one of the oldest schools in Ipswich and indeed, the state. It has strong links to the Ipswich community and can boast distinguished alumni including Queensland Parliamentarians, Sir Llew Edwards and David Hamill. While one of the great legacies of the Palaszczuk Government is the construction of brand new schools across Queensland eight new schools this year alone—we are also taking care of our older, more established schools.

In the Ipswich region, the Palaszczuk Government is investing \$102.9 million to upgrade and maintain our school classrooms and learning facilities, including maintenance for our older schools' buildings and classrooms to make them more suitable for a modern teaching environment. This investment will ensure that our schools can continue educating Queensland students for many more generations to come.

I would also like to take the opportunity to add that as of this year all Ipswich state schools have had air conditioning installed under the Palaszczuk Government's Cooler Cleaner Schools Program. I'm sure the students and teachers in these schools are very grateful for it during this heatwave.

Investing in skills and training is a crucial building block to supporting economic growth in Queensland and we need a highly skilled and adaptable workforce for our new and emerging industries. I welcome our government's election commitment to invest \$7 million in Ipswich TAFE Campus at Bundamba to build a Metal Trades Expansion and Robotics Centre. This is part of a \$100 million investment over three years to upgrade Queensland TAFE campuses.

Our government is focused on making sure our young people have every opportunity to access quality training so they can gain in-demand skills for future jobs. To ensure that, the Palaszczuk Government will allocate in this Budget \$200 million to invest in delivering programs that will give Queenslanders skills of the future including developing a TAFE Priority Skills Fund, a pre-apprenticeship support program, a Digital Professional Workforce Plan, and a Workforce Transition Support Program.

An additional \$21 million will be provided to extend Free TAFE and Free apprenticeships to Queenslanders aged under 25, and we will deliver \$45 million to build and upgrade training facilities for at-school training across Queensland.

During these uncertain times, it's more important than ever to give our young people hope that they can look forward to securing a decent job when they finish school or TAFE or University. Giving them innovative and adaptive skills and training increases their chances of securing these jobs.

#### Frontline Services

Mr Speaker, COVID-19 highlighted the fact that frontline workers played a crucial part in our successful pandemic response here in Queensland. I want to thank all of them for their extraordinary service this year and their efforts keeping Queenslanders safe during the pandemic.

The Treasurer said in his Budget speech on Tuesday that the Federal Government projects a net interstate migration of 86,000 people to Queensland within the next 4 years. Already in the last financial year we have seen 7,005 new residents move into the Ipswich Local Government Area.

That's why our government is committed to delivering service infrastructure and frontline workers to growth suburbs in my electorate such as Ripley, where we will build a new, larger police station to replace the old one at Yamanto, and a brand new \$5 million ambulance station.

Along with the new police station at Ripley, I'm pleased to see our government invest in a new Mobile Police Beat Van for the Ipswich Police District to assist with their operations. This is in addition to the 150 extra police that will be deployed to the Ipswich Police Region.

Crime and anti-social behaviour in the Ipswich CBD is a major issue that many business owners and residents have raised with me, and they want to see more done about the problem so that their businesses can thrive and public safety can be assured. So these police resources will be a welcome addition to our city.

#### Job building infrastructure

Mr Speaker, this Budget is not only providing Ipswich with essential infrastructure and frontline services, but is helping to provide thousands of jobs to boost the local Ipswich economy after the disruption of COVID-19.

Across the Ipswich region, the Palaszczuk Government will pour \$802 million into productivity-enhancing infrastructure and capital works to support 2,600 jobs.

Some of those jobs will come from major infrastructure works taking place across the Ipswich region such as the \$37.7 million East Ipswich station upgrade currently underway, the \$65.2 million program to improve and expand social housing in Ipswich, the proposed \$10 million East Ipswich Five Ways Intersection upgrade, the \$91 million new Acute Mental Health Unit, and the \$400 million Rocklea to Darra stage of the Ipswich Motorway upgrade.

#### Transport

Mr Speaker, the population of Ipswich is likely to hit around 500,000 people by 2040 and we need to make sure all these people can be gainfully employed, have access to affordable housing, good schools for their kids, hospitals, and other public amenities such as adequate road and public transport infrastructure.

A productive workforce and economy can only function with a robust transport network in place. As Ipswich reaches 500,000 people in 2040 it is crucial that we have an effective transport system in place that can cope with increased road traffic as well as provide good public transport services.

That is why we are delivering \$400,000 for a study into Ipswich's transport and mobility network. The last study undertaken of Ipswich's transport network was done in 2013, but the city has changed and grown immensely in those seven years, particularly in the Ripley Valley Priority Development Area.

Changing demographics are also seeing larger numbers of older residents living in Ipswich and people with disabilities who need alternative transport options to private vehicles.

This transport and mobility study will take all these factors into account to recommend a suitable transport network option that best suits Ipswich's needs.

Public transport will be a major part of that study. In Ipswich, residents want to see more public transport especially in new suburbs in the Ripley Valley Priority Development Area. Public Transport will help reduce over-reliance on private vehicles and help reduce the social and environmental costs associated with heavy vehicle use such as increased road maintenance, increased levels of congestion on arterial roads into Brisbane, and increased air pollution caused by vehicle emissions.

That is why I welcome the \$1 million investment allocated in this Budget to develop a business case for the Springfield to Ipswich rail line. This will take us one step closer to connecting Ipswich to Springfield by rail, which will bring numerous and long-lasting benefits to the Ipswich region including greater network efficiency and improved productivity gains.

#### Sports funding

Mr Speaker, our community organisations are the backbone of our city and provide social and recreational services that contribute to our local economy and help to build vital social support networks. Our sporting clubs, for instance, play a major role in Ipswich's identity, and as Member for Ipswich, I'm proud to support them and deliver the sporting facilities they need to boost participation and club membership.

For several years I've advocated on behalf of Raceview Soccer Club to secure funding so that they could build a clubhouse with change facilities onsite.

While the club has built up a membership of over 430 players with strong female participation, they have had no clubhouse or change rooms on the grounds.

So I was pleased to announce before the election our commitment to allocate \$900,000 for Raceview Soccer Club so they can build a new multipurpose community clubhouse with canteen and change rooms. Another sporting club I've long advocated for is the Ipswich BMX Club. They too have been without a clubhouse and canteen facilities, and this has jeopardised their chances of securing state, national, and international BMX competitions.

These competitions would bring in thousands of visitors to Ipswich providing a massive boost to our local economy and creating jobs for locals.

So I was very pleased to announce as an election commitment, \$500,000 for the Ipswich BMX Club so they can build a new clubhouse and canteen.

These clubhouse facilities are not only valuable assets for the sports clubs and the Ipswich community, but will provide work for tradies and local businesses during the construction phase.

#### Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the funding and investment delivered to Ipswich in this budget shows the level of commitment the Palaszczuk Government has towards creating jobs, supporting businesses, and delivering on vital infrastructure and frontline services.

We are still living in a time of great uncertainty, but the Palaszczuk Government's Budget builds back confidence into our economy. Mr Speaker, I commend the 2020-21 Queensland Budget to the House.



**Dr MacMAHON** (South Brisbane—Grn) (4.13 pm): I rise to speak to the appropriation bills and respond on behalf of the people of South Brisbane and outline the Greens' vision for what this budget could achieve. This year everyday people across Queensland have made sacrifices. Many of us have been unable to see loved ones, have missed out on weddings, holidays and funerals, but we have pulled back together to tackle this health crisis and keep everyone safe. Thanks must go to our incredible frontline health workers and a strong commitment to the public health advice given by the Chief Health Officer and the government. It is thanks to this and the sacrifices and hard work of everyday people all across Queensland that we are able to enjoy our current freedom and safety.

Queenslanders have worked hard, but now we are being told to work even harder with a budget that will force everyday Queenslanders to pick up the slack with limited investment in housing, in schools, in clean energy and in secure meaningful jobs. Right now in Queensland our unemployment rate is at 7.7 per cent. It is up as high as 11.9 per cent in some parts of regional Queensland. Youth unemployment is even higher. In my electorate of South Brisbane every week hundreds of people line up for food packets and hundreds of international students rely on food relief.

This budget relies on unacceptable sacrifices for too many Queenslanders while massive mining corporations and the banks get off scot-free. While coal and gas export prices have dropped, it is simply disingenuous for massive multinational mining companies to cry poor. BHP and Anglo American, with significant interests in coal and gas in Queensland, are both enjoying their biggest share price since at least 2011. Chris Wallin who owns QCoal, a company that part owns five coal mines in the Bowen Basin, is still on the Forbes Rich List with a net worth of \$1.75 billion.

It is almost farcical to suggest that these mining billionaires cannot afford to pay a little bit more in mining royalties, particularly when everyday Queenslanders are being asked to sacrifice so much. In a resource rich, wealthy state like ours there is no excuse for such a dangerously conservative budget at this critical time. It is full of underspend. It is going to leave Queenslanders in the lurch for years to come. What Queenslanders need now is bold government investment in tens of thousands of good secure jobs. While parts of this budget deliver jobs here and there, it does not go nearly far enough to tackle the scale of the crisis we are facing.

By way of comparison, over the next four years the Victorian government will invest \$78.4 billion in infrastructure. The New South Wales government will invest \$107 billion. So why here in Queensland is the government only planning to spend \$56 billion on infrastructure over the next four years? Even when one adjusts for population, the Queensland government is spending billions of dollars less every year than our southern counterparts. That is billions of dollars that could have gone into building more crucial public infrastructure like schools, hospitals and public homes.

Perhaps one of the starkest contrasts is the government's funding for social housing. The Victorian government has announced it will spend \$5.3 billion to build more than 12,000 social dwellings over the next four years. In stark contrast, the Queensland government has made it clear it only intends to build 1,800 social homes over the next four years. As of June 2019 there were 39,000 Queenslanders on the social housing waiting list, a list that is growing by 7,000 people every year. This budget relies on thousands of Queensland families having to wait years for safe and secure roofs over their heads.

As the Victorian government has rightly pointed out, their mass build of social housing will create 43,000 good secure jobs with tradies and firms large and small knowing they have a secure and massive pipeline of work over the next critical years. This is what Queenslanders are missing out on. This is what Queenslanders are being asked to sacrifice with this budget.

For South Brisbane I welcome a number of pre-election commitments that have been followed through: funding for cycling and active transport infrastructure; funding for the long-called-for Kangaroo Point riverwalk; additional capacity for Buranda State School; and crucial works for Dutton Park State School. However, funding allocated for the Montague Road study, a road that has been notoriously dangerous and congested for years as a result of poor planning, will not come online until 2022 at the earliest. Our community needs urgent investment in public transport, a new ferry terminal and active transport infrastructure. It is not enough to defer blame to the Brisbane City Council. The state government has to bear responsibility for the outcomes of a planning act that has created and allowed property developers to overrun our communities.

East Brisbane State School has also missed out in this current budget, despite reaching capacity and despite the ongoing advocacy of the P&C and the school community. If education is a priority for this government, why are prep students expected to start their schooling in demountable classrooms? I have said it before and I will say it again: Queensland is a wealthy state, so you would think our state schools would be some of the best funded in the country. Instead, Queensland state schools are the most underfunded state schools in the country and our parents, teachers and children pay the costs. The Queensland government has committed only 69 per cent of the 80 per cent schooling resource standard. I compare that to Tasmania and Western Australia, which have committed over 75 per cent or, even better, the ACT, which has committed the full 80 per cent. This budget does nothing to address that shortfall.

In the lead-up to the election one of the big promises we heard from Labor was about 6,000 new teachers and 1,000 new teacher aides over the next four years, which was a very welcome announcement. However, those positions appear to be funded from the existing education department

budget. There is no new money and the numbers include replacing thousands of retiring and resigning teachers. The Greens believe that we should be fully funding our state schools, cutting class sizes, abolishing class school fees for state schools, and giving every child a free breakfast and lunch so that no child has to learn on an empty stomach. However, this budget relies on an unacceptable level of sacrifice by teachers, parents and children across the state.

Another big promise we heard from Labor in the lead-up to the election was for 5,800 new nurses, 1,500 doctors and 1,700 allied health professionals by 2024. Again, that was a welcome commitment because anyone who has been to an emergency department in a public hospital or has waited in an overcrowded outpatient clinic knows that our public hospitals desperately need more resources and frontline staff. However, again when we look at the details of the budget there is no new funding. That means that Queensland Health and our hospitals will need to cut \$270 million from their other works every single year. They will need to find an extra \$1 billion over the next four years. Our frontline workers know what 'efficiency measures' is code for. It is code for do more with less and give up unpaid hours so that staff do not have to go home worrying about whether their patients will be well cared for. The budget relies on an unacceptable level of sacrifice by our frontline health workers and Queenslanders seeking health care.

The community is being asked to carry the cost of a lack of investment in housing and mental health for new prisons, detention centres and police. In particular, the \$86 million investment in youth detention beds shows what little ambition this government has for our young people. I join with the member for Maiwar in calling for a moratorium on any new youth and adult prisons, and for the government to raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 14. The Queensland Police Service could also find that there are savings to be made by diverting those police who are currently deployed to maintain the indefinite detention of refugees at Kangaroo Point.

The community is being asked to bear the cost of underinvestment in housing with an increasing number of children in out-of-home care. In Queensland the rate of children in out-of-home care has increased from 2018-19, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. I join the Home Stretch campaign in calling on the government to urgently extend funding for young people in out-of-home care until at least the age of 21.

The community will also continue to pay the cost of Queensland's lack of action on climate change. We welcome the \$500 million from the Renewable Energy Fund and grid upgrades for renewable energy zones, but the reality is that that is a drop in the ocean when we consider the scale of the challenge we are facing and the opportunities that Queensland has to create thousands of secure jobs. The Greens' proposal to invest \$20 billion in building publicly-owned renewable energy assets across Queensland would create thousands of jobs and cut electricity prices, ensuring that every Queenslanders shares the benefits of those public assets. We could be manufacturing wind turbines, solar panels and batteries here in Queensland and taking full advantage of Queensland's sunshine, open space and wind. While mining corporations enjoy a royalties freeze and mining executives walk away with millions of dollars in their pockets, for years to come everyday Queenslanders will continue to pay for the cost of the government's inaction on climate change.

For the Treasurer to be crowing, just a few days ago, that this budget was applauded by the Queensland Resources Council tells us everything we need to know. This is a budget written to ensure that big multinational mining companies maintain their extraordinary wealth while Queenslanders go homeless. It is a budget to maintain the royalties at paltry levels while people in South Brisbane line up for food parcels. It is a budget that lets government donors and lobbyists line their pockets while kids as young as 10 are chucked in watch houses.

This budget is a tremendous missed opportunity. We should be taking advantage of record low interest rates. We should be taking advantage of the immense mining wealth here in Queensland by raising mining royalties, by lifting the cap on infrastructure charges and by making the big banks pay their fair share with a modest bank levy, and investing that in the things that everyday Queenslanders crucially need. With this budget the government had a choice to make, that is, who would pay for the economic recovery here in Queensland: big corporations or everyday Queenslanders? This budget makes it clear that the Queensland Labor government has chosen the side of big corporations.



**Hon. DE FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development) (4.26 pm): It is my great privilege to stand in this House as the Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development and speak in support of the appropriation bills. There is nothing more important to this government than jobs, and this budget is unashamedly focused on jobs. Jobs change people's lives. They give people

the capacity to put a roof over their heads, pay their bills and have the necessities of life, and more if possible. They give people self-esteem, self-respect and options in life. Jobs allow people to plan their futures and give their children the opportunities they may not have had themselves. Jobs are what our economic recovery plan is all about.

I am very proud to be part of a government that has provided such a strong health response to COVID-19 that we have been able to start delivering a comprehensive economic plan for our recovery. I am proud to be part of a government that has regained all the jobs lost during the pandemic and then some, that is, more than 61,000 jobs in the past two months alone or 1,000 jobs a day. The continuation of our skills and training programs such as Back to Work and Skilling Queenslanders for Work are vital in that collective effort. So far those programs have helped more than 50,000 Queenslanders find employment. However, there is much more work to do and this budget is about getting on with our job. This is a budget for the times. It is bold, it is substantial and it is backed by a plan to get Queensland well down the road to recovery.

I had looked forward to the opposition leader's reply to the budget. In these times it is important that we all work together to build Queensland. In times like this big ideas and partnerships are important. I thought to myself that this was a real opportunity for the member for Broadwater to show what he is made of. Unfortunately, that is exactly what he did. His speech was full of big phrases. It was full of hopes and dreams. It was full of 'we gotta do this and we gotta do that'. It was full of 'we're gunna do this and we're gunna do that'. It was full of 'we need to do this and we need to do that'. It was full of 'why aren't we doing this and why aren't we doing that?' I listened very intently, which was a bit painful at times, to try to identify how the Leader of the Opposition and the LNP were going to fund all of the things that he was talking about. I listened and I listened. All I heard was that he is going to phone a friend. He is going to talk to Scott and to Adrian. They are going to get together, work together and fund all of those things.

I did not hear the Leader of the Opposition talk about how he is going to train Queenslanders for the jobs of tomorrow. I did not hear him say how he is going to implement a vision for TAFE. I did not hear how he is going to get Queenslanders ready for jobs. Actually, he did not mention training at all. He did not welcome the \$1 billion that we are investing in this year alone to train Queenslanders. He did not welcome the extension of our free TAFE and apprenticeships initiative. He did not mention our \$200 million for skills initiatives to help train and retain Queenslanders for in-demand jobs.

We did hear what a great minister he was when the LNP was in government and how much his departments loved him. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that this is not actually about him. This is not about practising in front of a mirror. This is not about playtime. This is actually serious business. What he said is simply not enough. What is facing Queensland is unprecedented. Looking at the reality of what is facing us, we need people to work together and we need a real plan for our future.

I am going to incorporate my speech from this point and I have permission from the Speaker to do so.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms FARMER:** Members opposite will have to read *Hansard*. If members opposite would like to hear a bit more about the training budget I would be happy to continue, but I will spare everybody. I commend the bills to the House.

*The speech read as follows—*

Speaker our Budget has a Big Plan for Small Business

We know that small business represents 97% of businesses statewide.

And that they employ 44% of all private sector workers.

That's almost 1 million Queenslanders Speaker.

Small businesses are the backbone of our local communities.

And they are vital to our recovery

It's why we've already provided \$2.3 billion in tax relief, grants, electricity rebates and loans that have supported businesses to keep 334,000 Queenslanders in work through the COVID-19 pandemic.

And the Budget announcement this week about our Big Plans for Small Business strategy built on that support.

Our new funding will support private investment with an initial \$100 million Business Investment Fund to invest in small to medium sized businesses that have significant growth potential and will create jobs.

Our announcement also includes \$40 million of investment over three years to increase skills and engagement.

Including \$25 million in small business grants, with a focus on our regions; as well as young Queenslanders, women, social enterprises, culturally and linguistically diverse people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

And we will continue to listen and respond to the needs of small business through targeted regional engagement activities,

As well as continuing our successful Mentoring for Growth and Queensland Small Business Month programs.

And developing a new Small Business Strategy

The Queensland Small Business Commissioner will be permanently established.

During the pandemic, the Commissioner has provided vital support to small businesses.

The permanent Commissioner will continue to advocate for, support and provide information to small businesses and empower them to drive economic growth across Queensland

Speaker I referred earlier to the grants this Government provided to small business to support them through the impacts of COVID.

These grants have already helped about 20,000 businesses throughout Queensland with more than \$196 million paid to date.

The grants have allowed businesses to update a range of processes and prepare for post-COVID operations.

Victoria Point's Salads Made Fresh used its \$10,000 grant to fund manufacturing software (Oodgeroo).

The North Ipswich Leagues Club installed hand sanitising stations and upgraded its cash register system with its grant.

Tourism businesses such as Cairns Adventures, which closed their Bad Fishy Jet Boating and Cairns Boat Hire due to COVID-19, used their grant for marketing and communication activities.

And we know there are so many similar stories from across QLD.

But Speaker we know there's uncertainty and challenge ahead for small business and I am committed to working with them as we confront the future.

Along with key stakeholders like the CCIQ, the Small Business Commissioner, the Small Business Advisory Council and others.

Speaker, one of the best ways we can help the Queensland economy—is to do everything we can to increase the state's skills and capability so that Queenslanders are best equipped for the jobs of the COVID and post-COVID economy.

We need the right people, with the right training in the right jobs.

And this budget, with over \$1 billion for Training in this year alone, will help us deliver that.

We will continue to support tens of thousands of young Queenslanders into a free TAFE qualification or free apprenticeships, expanding that program for all under 25s.

Our \$100 million additional investment in the TAFE infrastructure program will ensure that workers from the Gold Coast to Cairns continue to have their construction jobs supported, while we continue to prepare workers for the jobs of the future.

Speaker, the Palaszczuk Government will always back TAFE and giving Queenslanders, wherever they may live, the opportunity to access the skills and training they need for a rewarding and exciting career.

We are funding a range of new initiatives like pre-apprenticeship pathways, skills to get people into the manufacturing industry, First Nations training support and helping more regional Queenslanders get into growing and emerging industries.

We know training remains vital to our future productivity and our economic recovery.

And unlike those opposite, we invest in skills and training because they help create the opportunities that every Queenslanders needs

No matter who you are. No matter where you are in our vast State, this Government believes that everyone has the right to a good quality education.

Everyone deserves support to reach their full potential.

And that's what our training agenda provides.

But, importantly, our investment in training and skills development is the key to ensuring that Queensland has a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. One that can meet the needs of employers, compete for jobs and be ready for emerging opportunities across all regions and industries.

Speaker my beloved electorate of Bulimba has benefitted enormously from the Palaszczuk Labor Government's focus on infrastructure as a means of creating jobs and building the community.

Our local schools are so precious to us.

And two years on from the fire that decimated precious heritage buildings, Morningside State School is literally rising from the ashes, with the most beautiful new replacement building—to a value of \$4.57 million, of \$6.4 million.

I know the students and staff are so excited about it and I did enjoy my sneak preview a week or two ago.

Then there's Balmoral High School—a school where we are so proud of—where we're getting a new \$2.5 million Admin block and new \$4.8 million Science block.



An outdoor learning area for Bulimba SS

And almost \$1 million to improve accessibility at Cannon Hill SS

Upgrade work at local Outside School Hours Centres, such important services in our local schools, at:

Cannon Hill SS \$100,000

Morningside SS \$50,000

Murarrie SS \$80,000

Norman Park SS \$100,000

Seven Hills SS \$80,000

Bulimba SS \$100,000

And of course Speaker along with the Seven Hills State School community, I was elated to see the election commitment to a new Assembly Hall, which will come in this term.

But Speaker schools are not just bricks and mortar.

And I know people in my electorate were also very pleased to hear about some of the other Education initiatives in this Budget.

More teachers and teacher aides.

The health and wellbeing initiatives

Homework Hubs

And free sanitary products in schools.

Just to name a few.

Speaker for an inner city electorate like Bulimba, where traffic congestion is a constant threat to our quality of life, the accessibility and affordability of our local public transport options is absolutely critical.

Which is why I have spent every year I've been a Member, successfully lobbying for carpark upgrades to our major stations, and for major upgrades to the stations themselves.

The \$26 million upgrade which has already begun at Cannon Hill station is so welcomed and particularly so by people with disabilities, people with prams and younger children in tow, and the elderly.

It was great to see the \$11 million allocated to it in this year's budget.

And of course I was absolutely delighted to be able to announce in the recent election that we would see a similar upgrade of Morningside station this term.

And while I'm talking about these stations I must really acknowledge the staff who've been involved in the excellent consultation that's been undertaken to make sure the upgrades meet the challenges of that station.

I also especially acknowledge and thank the Transport Minister for listening to me so often about my concerns for good public transport for my community, and for being willing to look at our issues.

This is a Budget for difficult times.

It will take us through these tough years.

And bring us out the other end with hope.

And just as we have worked together on Queensland's strong health response, we will work together to get our state's economy back in shape.

We unite and we recover.



**Ms LUI (Cook—ALP)** (4.30 pm): It is a pleasure to rise today to speak in support of the appropriation bill 2020-21. In doing so, I would like to offer my congratulations to the Treasurer and Minister for Investment, Cameron Dick, for handing down a solid budget amid a global pandemic and what is arguably the most challenging time in our modern history.

It is evident that Queensland is in good hands. We have witnessed this in the strong leadership of our Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, and a strong Labor government. I would like to commend our Premier for all of her efforts and hard work to stand with Queensland, for Queenslanders, to safeguard our communities in the fight against COVID-19 in this state.

No doubt 2020 has been hard on everyone. The impact of COVID-19 has put immense pressure on individuals, families and communities in my electorate. Under normal circumstances, remoteness is always a major factor underlying my community's vulnerability. We got to see the true extent of my community's vulnerability in the face of this pandemic, highlighting many uncertainties. People's health was at risk. Public and private sector services were impacted. People stopped visiting due to restricted travel, resulting in a massive decline in visitor numbers to the region which had a huge impact on the local economy.

During this time, I met with many small business owners—cafe owners, shop owners and tourism operators to name a few—to hear firsthand their experiences with operating a business under very stressful circumstances. The feedback was the same right across the electorate: people's health and economic wellbeing suffered severely due to the many uncertainties that COVID presented.

If there is one thing to go by, I stand by the fact that the Palaszczuk government is a government that stands up for all people, no matter where they live. I am thankful that, since the onset of COVID-19 early in 2020, there has been no report of community transmission in my electorate. I am proud of this government's quick health response because the results were obvious in my electorate. Not only did this government's fast-acting decisions save lives in my communities; it also placed us in a strong position to turn our focus towards economic recovery.

This is a budget that delivers for my community, from Mareeba to the Douglas shire and Cape York to the Torres Strait, focusing on supporting and strengthening services and protecting local jobs, not only now but also into the future.

In health, we are seeing record investment into the region with a total state health spend of \$21.8 billion across the state, and \$1.3 billion will flow into the Torres and Cape and Cairns and Hinterland hospital and health services in Far North Queensland. With a background working in remote health, I am pleased that the Palaszczuk Labor government is investing \$6.8 million of a \$46 million total spend in this budget for the redevelopment of the Thursday Island Hospital and Primary Health Care Centre.

We are delivering new and improved infrastructure. Our government's record speaks for itself: \$5.1 million of a \$17 million commitment to the upgrade of five primary health care centres in the outer islands of the Torres Strait; building replacement of the primary health care centre on Mer Island; \$2 million for the upgrade of the Mossman Hospital emergency department; and just over \$1 million for Coen Primary Health Care Centre for the replacement of the morgue and the replacement and remediation works of the conference building's roof. This government is focused on making a difference to people's health, no matter where they live, and creating opportunities for local jobs.

Local councils in my electorate play a vital role in delivering infrastructure projects that also support local jobs. Works for Queensland is one of the most successful and popular grant programs amongst the local councils in Cook. I would like to pass on their gratitude and appreciation to the Palaszczuk government for its continued support of Works for Queensland as it gives local councils greater leverage to deliver on their infrastructure, maintenance and minor works.

This year, this budget allocates \$36.7 million for COVID Works for Queensland and \$22.5 million is coming into local councils in my electorate. Some 14 local councils in Cook will benefit from these funds. These critical funds are going directly into projects across councils in my electorate and is welcomed.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

That is not all. The Queensland government recently announced over \$9.7 million for schools in the Cook electorate to go towards a mix of upgrades and new projects. In Cape York, Aurukun State School will receive \$220,000 to create better teaching walls in the teaching block, replace windows and create cross-flow ventilation across the upper classrooms. Cooktown State School will receive \$136,000 for the upgrade of the prep playground, and the Hope Vale campus of Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy will receive \$370,000 for a new amenities block. These are not all of the schools in the Cook electorate. The Kowanyama State School, Lockhart River State School, Mossman State High School, Mossman State School, Wonga Beach State School and Tagai State College in the Torres Strait, with upgrades at its Malu Kiwai, Mer, Poruma and Saibai Island campuses, will all benefit from critical investments to build and refurbish vital infrastructure and support local jobs.

For big projects like the Wangetti Trail, construction was brought forward by six months to create jobs. We are investing \$3.5 million into the Mareeba Industrial Park expansion, stage 3, which will make heavy industrial zoned land available for large-scale development.

When it comes to roads, we announced \$313 million to accelerate work on local roads, including the Peninsula Development Road, the Kennedy Highway and the Bourke Development Road in my electorate. When I see all of the road activity in my electorate I know that we are supporting families, putting food on the table and roofs over people's heads.

In relation to Small Business Adaptation Grants, 140 small businesses in the Cook electorate have been successful in winning more than \$1.2 million in grants as part of the Palaszczuk government's COVID-19 economic recovery plan. I had the pleasure of visiting some of these small businesses: Just Jase Hair, the Sorella Hair & Beauty Studio in Mareeba and the Driftwood Cafe in Cooktown. It is clear that the Palaszczuk government's stimulus support package is providing much needed funds for small businesses to keep them afloat through these tough economic times. The electricity rebate of \$500 million to provide relief for households and small businesses with electricity and water bills is another example of how this government is working to support households and businesses throughout my electorate. Our Land Restoration Fund, \$43 million for five projects, will create over 300 jobs. COVID-19 is putting a lot of pressure on families and, as such, incidents of domestic and family violence were on the

increase. This government recognised the impact of COVID-19 on breaking families and, with the Commonwealth government, injected vital funds into community organisations to provide intervention support for vulnerable families. I am pleased that 10 community organisations in my electorate were successful recipients of domestic and family violence funds.

Works for Queensland has always been widely received by my local councils. The new COVID-19 Works for Queensland funds highlights this government's commitment to support the local economy.

I can confidently say that the decisions made by this government to support communities in my electorate through these economic challenging is seen at the community level. Whether its replacing the roof and electrical upgrades at the Community Canteen and continuing refurbishment at the Arts and Culture Centre in Kowanyama or the development of the Cultural Precinct and upgrades to the football field in Lockhart, or the installation of smart water meters across the Douglas Shire and upgrades at the Port Douglas Wastewater Treatment Plant, are only few examples of 14 councils in my electorate to receive the COVID-19 Works for Queensland funds to support shovel ready projects and sustain local jobs in regional and remote communities.

That is not all. In terms of education, this government is delivering so that our children have access to good quality education no matter where they live. In Cape York, Aurukun State School will receive \$220,000 to create better teaching walls in the teaching block, replace windows and create cross-flow ventilation across the upper classrooms. Cooktown State School will receive \$136,000 for the upgrade of the prep playground and Hope Vale Campus of Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy will receive \$340,000 for a new amenities block. Kowanyama State School, Lockhart River State School, Mossman State High School, Mossman State School, Wonga Beach State School and Tagai College in the Torres Strait for upgrades at its Malu Kiwai, Mer, Poruma and Saibai Campuses will all benefit from critical investments to build and refurbish vital infrastructure and support our local jobs.

For big projects like the Wangetti Trail, construction is brought forward six months to create jobs. We are investing \$3.5 million into the Mareeba Industrial Park Expansion, stage 3, which will make heavy industrial zoned land available for large-scale development—COVID-19 economic recovery initiatives for the Far North.

In regards to roads, there will be \$313 million to accelerate work on local roads including PDR, Kennedy Highway and BDR.

In regards to small business adaption grants, 140 small businesses in the Cook electorate have been successful in winning more than \$1.2 million in grants as part of the Palaszczuk Labor government's COVID-19 economic recovery plan. I had the pleasure of visiting some of these small businesses; Just Jase Hair, Sorella Hair and Beauty Studio, Mareeba; and Driftwood Café, Cooktown. It is clear, the Palaszczuk government stimulus support package is providing much needed funds for small businesses to keep afloat through this economic downfall.

The electricity rebate of \$500 million will provide relief for households and small businesses with electricity and water bills.

Our Land Restoration Fund of \$43 million for five projects will create over 300 jobs.

The Palaszczuk Labor government has a strong plan to unite and recover the state's economy. Queensland's plan for economic recovery is well and truly underway and together we will get through these challenging times. I commend the bill to the House.



**Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (4.35 pm): I rise to speak on the appropriation bills for 2020-21. What do we have in this budget? A budget is all about showing a government's priorities: what things it thinks are important, what it thinks should happen and how it should operate and present itself to the people of Queensland. What do we see? We see debt, we see deficit and we see deceit. We are pretty clear as to what Labor thinks. They have deceived the electorate by going to the election without clearly articulating that they plan on borrowing an extra \$28 billion, taking the debt to a whopping \$130 billion. By anybody's measure, that is a lot of money.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** I hear the roads minister interjecting. I will throw a challenge out for him. Minister, if we took \$28 billion worth of \$100 notes and we laid them end to end, do you think we would be able to go all the way along your entire state road network?

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** That's correct.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Walker): Direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Mr WATTS:** There would be over 33,000 kilometres of \$100 bills. In fact, there would be 44,240 kilometres of \$100 bills. The people of Queensland deserve to know how much \$28 billion is.

**Mr Bailey** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** If the minister would pipe down for just one second, he would see that 44,000 kilometres is a long way to lay down \$100 bills. I would enjoy the walk with him. If we laid down one bill every 10 seconds it would take us 88 years to get to the \$28 billion of taxpayers' money that is about to be spent. That will give members some concept of how much \$28 billion is. I have a couple of other analogies to help people visualise. If we stacked the \$100 bills one on top of the other, we would be able to step off and walk onto the Space Station. That is how much \$28 billion is. That is the deceit of this government. They have borrowed that much money.

The government has made some heroic assumptions. People make heroic assumptions every week. Some people fill out lotto forms and take a punt on some numbers. They make an historic assumption that they might win and they speculate what they would do with the million dollars if they won. Let me tell members: this government needs to win lotto five times a week for 107 years to get to

the \$28 billion that it is going to borrow. Now we understand the deceit that was put on the electorate of Queensland. Nobody was imagining a 44,000-kilometre line of \$100 bills. Nobody was imagining that the amount of money that is about to be borrowed is so large.

If we were borrowing it for something useful, that would be fantastic. I have been in business and I know that one borrows money to buy assets. One gets those assets and looks at them. I want to run through a couple of other numbers. Let us assume that we have a house and our house is worth \$191,539. Our mortgage is \$102,000 and we earn \$56,700 a year. Unfortunately, we spend \$64,670 a year. So what do we need to do? We need to reach into the mortgage. We go to the bank and say, 'Excuse me, would you lend us \$28,000 so that we can do some things on our house? Promise we will spend it on the renovations and some capital and everything else. Just trust us.' In four years time the bank comes back and says, 'Let's have a look at how much we valued the house at.' The house value has gone up \$145. The mortgage has gone up by \$28,000.

All we need to do to understand what they have just done in Queensland is add a lot of zeros because the numbers are identical. If this were an individual household they would not go and draw out \$28,000 and spend none of it on improving the asset. The asset has gone up by \$145 after they took out \$28,000. It does not seem like enough to justify the spending of the money.

There we have it. That is debt and deficit. Obviously we are losing money every year running that deficit, trying to buy fuel for the cars and buying pens to keep on people's desks. We are not building assets. There is some asset building going on. If there were a lot it would go up a lot more. The net worth of Queensland does not go up. It is a complete fraud on people.

What it really is is intergenerational theft. We are stealing this money from future generations because they are the ones who are going to have to pay it back. Why are we stealing that money? Why is this Labor government stealing that money from future generations? It is because they are going to waste it and because they are incompetent. If they were competent we would see the asset price go up. We would see things expand. Even with their own projections we do not see a great improvement in unemployment. We do not see a great improvement in the asset. What we do see is a great improvement in the debt. That is what we see from this government.

They have made some heroic assumptions. They have deceived the electorate. They are running a deficit. They are racking up debt. They are committing intergeneration theft. Unemployment does not get any better. Our assets do not really grow. Now we are all clear about what Labor's priorities are for the budget.

There are a couple of things they could do for my electorate that would be very useful. I will outline those. One of those, which is not quite in my electorate but people who would be directly affected live in my electorate, would be to approve Acland. Some 500 families would have an income and job this side of Christmas if they did. There is no reason it cannot be approved. The court action and everything else is just a furphy. They are just hiding. Other mine sites that face more hurdles and more court action have been approved by this government. They are misleading people. They are hiding because they do not want the Acland coalmine to go ahead, and that is the reality of it.

That is costing jobs in my electorate where we have 27.2 per cent youth unemployment. There are opportunities for apprentices—apprentice diesel fitters—and for people to learn how to become coalminers, and none of that is possible. There are jobs to herd cattle and to do some of the greatest rehabilitation that is available in this state. That is what Acland would do, but they will not approve it. Some 500 people are going to have a lot fewer presents under the Christmas tree this year because the government is being stubborn because they need inner-city Greens preferences.

There are a couple of good things. I want to give credit where it is deserved. As members of this House will know, Wilsonton State School is a school that I have a great relationship with and work very hard with. One of the things that is desperately needed there is an arts and performance centre. They need to upgrade their senior classrooms because they do not have the classrooms to teach right through to year 12. They need to get the hospitality area up to speed. All of that has been funded in this budget. It was a bipartisan commitment. Both sides were committed to it. That is fantastic for the school.

There is one little thing that I would like the minister to consider in addition. That is to look at a scramble crossing out the front. As the campus has gone from a few hundred kids to just under 1,000, the corner gets very crowded with students trying to cross all the way. They get stuck on one corner. It would be really useful if there was a scramble crossing there. I am sure the minister will look at that as these renovations go on.

For Toowoomba West Special School there is \$3.1 million. That is great for the kids at Toowoomba West Special School. It is half of what is required for the campus upgrade based on its plan, but it is a start. Out at Highfields State School there is \$3 million for the administration centre. That is a good thing because administrators have been sitting in corridors for a long time. I am glad to see that.

I will turn to missed opportunities. The Toowoomba North State School has grown. We have a large Yazidi community in Toowoomba and many of their children are attending Toowoomba North State School so it is growing very fast. They cannot fit in the school's library for assembly. They have nowhere to gather as a whole school without sitting on each other's laps. There is a roofed area but it is not enclosed. I think that the minister should really have a look at that area and enclose it so the school can gather together for assembly.

We have heard a lot about hospitals and satellite hospitals and all those different things. In Toowoomba there are people who get given a \$1,000 cab ride to Brisbane because our hardworking doctors and nurses are over capacity by heaps. They have to come to Brisbane. If we do not address the hospital situation in Toowoomba we are going to see tragedies. We made a commitment for a day surgery which would have taken some pressure off. In the budget there is some money for a patch up and a bit of maintenance at the existing hospital and for the business case to be finalised. We know what is needed. We need a new hospital at Baillie Henderson. We are going to have to bite the bullet as a state and get on with building or people are going to lose their lives and/or we are going to waste a heap more money moving people up and down the range in ambulances and taxis so they can see doctors. That is not fair.

One of the single biggest problems facing my electorate is water security. We live on top of a hill. There is no doubt that we need to do a water security options assessment of all of the possible options that can supply water to Toowoomba over the next 30 years. That needs to be done. That needs to be funded. Once that is done we need to then pick the best options that will deliver a secure water supply over a period of time.

The other thing that has been very popular in the electorate and that people really desire is a second connection road because the New England Highway is getting completely clogged with traffic from Highfields to town every day. This road, which I would like to call a western distributor road, could go all the way from Highfields through to Westbrook, but there is a piece in the middle that needs to be joined up and expanded. At the very least, we should do the business case for that so that we can plan, purchase the corridor and protect it for the future. If we do not do that soon we are not going to be able to ever do it because people will subdivide and build on that land. We need to plan, purchase that corridor and protect that corridor to secure Toowoomba's traffic flow long into the future on the western side of town.


There are another couple of missed opportunities. We do not have electricity competition in Toowoomba. People here in Brisbane enjoy 26-odd different companies that can supply power. They can negotiate the price. We have no choice: we have a monopoly in Toowoomba. You are stuck with the price. No matter how much you use you have to pay the bill they send.

The other thing that needs to be seriously considered by this government now that it has been given a four-year term is that, with Toowoomba's youth unemployment at 27.2 per cent, why are we included in the south-east corner when it comes to payroll tax? We are not considered regional or rural for payroll tax exemption, but we should be because it affects all of our businesses. It drives businesses out of Toowoomba. They are looking to move to other places. That is not good for us locally.

We can safely say that there have been a couple of educational projects in the budget that I would definitely support. There are some missed opportunities. But more than all of that, the people of Queensland should know that they have been deceived by this government. They should know that this government has embarked on intergenerational theft. They are taking our children and grandchildren's tax dollars and spending them right now.

If they were creating jobs by building assets and giving us a future, that would be a good thing. Unfortunately, if the net worth of Queensland is not going up by very much at all then that is not the case. They are just feeding the debt monster that they have created over the last 25-odd years. The debt monster is getting bigger and harder to control. The people of Queensland should be concerned that they were deceived and that the debt is so large.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr BROWN** (Capalaba—ALP) (4.50 pm): Following the member for Toowoomba North's logic, the federal government's \$1.1 trillion debt will get you to the moon and back in hundred dollar bills. It is a massive debt. I would hate to see the size of that monster. We are the 0.1 of the \$1.1 trillion debt that the federal government has.

This is the first opportunity that I have had to rise in this place in the 57th Parliament. It would be remiss of me not to thank the good people of Capalaba for returning me to the chamber because it gives me another four years of 'Don delivers in my local community'. I am not surprised that the good people of Capalaba put their faith in me again because I was the only one who had a plan for Capalaba. The LNP had absolutely no idea. They were offering up a feasibility study that they had done before and found that it was not feasible and \$50,000 for a roadside mural—an idea that they stole from me. I am going to lay out the plan of what Don is delivering for our local area.

I only have to turn to health. In this budget there is funding for the seven-level car park at Redland Hospital. Car parking has been a problem in the Redlands for many years now. It has taken a Labor government to bring that initiative to light. Construction of that car park is happening as we speak. It is fantastic to see that we are getting on with constructing that car park.

We have the stage 1 upgrade of the Redland Hospital. Again, it is a Labor government that is investing in health in our local area. We know there are growing pains and we have an ageing population in the Redlands. It is important that we keep up with them. That is why it is fantastic to see such a massive investment in the Redland Hospital with the stage 1 upgrade.

It is also fantastic to see funding for a satellite hospital for Redland Bay. It is going to be very important for the residents, especially in the Southern Moreton Bay Islands, to use that facility. It will take the pressure off our main hospital which will be of benefit to the people.

**Dr Robinson** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** I take the interjection of the member for Oodgeroo. It would be silly for the LNP to want a satellite hospital at the same site as the hospital itself. The member for Oodgeroo wants to see a satellite hospital at the same site at the hospital itself. That is the logic of the LNP.

We are also delivering for education in my local area. It is fantastic to see funding for the refurbishment of the Capalaba State College hall. It will go a very long way to help their drama and dance classes. They always put on a fantastic performance at the end of the year. Due to COVID, I unfortunately missed this year's, but I always look forward to it.

We are seeing massive investment in solar and air conditioning in our local area, continuing that great work. It is fantastic to see so many local tradies at our schools at the moment installing air conditioners, and those air conditioners will be powered by clean and green energy at the schools. Again, we are delivering on so many extra teachers and teacher aides, and they do a fantastic job.

There is a stark difference between Labor and the LNP in my local area when it comes to TAFE. When the LNP were in government, they completely gutted the Alexandra Hills TAFE. They sacked teachers. There were only two teachers there when I came into parliament. They had privatised the whole place. They had jacked up fees. It was a ghost town. Since then we have seen a massive investment. A massive number of students are going there. Upgrades are happening to the electrical workshops, the plumbing workshops and the automotive workshops. There are new buildings for nursing and plumbing. This means that our students will have a fantastic future.

It is only a Labor government that will invest in TAFE because we know that students are more likely to get a job in my local area having certificate IIIs and certificate IVs than having a bachelor degree. It is only a Labor government that is investing in our local TAFE, delivering our students the education and the jobs that they deserve. We are rolling out the free TAFE courses and apprenticeships program for under-21s to under-25s. It is a fantastic initiative and I congratulate the Treasurer and the minister for that expansion.

We are also delivering on infrastructure. It is fantastic to drive into parliament along Old Cleveland Road and see so many roadworks at the moment. It might be a bit frustrating for commuters at the moment, but it is really important to see those upgrades. There is the upgrade to the Old Cleveland Road onramp to the Gateway arterial. That has been a problem for a number of years—one I have fought for and delivered. It is fantastic to see those roadworks happening right now. There are upgrades happening right now for the Eastern TransitWay at Creek Road in Carindale. It is fantastic to see so much construction work happening there as well.

**Dr Robinson** interjected.

**Mr BROWN:** I again take the interjection of the member for Oodgeroo. He has been in this place for five terms now. Every single deliverable in his electorate has been delivered by a Labor government—every single one. I would like to see our track record of new schools, hospital upgrades and tourism investment against his. He turns up and he is always happy to get his photo taken.

**Dr ROBINSON:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I find those comments offensive and inaccurate. I ask them to be withdrawn.

**Mr BROWN:** I withdraw. He loves to turn up. I am happy to have him there. It gives me great pleasure to deliver so much in his local area. I have only been in parliament for two terms—now three—but I have delivered more in his electorate than he has. My track record is better than his will ever be in his own electorate.

We are delivering the Birkdale train station. It is fantastic to see funding for the design work. This will mean that we can combine the two car parks there. At the moment it is fenced off at the old preschool site—I actually went to that preschool. It is important that we can combine those car parks.

**Ms Leahy:** Did you go to preschool?

**Mr BROWN:** I am that old, yes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Walker):** Direct your comments through the chair.

**Mr BROWN:** It has sentimental value to me. It is such an important train station in terms of disability access, so it is important that we have more car parks there and that we can connect those car parks.

I would like to highlight spending in this budget that I am deeply concerned about. I have already raised this issue in the House before—\$2.05 million in state government grants is being directed by Redland City Council into the eastern escarpment project in the mayor's own backyard. Since I initially raised this issue in the House, the mayor has sent me two concern letters and then leaked them to the *Courier-Mail* journalist Des Houghton to try to silence me from raising this important issue. Since then the mayor has declined to take this matter any further—and I believe I know why.

Just before the election I received a response from the Redland City Council to an RTI application and it is damning. It shows that the mayor was in full knowledge that this project, which would financially benefit her business, was being put forward and that the decision was influenced by her chief of staff and executive assistant. In an email forwarded from the mayor's executive assistant, Allan McNeil, to the mayor on a Saturday, council officer Christine Cartwright says the following to her fellow council officers in regard to the allocation of Works for Queensland funding—

State has also confirmed that I am able to submit our projects under the CEO approval, as opposed to Council resolution, due to the short application period. I have also discussed these projects with Allan McNeil, who is supportive of what officers have identified.

There you have it—the mayor's EA discussing and supporting this on behalf of the mayor to council officers and keeping the mayor in the loop even on a Saturday, making sure that she is well abreast of things before any other councillor gets a chance. You only have to look at the name of the project in the description forwarded to the mayor to see the financial benefit she is going to receive. It states—

This project will enhance the community and visitor access to natural areas while protecting biodiversity in the region, increasing utilisation and encouraging physical activity, Mountain biking and bushwalking users, enhancing market growth for day trips and overnight stays, providing critical uplift to the local tourism and hospitality industries.

Economic impact modelling has indicated that this project will provide over \$6m towards the regional economy.

Mr Deputy Speaker, \$6 million, increased overnight stays, and there is no closer business to this project than the mayor's accommodation and hospitality businesses, situated right on the doorstep of this project which she will benefit from. Two days later the rest of the councillors were able to give their feedback on the projects being put forward. Three councillors responded; two of whom raised serious concerns. On the same day Councillor Wendy Boglary replied back to the council officer, 'Can I please ask on what basis these two projects were selected?' In an email later on the same day Councillor Wendy Boglary again replied to the council officer. She said—

When I voted to support this project, General Meeting 23rd January 2019, the funding amount was \$859,622.00.

I am surprised to see such a huge difference now in the final design has been completed.

Can I ask how did the project advance to this funding amount and the project priority list without requiring a briefing to councillors?

In a final email back on Friday, 12 June, Councillor Boglary again said to the council officer—

At this stage I cannot support the funding to the Eastern Escarpments to the amount of \$2.1m when all previous Councillors workshops and agenda items have had a much lesser amount only mentioned. I did support the project but struggle with the dramatic increase in funding without discussions as a whole council.

Councillor Paul Bishop also raised serious concerns with the council officer on Friday, 12 June. He said—

While I am not completely across the algorithms, metrics and processes that have been used to determine these two projects I'd like to make two points.

1. Generally, I believe that state funding should be allocated fairly, equitably and transparently across the balance of the city to advance projects of maximum value to the majority of residents over the long term future.

He goes on to state—

As such, I see this allocation of \$2.1m being put towards one project that has some sensitivities involved makes me wonder what the State Government expectations are regarding allocation ...

It's a surprise to me that this project has been advanced 3x its original proposal without it appearing to have been a clear priority against competing projects.

There was one councillor who endorsed the project and that was the deputy mayor, Julie Talty, whose division is receiving the project. RTI documents show that a week later the deputy mayor had no idea what was in this \$2.05 million project. She had to ask for a briefing on it a week after she endorsed it. There you have it, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will table the documents for the benefit of my local community.

*Tabled paper:* Bundle of documents regarding Works for Queensland project funding allocation, Redland City Council [370].

These documents show the mayor's EA doing the bidding of the mayor. The mayor had complete control and did not use the state government grants to benefit her local community. I urge local residents to read the RTI documents and make up their minds for themselves. I look forward to the conclusion of the OIA's investigation of this matter. I commend both of the bills to the House.



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (5.03 pm): I am pleased to support the appropriation bills before the House. I congratulate the Treasurer on delivering his first budget—the sixth that my government has presented to the people of this great state. I congratulate all ministers, assistant ministers and all departmental staff for their work on putting this together in such a short time frame. They are very committed officers and they have done an extraordinary job. It is what we committed to: a budget at the right time and for the times we live in. We said that we would bring down a budget after the election once we were furnished with financial details from the federal budget. This is a budget to continue implementing our strong economic recovery plan.

As Premier, I knew I was setting the Treasurer an important task for our state: to frame a budget in unprecedented circumstances—a budget that would deliver the jobs, infrastructure and services that Queenslanders rightly expect but in challenging conditions that none of us have experienced before. The budget had to tread a careful line which I am proud to say it achieves. Our state's needs have not diminished, but in many ways our capacity to meet those needs has been impacted by COVID-19. Nevertheless, this budget continues the job of recovering, building and growing. Given its proximity to the election it is important to note that, in addition to that, it delivers on our \$4.3 billion in election commitments to Queenslanders. Let's look at some of the highlights.

There is a \$1 billion investment pipeline to support rail manufacturing in Maryborough—part of our plan to make Queensland the manufacturing capital of Australia—to make trains, defence aircraft, tanks, vaccine patches, renewable hydrogen and new economy minerals here in Queensland. There are additional frontline staff, including: 2,025 additional police; 5,800 nurses; 1,500 doctors; 1,700 allied health professionals; 475 paramedics; 6,190 new teachers; 1,139 teacher aides; and 357 firefighters.

There is a record \$17.5 billion investment in education and training, including: \$1 billion for Great Schools Great Future—supporting school infrastructure across Queensland—in addition to our \$1.7 billion Building Future Schools investment, delivering homework centres in schools and a student health and wellbeing package.

There is a record \$28.8 billion investment in health. That includes additional health infrastructure, including: seven new satellite hospitals and major upgrades to the Cairns, Townsville and Rockhampton hospitals. We know how important health is to families right across our state.

Our regional roads investment includes \$100 million of additional investment on the Bruce Highway, \$200 million on an inland freight route to take trucks off the Bruce, \$60 million for the Cairns Western Arterial Road and \$46 million for Stuart Drive Stage 2.



We are helping Queenslanders into work with skills and training with \$100 million in TAFE upgrades, \$45 million to provide skills infrastructure in schools and \$21 million for free TAFE for Queenslanders in priority skills up to the age of 25.

There is support for businesses and households: \$250 off electricity bills this year through rebates; a 50 per cent water price cut for horticulture farmers and 15 per cent for irrigators; \$130 million in support for small businesses with a \$100 million Business Investment Fund; and 334,000 Queenslanders supported to stay in work by helping businesses with loans and grants. We back small business right across this state.

In addition, we are supporting tourism and the environment with \$74 million to rebuild tourism and \$40 million to help people into work on environment and reef protection initiatives. As I talk about these initiatives I remember these announcements as we went across Queensland making these commitments to the people of Queensland, and now they are being delivered in our budget.

We are helping local governments across Queensland and I thank all of the mayors. They do a mighty job working with our government to make sure that Queenslanders get into jobs, with \$400 million for Works for Queensland and \$280 million for the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme—in fact, I do not think there has ever been a greater partnership with local government than there has between this government and local government across Queensland—as well as \$200 million for the SEQ Community Stimulus Package.

We are supporting the community. There is a record \$171 million investment in palliative care—we know how important that is for people—\$36 million for Surf Life Saving Queensland; \$5 million in support for workers impacted by lung dust disease; and \$6.2 million to provide financial support, including no-interest loans and financial counselling.

Among the areas that relate to my portfolio, I am proud that this budget includes a \$10 million boost to provide Queensland's veterans and ex-services organisations with more support for employment, infrastructure upgrades, and legal and homelessness support. The funding includes up to \$4 million for capital works grants, commemorative events, memorials for ex-services organisations, councils and other groups helping veterans; \$1.8 million for a specialist service to support homeless veterans; a \$1.1 million training package to help veterans into civilian employment; \$1 million for the Anzac Day Trust Fund; \$1 million for the Oasis Wellbeing Centre Townsville; \$600,000 for legal assistance; and \$500,000 for health and wellbeing research. My government places the highest value on the contribution of the men and women of Australia's defence forces. While we continue to implement Queensland's plan for economic recovery, we want to make sure we do not leave anyone behind, especially our veterans.

In the area of trade, the budget reinforces a number of important commitments by Trade and Investment Queensland: building and maintaining relationships with international investors, which is so important to promote Queensland and to bring about even more jobs; providing market intelligence and connections to help Queensland exporters and investors; trialling new ways of delivery and using digital business matching to raise the profile of Queensland companies; and providing expert advice to small and medium sized exporters.

For our screen industry, as I mentioned today in the House, the 2020-21 grant budget for Screen Queensland is \$55.4 million. That includes an extra \$20 million for the highly successful Production Attraction Strategy and funding for a television hub on the Gold Coast for national and international productions. At the end of the day, that means jobs across Queensland and they are secure jobs because people do not have to pack up and move to different states. Unfortunately, with what is unfolding in the United States at the moment, I honestly believe there is going to be an even greater influx of movies and Netflix productions here in Queensland. We should embrace them with open arms because they give long-term, secure jobs for all of the production people involved—whether it is the carpenters, the caterers or someone to do with the accommodation. Some people stay here for six to 12 months, and sometimes they even end up buying properties and staying here long term.

In my community of Inala, the budget delivers important funding for our schools, health, roads, policing and housing support. For example, there is \$2 million for the multipurpose hall at Glenala State High School. When I first became the member, I remember that Glenala was extremely run-down. How can students have pride in their school when they walk through the front gates and see smashed window panes and teachers doing the repairs? We will put \$2 million in there for the expansion of that multipurpose hall, and that is much needed as the numbers are now increasing in that school. Students once used to drive past or catch the bus and go to Corinda but they are now staying at Glenala. I want to also acknowledge the great work of the member for Mansfield in making sure that school delivered for the people of Inala.

There is \$2.25 million for an upgrade to the Trade Training Centre facilities to prepare students at Glenala for jobs in defence vehicle manufacturing. That is going to be really important. We are talking about manufacturing jobs and linking with the opportunities that the kids will have to get jobs close to home so they can work close to home. There is nothing more important than getting a job. We do not want to see young kids walk across the stage and say they have no hope of getting a job; we want them to say they have hope and a lot of opportunities to achieve their goals for themselves and their family.

There is money for maintenance of schools and money for air-conditioning of the Inala Community Health Centre. There is \$47.4 million to complete the \$400 million Ipswich Motorway upgrade from Rocklea to Darra. That is due for completion next year so I look forward to joining the Minister for Main Roads for that opening. There is money for the Richlands SES, and there is \$20,000 as part of a \$500,000 commitment for Inala Wangarra to construct change rooms to support female participation. There is \$411,000 towards investment in training infrastructure at the Inala TAFE.

In contrast, the LNP are a risk to Queensland's economic recovery, making it up as they go along. The Leader of the Opposition's budget reply had no new ideas and nothing of substance. I sat in that chair over there for three long years and I worked hard every single day. We analysed the budget and we came up with ideas and contrast ideas.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I hear the member for Clayfield. I do not have enough time at the moment. I could go through the long list of cuts. Here he is. It did not take long; he is back. I remember the arrogance. I remember that they did not talk to us in the corridors. I remember that. For three years, they did not even speak to us in the lift to say hello. Very few members would even do that. I am not going to forget that.

**Mr Mickelberg:** Never, not once.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You were not there. We could go through the whole list of the cuts to the frontline services, the cuts to the regional—

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** It is good to see the member for Clayfield awake. He has been a bit asleep for the last three years but it is good to see he is awake and is back fighting fit. I am quite happy to talk about my government's strong economic recovery plan. They had something called Strong Choices, which was about actually selling off the assets. Do we remember that? There was \$100 million in advertising, building 1 William Street for themselves and not caring. They cut things like the Pyjama Foundation. Almost every single day, there was something else. The member for Stafford is nodding because he can remember it because he was part of our team that battled the LNP back then. They did not care about people. They did not care about the regions. They did not care about services. It was all about themselves.

**Mr Dick:** And nothing has changed under the member for Broadwater.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Nothing has changed. The gang is all back together again. The band is playing from the same old hymn sheet. I am glad the member for Clayfield is back. It gives me so much more to talk about for the next four years. We have four years to talk about it.

Let me say very clearly that it is an honour and privilege to serve the people of the state. I have to mention the number of people I met throughout Queensland who thanked us for keeping them safe during COVID. There has never been a more testing time for a government.

**Mr Lister:** You didn't talk to the farmers and the small businesses along the border.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will say that I am friends with a lot of farmers across Queensland.

**Mr Lister:** Not in my electorate.


**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I think you will find that I am. I think you will find that they do like me. I think they will say that they do. We will always stand up for the people in this state. We will always deliver. We will listen to what people have to say and we will deliver on our election commitments. That is exactly the record that we stand on and that the people of Queensland respect.

When you sit in that chair opposite, you have to come up with new ideas. It is not about fancy words and it is not about the one-liners; it is about working hard and actually standing for something. As I said the other day in this House and I will say it again, the future of those opposite will depend on their party splitting. If they do not have a separate National Party, they will be consumed by the Katter party and they will be consumed by One Nation. There is no identity for the once great National Party

in this state. It is extremely disappointing, and it is about time those opposite took a long hard look in the crystal ball and saw what was happening in the electorate before them. The Liberal Party has completely consumed the National Party on that side of Queensland politics.

**Mr Nicholls** interjected.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I do not think the member for Clayfield should be interjecting because he has had a lot to do with the demise of the National Party in this state. Once again, I thank the Treasurer for delivering a strong budget that was backed and endorsed by the people of this state. We said that we would deliver a budget before Christmas and that we would have estimates before Christmas, and that is exactly what we are doing. We will continue to work hard for the people of this great state. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.18 pm): What an absolute pleasure it is to deliver my reply to the budget after the Premier. She has kept Queenslanders safe and she is leading the recovery. I support the appropriation bills. The terms 'arrogance' and 'hubris' have been tossed around by those opposite this week liberally, mostly in relation to the Treasurer. It takes a special level of arrogance and hubris to cop a flogging at the election like those opposite copped and walk into this chamber and start to lecture those on the other side. We saw peak arrogance in this chamber yesterday in a move that would make Kim Jong-il proud.

The member for Everton raised a statue to himself on behalf of his adoring constituents—peak arrogance and hubris. It takes an extra-special level of arrogance to walk into this place and disregard the votes and the wishes of the Queensland people, but we have heard that over and over and over again. We have been told that the people were scared into voting for Labor, that they were duped into voting for Labor. I can tell those opposite that they are going to spend a lot of time on that side of the House if they tell the voters of this great state that they were stupid, scared or duped into voting for Labor. Do not use the words 'scare campaign' in relation to a global pandemic.

Yesterday I spoke in this place of the more than 1,500 nurses who have died since the start of this global pandemic. Go and tell the families of those 1,500 nurses that there is a scare campaign going on! There is a very serious global pandemic going on. It is killing a lot of health workers. I am so thankful to be part of a state led by a Premier who is smart enough to listen to the advice of the Chief Health Officer. I suggest, along the lines that the Premier used, that those opposite put the crystal ball down, walk into the big hall of mirrors and start by taking a very good look at themselves. They should do that before they start lecturing people on this side of the House.

I would say a really good place to start would be to look at the shiny new promises of the new Bradfield scheme and the spangly, diamond-coated Bruce Highway that was put before the people of Queensland. They like to throw around the accusation of 'Labor's con job', but the people of Queensland worked out who the true con artists are, and it is those opposite. The people of Queensland found them out and said, 'You are the con artists.' When push came to shove and we finally got some details on these spangly, shiny new promises what did we find out? These were their signature things; it is all they talked about in Greenslopes because people really care about the new Bradfield scheme in Greenslopes! These were their most important promises, and guess what? Were they going to do it in the first budget, when we finally pushed them and said, 'Let's get some details'? No! What about the first hundred days? Were they going to do it in the first hundred days? No, definitely not in the first hundred days. Were they going to do it in the first year? We might think that if it was so important, they would do it in the first year. No, no, no! No, the people of Queensland had to wait a mere 5,475 days until those promises would be delivered—15 years! Seriously, we cannot make this stuff up.

Let us consider what it would have meant if those opposite had been elected. My eldest daughter is 15. She would have been voting in her fourth election before there was a dam scraped or a road built. The member for Bonney and the member for Gaven probably would have been in hot competition with one another to be the longest-serving members of this House, and I can guarantee the member for Bonney would still be on that side of the House. I will finally be able to sing a song that I like and I would be able to sing it knowing it is literally true. I would be able to sing—

Will you still need me, will you still feed me

When I'm sixty-four?

I could sing that and it would be true before any of these roads are built. Perhaps they sought advice from the new Leader of the Opposition about the timetable. He suggested that they should take a slower pace. Can I say 15 years is a very slow pace.


It has been said that to win an election you need to win the economic argument. Keeping Queenslanders safe and leading the recovery—these are the things we offered to the people of Queensland and these won the economic argument in the minds of the people of Queensland. When he was health minister, the Deputy Premier correctly said that the first economic response to COVID-19 is the health response. That is what we did, and the numbers speak for themselves. We are getting the health response right. What did those opposite offer? They called for the borders to be opened 64 times and they joined their voices with some of the most renowned public health experts around, Alan Jones, Pauline Hanson and Clive Palmer. Sadly, it seems the Greens political party has now joined the chorus of people questioning the advice of the Chief Health Officer.

I will work with the Premier and I will work with the people in my electorate to continue to keep Queenslanders safe. This budget is all about recovering from COVID-19. I see this every single day in my electorate: investments in job-creating infrastructure, in schools, public housing, sporting facilities, cycling infrastructure, investments in skills and development and training, backing our small businesses. He often refers to himself as 'Furner the Farmer's Friend', and many people call him that. He has made Labor the farmer's friend. Now it is time for Farmer; she is going to make Labor the 'Small Business Owner's Friend' because everywhere I go around this state I meet small business people who are so thankful for the actions we have taken during this COVID-19 period to save their businesses.

Around this state we are investing in strengthening and expanding existing industries like agriculture and mining; we are diversifying our economy into areas like renewable energy, film and television, hydrogen and advanced manufacturing. All of those things, combined with our investment in infrastructure that is improving and creating roads, hospitals, schools, training facilities, sporting facilities, tourism facilities—all of those things create jobs. How are we doing this? There is no secret. We are borrowing, just like every single sensible government around the world. I reject the notion put forward by the member for Callide, the member for Scenic Rim and the member for Toowoomba North—there were quite a few who put it forward—that the investments we are making do not boost productivity. I would suggest people pick up the capital statement and start at page 8 and read. What they will find is productivity-boosting infrastructure investments.

The LNP needs to come clean. They need to stop the con job that they started during the election period. I could not work out whether they were running for election or writing a stand-up routine for the UQ economics club. They were out there saying to people, 'We're going to have a surplus. We're not going to increase or create taxes. We're not going to sack any workers. We're not going to cut any services and we're not going to borrow any money.' Seriously, how do they pull that together? When we finally dug into their signature promises we found out that the only way they were going to be able to do it was to not do it for at least 15 years.

We are taking action right now to keep Queenslanders safe and to lead the recovery. The Premier, the Treasurer, every minister and every single member on this side of the House are focused on keeping Queenslanders safe and on leading the recovery. That is what this budget is all about and that is why I support it.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.27 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the appropriation bills 2020-21. As the Leader of the Opposition said, this budget is paying for today, not building for tomorrow—and more on that in a moment. I know all honourable members see me as a fine, good-looking, middle-aged Aussie bloke passionately representing his community in this place, but I beg to differ. I was actually born in England. Like the member for Broadwater's grandad, my parents emigrated, too, in 1960 with me as a six-year-old, my older brother, my older sister and my younger sister. Mum and dad have since passed, but we feel so fortunate that they made the decision to emigrate to Australia. We live in the best country on the planet with opportunities abounding.

It is appropriate to draw an analogy between what they reached for and what the people of the northern Gold Coast hope for. Sadly, what we see being delivered on the northern Gold Coast is nothing like what we need for the fastest-growing region in Queensland with 45,938 voters, more than 26 per cent over quota and an average age of 30. In terms of the constituents of Coomera, 27½ per cent are under 15 years of age and, indeed, there is something like 42 per cent who are under 25 years of age, so it is a very young electorate. It reminded me of my mum and my dad bringing us kids out here and what we aspired to, what my parents aspired to and what they are hoping for as well.

With this budget, they are not building now for tomorrow. On the northern Gold Coast in particular, the government is just spending to pay the bills—almost \$28 billion, as we have discussed. What about road projects? An article in yesterday's paper states—

Treasurer Cameron Dick says there are no plans to fast-track major road transport projects across the Gold Coast to deal with the city's rapidly growing population ... Mr Dick said the existing construction schedules were more than adequate to deal with the city's growth.

Remember, he said that existing construction schedules were more than adequate. Let's look at some of what is not being delivered anytime soon by this government for the northern Gold Coast or indeed the Gold Coast. Let us start with the Coomera Connector, the second M1 as it is popularly known, that when constructed will take 60,000 vehicles off the current M1. In 2021 we will spend a further \$12,887,000 on a \$1.53 billion project. Some \$755 million of that was committed by both the federal government and the state government for stage 1. Some \$735 million of the \$1.53 billion goes beyond the forward estimates. We are looking at taking 60,000 vehicles off the M1 sometime after 2024—and probably after 2028 at the rate that those opposite are taking us forward.

We have had a couple of wins. First of all, a police station was fast-tracked and it is being delivered in 2021. That came after a big push from the people of the Coomera electorate calling for an additional police station. The never-to-be-built police station is now being built but, sadly, although we committed 80 police for Coomera and Pimpama at the election, there is no commitment from the government other than 150 police for the whole region, incorporating 23 police stations, over five years. That is 30 police officers a year on average over a five-year period for 23 police stations in that area.

I now refer to the exits. Upgrading and duplication of exit 41 will occur sometime in 2022 if we are lucky. I have been trying to get that fast-tracked.

**Mrs McMahon:** We've started. The barricades are there.

**Mr CRANDON:** 'The barricades are there.' I take that interjection. That is what they called it. The day before the election period started, they put up some barricades and fences and said, 'We have started. We have turned the first sod.' In the 2020-21 period exit 41 is in QTRIP. In 2021 we are spending \$10 million of an \$83 million spend. If we are fortunate enough and do not have wet weather et cetera, we will get it sometime in 2022.

What about the upgrade of exit 49? If we are lucky, it will be delivered in 2024. Let us put this in perspective. The funding has been available since the budget in 2019. All of the money for exits 41 and 49 was made available in 2019. Exit 49 is being delivered five years later. Exit 54 took 18 months to build from start to finish, and we are taking five years from when the funding was available to deliver exit 49. The fastest growing region in Queensland, Pimpama, relies on exit 49 every day. It is a deadly exit off the M1 and the government is pushing the project out five years.

What about the upgrade at exit 38? The business case was completed in 2018. How much is the funding? Zero—not a dollar, not a cracker, not a penny in this budget for exit 38. The economic benefits of exit 38 upgrades are massive. It is a major arterial road going into the Yatala enterprise area. An enormous number of trucks traverse that road, but there is not one dollar of the \$87 million in this budget.

Additional exit 45 south was a commitment that we made, \$25 million. What have those opposite put in? \$10 million. They have somehow convinced the federal government to give them another \$10 million to build a slip lane. When will it be built? Well, the planning is planned for 2020-21 but there is no indication beyond that of when we might expect to see completion of exit 45.

The hospital and health precinct was the absolute ripper. Some eight weeks out from the election we committed \$4 million to master-plan a state-of-the-art hospital and health precinct in the northern Gold Coast. On 19 October, the day polling opened, there was a big headline in the paper: '\$160m: First look at Gold Coast's new hospital'. The \$160 million had nothing to do with the Coomera hospital; \$3 million of it did, to plan it. The other \$157 million was \$111 million for the Gold Coast University Hospital, \$5.7 million for Robina and \$40 million for a satellite hospital further down the coast. But they sold it to their booth workers as though, 'We're going to build a hospital at Coomera.' No, they are not. They are spending \$3 million to plan it. I have been told on good authority from within the Gold Coast University Hospital and health precinct hierarchy that we will not see anything happening there for a minimum of six years.

What about the new railway station at Pimpama? I remember clearly a big headline announcing the Pimpama railway station. When was that announced? It was not for this election. That was announced by those opposite before the 2017 election. They went down there, had a look around and said, 'Hey, look at us, we're going to build a new station.' That was in 2017. Is it in the forward estimates in the 2020 budget? No, there is nothing in there. If we are lucky we might get it in 2024, but that is only if we are so very lucky. We look forward to the minister's response to the petition on that.

What about a police citizens youth club at Pimpama? There is not a cracker from those opposite. I have written to the minister; in fact, we ran petitions. The minister wrote back and said, 'No, we're not building a police citizens youth club.' Do members remember the figures I provided a little earlier?

**A government member:** No.

**Mr CRANDON:** Those aged under 15 years represent 27.5 per cent of our population. Members opposite see this as funny. We have the fastest growing region in Queensland, we have the youngest population in Queensland and we have police issues all throughout the electorate but those opposite see it as funny. It is not funny, folks. Every day people have to put up with the congestion on exit 49, with crime et cetera. The \$6½ million police citizens youth club—

**Mrs D'ATH:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is not putting his comments through the chair and is arguing across the chamber. I ask that he be reminded to put his comments through the chair.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** Member, please direct all comments through the chair.

**Mr CRANDON:** I will put my comments through the chair, absolutely. So for \$6.5 million they say, 'No, we're not going to build that. We're not going to do anything for the people of the northern Gold Coast.' There is not a cracker to help with youth crime on the northern Gold Coast. Some \$6½ million is all we have asked for and the answer was simply, 'No, not happening.' I will not give up on that.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRANDON:** Here they go again. They think it is funny. Ours is the fastest growing region and it has the highest number of youth of any electorate in Queensland. Some 18½ thousand children go to school in the Coomera electorate every day. Those opposite think it is funny that we do not have a police citizens youth club.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Please cease all interjections across the chamber.

**Mr CRANDON:** As for buses, it is interesting to note that the new public transport ticketing system is a great idea and a great concept. It would be great if you could use it! We do not have the public transport on the northern Gold Coast sufficient to use this ticketing system. Getting people to the train stations—

**Mr WATTS:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. There are interjections behind me that keep saying 'you'.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui):** Members, I ask that you cease all interjections across the chamber. I am having trouble hearing the member.

**Mr CRANDON:** As far as bus services are concerned, we just do not have anything like the number of bus services that we need for the area. We get nowhere. We are running petitions and I look forward to the responses to those petitions. Once again, we need bus services out to Jacobs Well and bus services from Beenleigh to Ormeau and Ormeau to Coomera. We desperately need them, but there is nothing forthcoming in the budget that I can find to do anything in that regard.


There has been no consideration for developing a long-term strategy for the canelands, an area that is desperately in need of a long-term strategy. There has been no consideration from those opposite in relation to the canelands and where it will eventually go when the cane industry ceases, and it will cease some time probably in the next decade. There is no planning from those opposite in that regard.

The electorate finally got our special school. I had been talking to the minister since before the 2017 election about a special school. That has finally been confirmed and is being delivered in 2022. I thank the minister. Education Queensland is the one that is at the forefront. Education Queensland does a wonderful job in relation to delivering for the fastest growing region in Queensland. When I was first elected there were nine schools. There are now 21 schools. No. 22 is being delivered next year and No. 23 the following year. That is the kind of growth that I am talking about. There is nothing like that anywhere else in Queensland, yet we are left stuck in the slow lane with regard to our development, with regard to developing our exits, with regard to the second M1 and so forth.

The extended TAFE campus for the marine precinct has finally been announced. When I ran the petition last year in 2019 the minister said, 'No, we're not giving you an expanded marine-centric TAFE campus for the marine precinct.' Just before the election was announced the minister snuck into the electorate to announce a marine-centric TAFE campus for the northern Gold Coast. The government saw what we needed. Thank you, Minister. The feds had to get on board. I got a few quotes in the story as well. They tried to do it in secret as an exclusive to the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. I ended up having a few quotes in that story as well.

There is one thing that the member for Logan and I might be able to agree on, and that is weather proofing Albert Hall at the Cedar Creek State School. Around about half the students are from Logan and half of them from my electorate. That will cost \$150,000. Hopefully I will get the member for Logan on board to assist me in that regard.

*(Time expired)*

 **Mr KING** (Kurrumbidgee—ALP) (5.43 pm): Today I am proud to speak to this year's appropriation bills introduced by our Treasurer, the Hon. Cameron Dick. This is my sixth year supporting a strong Labor budget, and what a year it has been! These bills follow the appropriation acts we passed in September and are the next step in our plan to unite and recover across Queensland. I thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer; returning and new ministers; and the hundreds of ministerial and departmental staff who have worked hard to deliver this piece of legislation so quickly after the election. It truly is a massive feat.

For those few detractors who kept peddling mistruths during the campaign that Queensland was the only state that had not delivered a budget, I just want to point out that the only Australian state or territory to hand down a budget before our election was Western Australia and our budget follows a week after Victoria's and two weeks after that of New South Wales.

Thank you again to everyone involved in preparing this budget. We can now give businesses and consumers certainty about our plans and, with that, more confidence to make their own plans heading into 2021.

COVID-19 knocked us all for six this year and its impacts extend to this budget. Just like many of us refinance our homes in tough times or extend our assets or make home improvements which add more value, our government will be targeting our spending to stimulate the economy and reap maximum benefits for Queenslanders through our state's recovery.

It is nothing new to say that the health of Queenslanders remains one of our top priorities. This budget sees the further safeguarding and strengthening of our health system to the tune of \$21.8 billion. This includes the beginning of planning for our innovative new satellite hospitals. These hospitals will give many South-East Queenslanders, including my constituents, more care options closer to home and, as a consequence, free up space in hospital emergency departments.

While we are talking about emergency departments, last financial year saw work start on the \$400 million redevelopment at Caboolture Hospital. While Caboolture Hospital is in the neighbouring Morayfield electorate and a source of great pride for my colleague the Hon. Mark Ryan MP, it is also the closest major hospital for many of my constituents, most notably the growing communities of Burpengary and Narangba. This redevelopment is great news for them. By 2023 the project will deliver a new five-storey clinical services building, 130 new beds, expanded health services and a multistorey car park. There is also more funding in this budget for Redcliffe Hospital, which also services my constituency.

This budget marks the start of our investment in hiring an additional 5,800 nurses, 1,500 new doctors, an extra 475 paramedics and 1,700 new health professionals over the next four years. Some \$100 million over three years will be invested to employ 464 additional wellbeing professionals in Queensland state schools and to trial the placement of GPs in up to 20 schools. In a matter close to my heart, \$171 million has been committed for a Queensland Health palliative care strategy funding package through to 2025-26.

**Mr Harper:** Hear, hear!

**Mr KING:** I take the interjection from the member for Thuringowa on that. Like all Labor budgets, this budget reflects our commitment to quality education in Queensland, with a record over \$14 billion investment on the table, and I have heard many members in this place talk about the education benefits they are getting from this budget. This includes a commitment to employ more than 6,100 teachers and 1,100 teacher aides over the next four years plus a \$1.9 billion infrastructure spend, adding to our pipeline of jobs for tradies and ensuring every Queensland child has access to world-class education facilities.

In my electorate alone, our commitment includes \$700,000 for a new security fence at Petrie State School, and I understand that work will commence on that during these schools holidays, and the first instalment in a whopping \$8.3 million for a new admin block, bringing better disability access to Lawnton State School—something I have been fighting alongside the school community to secure since I became its elected representative in 2017. Lawnton State School is over 50 years old and it really has needed some TLC. I am so pleased to build on our delivery of a new hall with this awesome new funding news.

The roll out of air conditioning and solar for all our state schools continues in this budget. I am sure there are teachers and students out there this week wishing the air conditioning was already done, and luckily in some schools it is. For those still sweltering, hang in there. It will happen over the next school year and a half.

Families in Burpengary on the border of my electorate and the Bancroft electorate will also be pleased to see planning start for a new school in Burpengary East. I want to give a shout-out here to the fabulous work that the team at Burpengary State School does. In fact, its P&C has just taken out the P&C of the Year award for the second year running.

**Mr Whiting** interjected.

**Mr KING:** It is. This budget also gets the ball rolling on a funding program that will deliver \$50,000 for disability access at Narangba State School and \$200,000 for outdoor learning and general upgrades at Jinibara State School—great commitments I was able to make during the election period.

The good news continues. For those who have finished school or are on vocational education journeys, there is more than a billion dollars in the 2020-21 Queensland state budget for training and skills initiatives. We are committed to preparing Queenslanders for the jobs of the future, and this has never been more important than now as we recover from this global pandemic.

As an electrician by trade, I know how important it is to fund a range of pathways to jobs. That is why I am proud to say that we are investing \$21 million to extend free TAFE and free apprenticeships to Queenslanders under 25; over \$32 million over two years for the TAFE Priority Skills Fund; \$25 million over two years for pre-apprenticeship support; \$8 million over two years for the Social Enterprise Jobs Fund; \$5 million over two years for the First Nations Training Strategy; \$5 million in 2020-21 for the Workforce Transition Support Program; \$16½ million for the establishment of Manufacturing Skills Queensland; and \$100 million in TAFE facilities across the state.

Labor has always believed in a strong TAFE system and this budget reinforces that. I have said this before and I will say it again today: in my electorate of Kurwongbah there are infrastructure projects everywhere you look. Thanks to strong investment across the past five Labor budgets, the Lawnton park and ride is almost open; the long awaited Petrie intersection upgrade project tender will soon be awarded; we have delivered safety improvements along Dayboro Road, including at the Vores Road intersection in Whiteside; and we will soon have a new \$41 million Dakabin Station—yay!

In Burpengary work is full steam ahead on the Bruce Highway interchange at New Settlement and Deception Bay roads, and I know my colleague, the member for Bancroft, is as excited as I am about that. This is a project that locals have been waiting a long time to see. I have also said this before, but it is worth putting on the record again: because of the cuts in the Newman LNP government—cuts that we are still recovering from—funding for this highway project was taken out of QTRIP so when federal members in my area describe this project as overdue I could not agree more. It took a state Labor government to finally fund the state component, with further funds included in this budget.

We have also committed to upgrading the Burpengary train station—news that has made my constituents very happy. That is another very old station. I thank the Minister for Transport for helping me to achieve this upgrade for local commuters. I look forward to seeing the planning work start on this project soon. This budget also locks in funding for many of our Works for Queensland commitments and our Unite and Recover Community Stimulus Package. In my area we have scored well. We have new amenities for Narangba Rangers footy club; an upgrade and extension to Ron Thomason Park in Lawnton; and new tennis courts at the Harris Avenue Sports Complex in Narangba.

Further, this budget provides the remainder of funding for new change rooms for the mighty Pine Rivers Bears. I know the club is really looking forward to seeing this project become a reality. I thank the Moreton Bay Regional Council for partnering with us here. These infrastructure projects are creating hundreds of jobs, putting money back into our local economy and helping us to unite and recover for Queensland.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech for incorporation so I ask that the remainder of my speech is incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

*The speech read as follows—*

Jobs.

Speaker, The creation of jobs is one of our most important tasks as a government, and it was great to hear recently that 205,000 jobs lost at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic have come back online since May. That is a remarkable recovery in Queensland. And part of this success must be attributed to our government's investment in helping small business pull through with: \$1 billion in interest free/low interest business loans; payroll tax relief; a Backing Queensland Business Investment Fund to



support businesses that need capital to create jobs; \$400 million in land tax relief; \$196 million for Small Business COVID-19 Adaption Grants, including up to \$10,000 each for 50 small businesses in my electorate of Kurwongbah; \$100 million in electricity bill rebates; And we've introduced a target of 25 per cent of all government purchases to be from Queensland small and medium size businesses from July 1, and a target of 30 per cent by June 2022.

This budget continues our commitment to the sector through a new \$140 million Big Plans for Small Business strategy.

Other initiatives.

The final points I want to touch on today are funding commitments that mean a lot to our communities. In fact Speaker, in some cases this funding might be the difference between life and death. That is: \$12m for new police in line with our 2025 more police personnel by 2025 commitment; \$4 million for new police resources; \$680,000 to begin the rollout of 25 new mobile police beat vans across the state; over \$4 million to continue Project Booyah, an early intervention program for at risk youth; and to expand the RESPECT program into schools; \$5 million for Safe Night Precincts; almost \$1 million for Meals on Wheels; \$152 million for Women and Violence Prevention; more than \$1 billion to tackle housing and homelessness issues; \$18.9 million for Neighbourhood and Community Centres; over \$1.9 billion to the NDIS; over \$1.4 billion for Child Protection; \$36 million over four years to Surf Lifesaving Queensland; and \$858 million for Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, with priorities including: increasing frontline capacity by more than 15 per cent over five years; new fleet equipment; new fire stations in high growth areas.

My wife is a volunteer firey and with bushfire season upon us already, I'm relieved to know that this investment means all of our fireys can protect us with more of the resources they need to do their jobs as safely as possible.

Conclusion.

Speaker, our government has a plan to unite and recover across Queensland. We will continue to protect Queenslanders, partner with business (big and small) to drive investment in our state and we'll fund job creating, economy boosting projects. Across my electorate of Kurwongbah, projects with new or continued funding in this budget are already creating and sustaining thousands of jobs. I look forward to building on this momentum as we farewell the year of the 'rona' and welcome in 2021. While the risks of this virus are still real and we only have to look south for the proof of that we won't take our foot off the pedal when it comes to our economic recovery. And Speaker we absolutely won't compromise when it comes to protecting the health of Queenslanders, especially our most vulnerable. I am proud to be part of a re-elected Palaszczuk Labor government. And I am proud to give my support to another strong Labor budget. Speaker, I commend this bill to the House.



**Hon. MC de BRENNI** (Springwood—ALP) (Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement) (5.52 pm): Leading up to the October state election the Palaszczuk government presented Queenslanders with our clear economic recovery plan. I presented the same plan to the community of Springwood. It was a plan to restore and create jobs, to build more industry and infrastructure, to futureproof our state and to bring manufacturing back to Queensland. On 31 October Queenslanders overwhelmingly endorsed that plan. With our Treasurer handing down the 2020-21 budget we are getting on with the job of delivering that plan. We promised to deliver the budget before Christmas and we delivered.

You will not find a team more focused and determined to create jobs than the members on this side of the House. Queenslanders have placed their trust in this team to lead our state's economic recovery and I know we will not let them down. Queenslanders have placed their trust in us to keep them safe and to keep them in work. This budget locks in those and many other commitments our government made to Queenslanders.

As the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement I can assure Queenslanders that delivering on those commitments continues to be my focus moving forward; like delivering cheaper, cleaner energy to households and businesses across Queensland and by investing in and growing publicly owned generation. That is exactly what our budget delivers for Queenslanders. It is a budget that invests \$500 million to support the development of renewable energy projects across Queensland, with Queenslanders reaping the rewards of owning their clean energy assets through their power account rebates and asset ownership dividends; another \$145 million to unlock three Queensland renewable energy corridors by building transmission networks supporting further investment in new wind, solar and hydro because on this side of the House we know that cheaper, cleaner energy supply underpins our economic plan for a post COVID recovery and renewables will play a central role.

In order to remain at the forefront of renewable hydrogen this Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered another \$10 million through the Hydrogen Industry Development Fund to develop the industry in Queensland. Queenslanders have endorsed our plan for economic recovery that includes cheaper, cleaner energy to help grow our manufacturing and our resources sector which ultimately will deliver jobs. The world is looking to hydrogen to help meet their future energy needs and the Palaszczuk government wants Queenslanders to work in decent, secure jobs supplying it to them in addition to traditional industries like coal and gas. It brings our total investment in the development of the industry to \$25 million.

In what can only be described as perfect synergy with our commitment to skills and training, the Palaszczuk government, through this budget, will deliver \$20 million for the Queensland Apprenticeships Centre in renewable hydrogen at Beenleigh; over \$10 million to the Hydrogen and

Renewable Energy training facility at Bohle TAFE in Townsville; \$2 million in upgrades to training facilities at Gladstone State High School to prepare those students for future jobs in the hydrogen industry; and \$17 million for a renewable energy training facility. That is a \$30 million commitment that ensures that Queenslanders have the skills and training ready to meet demand as it grows.

Hydrogen will help power the world's future and I want to make sure, like coal and gas, Queenslanders get those jobs supplying it. At this point though, I must note my disappointment that those opposite, including the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow minister for my portfolio, the member for Condamine, made absolutely no mention of their plans to deliver affordable energy for Queenslanders. Disappointed, but none of us were surprised. They did not utter the phrase 'renewable energy' once either. There was no mention of a plan to ensure Queensland workers are skilled for our future as a hydrogen producer, which is why I think we all find it incredibly difficult to believe the Leader of the Opposition when he says it will be different this time in the LNP under his leadership.

Just like his old colleague Campbell Newman, in his budget reply speech he was arrogantly telling Queenslanders that somehow they did not know what they were doing when they voted for Labor and our Premier. The Leader of the Opposition neglected to talk about Queensland's world recognised health response in his budget reply. He has forgotten that Queenslanders vehemently rejected their reckless COVID-19 approach that put lives at risk.

The Leader of the Opposition says he wants the best for Queensland, but Queenslanders have not forgotten that power prices rose 43 per cent when the Leader of the Opposition was sitting at the cabinet table. They have not forgotten that the LNP voted against the Buy Queensland approach that backs Queensland businesses. They have not forgotten that the LNP put their developer mates before Queensland tradies. On this side of the House we will never forget that Queenslanders come first. This budget proves that.

I have had the remainder of my contribution reviewed and approved for incorporation and as such I ask that the remainder of my contribution is incorporated into *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

In the Public Works and Procurement space, our Government's Buy Queensland policy has never been more critical. We are supporting suppliers and industry through this challenging time by using our significant investment in goods and services to support as many local jobs and businesses as possible. In fact, never before in Queensland's history has the state government invested so much into directly supporting local businesses and jobs. This year, a record \$10.4 billion procurement investment has supported 39,000 local small and medium businesses. And it is because of our Buy Queensland strategy that local firm Cairns Steel is currently carrying out the roof strengthening works on the Cairns Convention Centre redevelopment. And because of Buy Queensland it is local workers and apprentices installing state-of-the-art air conditioning as we speak. Working in safe, secure, well-paying jobs, thanks to this Palaszczuk government. Mr Speaker, we also continue to rebuild QBuild. In the New Year, we welcome another cohort of 20 apprentices to the QBuild family. The search is already on for the next 40 Queenslanders to join their ranks: carpenters, plumbers, refrigeration mechanics and electricians. With 50 regional offices and depots from Thursday Island to Robina, help is never too far away. Having these sites back online, fully functional, and with skilled Queenslanders on hand, means we can respond more quickly and efficiently, especially as the summer storms roll in.

I am particularly proud of what this budget delivers for the community I represent in Springwood, and I look forward to working as part of this Palaszczuk Labor government to deliver a host of road, school and health infrastructure.

Our economic plan—

Roads

Continues the full M1 expansion & busway to Loganholme, which has already supported more than 700 jobs; four-laning Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road; delivers the second M1 South of the Logan River to the Gold Coast.

Education

In the district in which I live our budget will deliver 990 new teachers and 154 teacher aides. It also delivers: a new oval and amenities for Mount Cotton State School; an upgraded oval for Springwood Road State School; a new hall for Rochedale State High School; it builds on the massive investment this year in new classrooms, air conditioning and solar panels.

Health


Our community will continue to receive world leading health care with new and advanced facilities: a new satellite hospital for the Southern Redlands—a national first; a new 32-bed ward and 6-bed ICU for the Redland Hospital expansion, as part of delivering a full expansion; Logan hospital expansion creating 206 additional beds in the largest hospital expansion in Queensland; and 5,800 new nurses and midwives and 1,500 more doctors across our State.

Emergency Services

And I am pleased to advise our neighbourhood that we will be delivering bolstered emergency support in our community with: a new fire station for Mount Cotton; 356 new fire fighters and 2,025 new police officers across our State; and 475 paramedics.

I am proud of this result for my neighbours, friends and family that call Springwood home, but it is not one I can take all the credit for. I acknowledge and pay tribute to my team of volunteers who delivered a Labor government that is focused on putting Queenslanders first: Tony Walsh; Neil Bradley; Anne and Wally Scanlon; Heather Carr; Jan Riordan; Phil Tomkinson; Jim Sykes; Raaidyn Arko; Inari Thiel; Corey Dewhurst; my friends in my trade union family; all of my staff who gave up their evenings and weekends; and many, many more. There were so many more that I have not named, but it was because of all of them that our community will benefit, our local kids will have better schools, our sick better hospitals and our local businesses the conditions to grow and employ. Our community was unwavering in their support for Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk's economic recovery plan, and a Labor government. We made sure that at the height of the pandemic in Queensland, the more vulnerable members of our community had access to the range of government support measures. We made sure they had groceries, or just a listening ear at a very lonely time. And I can't tell you how many pensioners, single parents and low-income households told me that our electricity rebates alleviated some of the financial strain of COVID-19. As economies around the world are taking a hit, the Palaszczuk government has been delivering our plan to support Queensland households, and keep Queenslanders safe and keep them in work.

I commend the Appropriation Bills to the House.

 **Ms LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (5.57 pm): I rise to contribute to the cognate debate on the appropriation bills. I wish to thank my electorate for their support at the last election and for the opportunity to represent them for the forthcoming term. I am proud to represent such a large and diverse electorate. I commend the Leader of the Opposition, David Crisafulli, and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, David Janetzki, for their budget reply speeches in this House. They have both brought a vision to this House that is focused on Queenslanders.

Queensland was the last state in the nation to deliver a budget in 2020, proving once again that Labor has no economic ambition and no plan. Without a budget Labor has been flying blind through the biggest economic crisis in almost a century. Before COVID Queensland had the highest unemployment rate, the highest number of bankruptcies and the lowest business confidence because Labor cannot manage the economy.

Finally, after 530 days, we have the budget that Queenslanders would have liked to have seen before the state election. The common question that I received in the lead-up to and during the election campaign was, 'How does this Labor government get away with not having a budget?' I was asked, 'Surely there must be some constitutional mechanism to ensure the state government brings forward a budget.' Sadly, there is not because this government uses the parliament as its plaything. Finally we have a budget for this state. It is not a good budget, but at least we have a budget.

Despite promising only \$4 billion in additional borrowings at the state election, debt has now blown out to \$28 billion across the next four years. Before the election Labor told Queenslanders that debt would go to \$106 billion. Just four weeks after the election it has been revealed that it will reach almost \$130 billion. That is a sevenfold increase in borrowings from what Labor promised just four weeks ago. It is another Labor broken promise.

I wish to turn to matters in my portfolio and concerns of the local government sector. Earlier this year, in March, we had the local government elections. Unfortunately, during those elections the performance of the Electoral Commission was lacking. There was a postal vote fail as many people were unable to register for their postal vote applications because the system crashed. People did not get their phone vote so we had a phone vote fail. On the all-important night of the election we had an election results fail. Unfortunately, the committee report conducted by the parliamentary legal affairs and community safety committee into those fails will not be debated in this House because of the state election.

I wish to thank the councils, the Regional Organisation of Councils and the Local Government Association of Queensland for their advocacy in the lead-up to and during the election campaign. Their desire to improve the outcomes for their communities and the local government sector is commendable. However, the local government sector has some disappointments with this budget. It is disappointing that the advocacy efforts of those groups have not been rewarded more strongly in this budget.

Every 80 minutes a water pipe bursts in rural and regional Queensland. There is no funding to address the rural water and wastewater infrastructure cliff that is upon local governments across this state. This matter has to be addressed because if local governments cannot maintain the quality of drinking water we will have a health crisis in many communities.

The Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme has not had an allocation increase since 2014. The Auditor General's Report No. 4 of 2017-18 titled *Integrated transport planning* identifies an estimated \$9 billion renewal backlog for the road network over the coming years. When one looks at this Labor government's lack of investment in inland roads, one can understand why those roads are in the state that they are in and why there are more deaths on outback roads than in any other region. On behalf of the local government sector and rural and regional communities, I will continue to advocate

to this government for more investment in our rural and regional roads. Further, I note there has been no commitment to reinstate the Western Roads Upgrade Program in this budget. This is an underwhelming budget when it comes to roads across my electorate.

Whilst I am speaking about roads it is important that I make mention of the second Bruce. That road will pass through Mungindi, Thallon, St George, Surat, Roma and Injune in my electorate. I note that the government intends to work in partnership with the Commonwealth to take trucks off the highway and onto the second Bruce inland freight route. That is going to be interesting as, during the election campaign, Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack said—

The Australian government has a strong \$10 billion commitment to the existing Bruce Highway—money which is already allocated to several upgrades and projects.

Making elections commitments is fine, but when you promise to spend money already allocated to existing projects, you need to be transparent about the communities from which you intend on stripping funding.

There is no 80 percent commitment from the Commonwealth for the second Bruce.

Queensland Trucking Association Chief Executive Gary Mahon said he expected 'probably more in the order of \$2 billion' would be needed to bring the corridor up to the required quality. That is in contrast to the state Labor government's election promise of \$200 million and most of that funding is in the forward estimates beyond 2023-24. This government will have a lot of work to do with the local councils along the proposed route, as there are town bypasses that are owned by the councils. Either the number of road trains passing schools and through town CBDs will increase or the state government will have to purchase the bypasses from the councils or pay road-user charges to the councils.

I now turn to some other issues in my electorate. At the last state election the Premier promised better health services, but she has delivered a system in crisis and, sadly, we see that at the Dalby Hospital. From what I am hearing from constituents, the staff are not being supported to deliver better health services. I have been advised that constituents are discharged at midnight from the Dalby Hospital. One was told to drive for an hour to get home, having been admitted earlier in the day with severe pain. One constituent had no car in which to drive home, but they insisted that he be discharged at midnight. Such patients end up booking into motels at one o'clock in the morning at their own expense. I ask: does the government have a staff shortage or a bed shortage at the Dalby Hospital? Surely the staff can be better supported by this government. Regional maternity services are not even mentioned in the budget, showing that this government does not care about the regions.

Queenslanders deserve a world-class public health system, no matter where they live. That is why I was started the call for a CT scanner in Charleville. Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that you have one in Mareeba. A partnership can be developed with Southern Queensland Rural Health to deliver a CT training hub in Charleville, which would benefit many other communities across Queensland. I call on the government to assist with the funding for the business case to develop the service and training model. It might be of interest to the House to know that it can cost up to \$100,000 per month to transfer patients by air from places such as Charleville and Augathella to other centres for head and abdominal CT scans. That is not sustainable in the long term. Charleville is outside the 200 kilometre radius for ambulance transfer, meaning that all CT cases are transferred by air. However, it has come to my attention that air transfer is not always available and very unwell patients have made the dangerous trip by car, risking their lives.

COVID has taken the spotlight off the drought. I for one will shine that light back on the drought, which should be a priority in this budget. Sadly it is not. The drought has intensified across my electorate. There are households out of water and there are property owners out of water. Some property owners are halving their stock numbers and many are returning to supplementary feeding. After this week's heatwave many water supplies will be absolutely decimated and we will be back to a similar level of drought severity as this time last year. Many people are incredibly fearful of dry storms and bushfires burning out what little feed is left.

I say to the government that this is not the time to be cutting the budget for the department of agriculture. It is not the time to be proposing cutbacks to drought assistance, such as those that this Labor government has planned for freight and fodder subsidies. Coupled with the departmental budget cuts of nine staff, this Labor government has cut 53 staff over five years from the department of agriculture. It is just cuts, cuts, cuts all the time when it comes to this government and agriculture.

There are real challenge across South-West Queensland when it comes to housing. The issue of the lack of housing is raised regularly by local governments, employers and real estate agents. Housing for local government employees is needed, housing for small business staff is needed and housing for professional staff is needed. In some of the more remote communities of this state population growth is being held back by the lack of housing.

In Quilpie, the long day care service found it extremely difficult to find accommodation for their staff. Without staff we would have no child care service in the community of Quilpie. People cannot drive for two hours to Charleville to take their kids to the next available service. That is just not practical. In remote communities it is hard enough to find the appropriately qualified staff and attract them to jobs. If communities do not have sufficient housing they are unable to buck the population drift or keep their essential services operating. This government needs to look very seriously at investing in rural and regional communities to increase the housing stock. In my view, this budget does not adequately address that issue.


In the time I have remaining I wish to raise an issue about the state election that I think should be of interest to all members. Some members were elected to this House on very close margins. I spent a lot of time scrutineering in my electorate and there is a matter that needs to be raised. It is not reported publicly that 566 postal ballots were rejected in the Warrego electorate. Those rejected postal ballots are not recorded in the informal count.

**Mrs D'ATH:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order on relevance.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): There is no point of order.

**Ms LEAHY:** In my electorate, polling booths were closed with no notice because of problems with getting staff. There is a budget concern in relation to the last election, particularly in my electorate. In this election there were more rejected postal ballots—566—than informal ballots—521. Some of these postal votes were rejected for the seal not being torn off the declaration envelope, even though the ballot was in the declaration envelope and the secrecy of the ballot could be maintained. The lack of reporting by the Electoral Commission of these rejected postal ballots is of great concern. I am sure it would concern the 566 people who do not know that their vote would not count. It is not transparent to simply reject these postal ballots without reporting this information publicly. They should be reported, just as the informal ballots are done.

Democracy is enhanced by transparency. At the present time, there are 566 voters who have been denied their say and this has been kept secret. This is not acceptable. Without reporting the rejected ballots there can be no mechanism by which to resolve the problem or even benchmark education campaigns to help reduce the number of rejected postal ballots and enhance democracy. I say to every member of this House: the same thing has happened in your electorate. The secrecy around rejection should be of concern to you all.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Minister for Health and Ambulance Services) (6.10 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the appropriation bills introduced by the honourable the Treasurer on Tuesday of this week. At the outset I commend the Treasurer, Queensland Treasury and all the departments and ministers on the tremendous work they have put in to delivering the budget for the people of Queensland so quickly after the 2020 election. This was a promise we made before the election and this week we deliver on that promise. This election saw the people of Queensland put their faith in the Palaszczuk government and the people of Redcliffe put their faith in me as their representative for another four years.

The year 2020 has been a year like no other. The presence of COVID-19 has meant that we have all had to adapt to new ways of life and work. I believe that Queensland and Queenslanders have done a tremendous job, but this was no accident. It is not luck; it is leadership. Our success in Queensland has been by design. It has only been possible because we have a strong health system in Queensland and the best people in Australia giving advice and recommendations to government on how to handle COVID-19. This has been led by our Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young. I know that all members—at least government members—will join me in thanking her and her team for the marvellous work they have done keeping Queenslanders safe. Every day I had someone in my community coming up to me and saying, 'Please say thank you to Dr Young and please say thank you to the Premier for keeping us safe.'

It is our collective actions which have enabled our collective achievements. Locally, we went to the election with a positive agenda for our community. I am proud to have the privilege of delivering that agenda over the next four years. This includes over \$19 million in this year's budget for ongoing redevelopment works at our mighty Redcliffe Hospital. I am proud of our Redcliffe Hospital as the member for Redcliffe, and I am even more proud of the hospital as Queensland's new Minister for Health and Ambulance Services. I am looking forward to attending the Redcliffe Hospital this Saturday to catch up with the staff and also to check out the new MRI machine. Redcliffe residents would have seen before the election that I posted a time lapse video of the new MRI machine being installed. I am very excited to hear that it is already fully operational, having scanned the first patient on 17 November 2020.

Under the Palaszczuk government's state budget, we will also see more than \$3.5 million invested in our local Redcliffe schools for refurbishments, maintenance works and enhancements to outdoor learning and play equipment. I am passionate about education and I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government is continuing to invest in our schools right across Queensland. The announcement to extend our free TAFE and apprenticeships to up-to-25-year-olds is very exciting. It is such an important time to be getting young people into a trade when so many who had left school last year have found themselves unemployed because of COVID. A trade is as valuable as a university degree, in my view, and it is wonderful that this opportunity will be given to these people thanks to the Palaszczuk government.

As promised in the election, we are supporting our frontline police with additional resources to our local policing district including a mobile police beat which the people of Redcliffe will see out and about soon. We are also investing in sporting infrastructure, ensuring our community can stay healthy and we can attract major sporting competitions to our community. Not least is the \$2 million for the lights at the Dolphins Stadium, Redcliffe, which will strengthen our NRL bid even more. I am looking forward to continuing to work with all ministers to deliver on our election commitments over this term of parliament on behalf of the people of Redcliffe.

As Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, let me say that the budget delivered by the Treasurer on Tuesday is a clear and emphatic reaffirmation of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to deliver quality health services to the people of Queensland. The record \$21.8 billion allocated to the provision of health and ambulance services includes an operating budget for Queensland Health of \$20.199 billion. This represents an increase of 9.5 per cent on the budget allocation to health in 2019-20. The investment made in health says a lot about the government's priorities and everything about its values. This year's record allocation acknowledges the primacy of health and health services in our economic recovery plan.

A strong ongoing health response to COVID is critical to our economic recovery. It also reflects our government's recognition that access to affordable and readily available health care is a key to a strong and healthy society. The delivery of quality health care, irrespective of personal background and individual circumstances, serves not only the clinical imperative of our sense of social responsibility but also the moral tenets of our aspiration as a civil society. This commitment to those values is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the health capital budget, which has doubled this year to \$1.625 billion. That means new hospitals and the expansion and refurbishment of existing hospitals, to ensure Queenslanders have access to a standard of care amongst the best in the world.

If the investment in health is a statement about our values, it is worth considering what the LNP's record says about what they think is important. In the member for Broadwater's budget reply, a speech he stated would serve as a declaration of the values and priorities for his opposition team, there was only one reference to health, when he said—

Government must ensure that Queenslanders have access to the best possible health care ...

That is it. So much for vision! The Palaszczuk government's record investment in our health capital program stands in stark contrast with the performance of the LNP when they last sat on this side of the House. In their entire term, they did not build or plan to build a single hospital.

This budget, framed in the shadow of COVID-19, builds upon the Palaszczuk government's formidable record in delivering quality health care to the Queensland people, no matter where they live in our great state. The resilience and capability of our health system was evident in the strength and conviction of our health response to the unforeseen arrival of the COVID pandemic. That response, led so capably by the Chief Health Officer, was a testament to the extraordinary diligence and professionalism of our frontline health staff who, particularly in those early uncertain months, put themselves in harm's way in the service of their fellow Queenslanders. We will always back our frontline health staff, a pledge that finds clear expression in this budget.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation and, as such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

Having restored the health workforce after coming to government in 2015, this budget continues to fortify the front line in the face of increasing demand by employing over 2,800 additional health staff. I referred earlier to our record capital budget, which includes \$265 million for the construction of an additional seven satellite hospitals in South-east Queensland to alleviate some of the demand pressures on our tertiary facilities by offering services in areas such as chemotherapy, dialysis and prenatal care.

This year's budget will also see major upgrades and expansions of the Gold Coast University Hospital, Ipswich Hospital, Proserpine Hospital, Cairns Hospital, Townsville University Hospital, Logan Hospital, Caboolture Hospital and Redland Hospital.

Each of these projects will deliver local construction jobs in each of these communities, as well as continuing operational jobs once they are complete.


This year's budget will see investment to expand renal dialysis across regional, rural and remote areas of the state. This will mean more treatment spaces for renal dialysis patients across new and expanded services. We will inject \$33.5 million to establish 41 additional renal dialysis treatment spaces across regional, rural and remote areas of Queensland. This means care closer to home for even more patients. Patients requiring renal dialysis often spend hours a week receiving lifesaving treatment. This will make a real difference to those people who spend so much time travelling for care, meaning less time on the road and more time with their family and friends. It will also divert some demand from nearby major hospitals.

In this year's budget we are investing an additional \$171 million in palliative care funding to ensure Queenslanders get the highest quality care at the end of their lives. Care at the end of life is one of the most important responsibilities a government could have. Demand for palliative care continues to increase with our population aging. This is the single biggest injection in palliative care funding in Queensland's history. We will invest \$102.5 million to employ more frontline palliative care staff and \$54.8 million for community based service providers to deliver home based hospice care. This means more Queenslanders will be able to have their wish of spending their last days at home.

The funding will also expand after-hours services run by our public hospitals and improve digital services and telehealth support for staff, patients and their families. This budget also backs our hard-working paramedics, delivering a record budget of \$933.9 million which represents an increase of 5.4% on the 2019-20 allocated budget, and 48% since we came to office. There is an axiom in politics that says if you want to know what a government stands for, look at its budget.

The year 2020 has been one of the most challenging and difficult years in our history, but fortunately for Queenslanders, they had a government that has been up to the task. This year's budget reaffirms in the most emphatic terms the clear priority of health care for the Palaszczuk government. I look forward to working with my department and our network of hospital and health services as we continue to deliver quality health care to all Queenslanders in all parts of our state.

I commend the appropriation bills to the House.

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (6.18 pm): This is a budget where years of financial mismanagement, waste and excess have finally come home to roost. Because of Labor's economic mismanagement, this Labor state government has not been able to do more to support Queensland families and Queensland businesses. Long before COVID came along, Labor's reckless spending had resulted in a debt of more than \$90 billion. The Queensland economy was stagnating, with high unemployment, declining state revenues and business confidence through the floor—all before COVID. I suppose it comes as no surprise in light of this that, rather than front up and tell Queenslanders the truth, Labor chose to mislead by promising \$2 billion in additional borrowings before the election but delivering a budget that will see debt increased by seven times that amount, or \$28 billion.

It has to be said that a 700 per cent increase in just four weeks is a pretty solid effort. Let us be clear that this is not a massive investment in new infrastructure. Most of the government's infrastructure spend will not even start this financial year. Labor have said that revenue is collapsing and they need to borrow to pay for deficits and to protect jobs, but that simply does not wash. Queensland's unemployment rate is the worst in mainland Australia and despite racking up the biggest debt in Queensland history, unemployment is still forecast to be the worst in the nation in four years time at 6.5 per cent.

We have heard a defence mounted by the Treasurer and others that Queensland's debt is not going to be as high as the debt in New South Wales or Victoria, but that simply does not stack up either. Queensland's economy is considerably smaller than that of both New South Wales and Victoria and both are investing considerably more in infrastructure spending than this budget delivers for Queensland. In fact, in New South Wales that infrastructure spend is nearly twice as much as what is budgeted for in Queensland over the forward estimates.

It has been suggested that Labor did not mislead Queenslanders when they said they would increase debt by \$4 billion because they need to underwrite operating deficits and that was in addition to the \$4 billion figure. If we take this at face value, which I think is tenuous at best, it is instructive to observe that revenue is forecast to fall by \$12.3 billion over the next four years. So we arrive at a figure of approximately \$16.3 billion if we accept all of Labor's arguments and assumptions and yet debt is going to increase by another \$11.7 billion on top of this.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** They do not like to hear it. The answer is simple. Labor knew what the budget situation was prior to the election in October and they knew the inconvenient truth that the debt was going to hit \$130 billion.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Order! Members to my right, please cease all cross-chamber interjections.

**Mr MICKELBERG:** They deliberately deceived the Queensland public and they hid the true state of affairs for their own political benefit. It is a broken promise plain and simple and the Queensland people will see it for that.

Small business is the engine room of the Queensland economy and they are the backbone of our communities right across Queensland. The Treasurer stated in his budget speech that Queensland small businesses 'bore the brunt of the COVID-19 downturn' and yet rather than providing any new support to small and medium businesses across the state, the Treasurer has decided to ignore them. As the CCIQ said, this is a state budget that 'fails to deliver the immediate measures needed to protect business ahead of the looming economic cliff'. Much of the information contained in the Queensland government's Budget Highlights under the heading 'Backing business' reads like a history book. Struggling small businesses do not want to read about funding that has previously been expended. They need real support now and they need real investment now.

Despite the clear calls from CCIQ and businesses across the state, the Treasurer and the Minister for Small Business have both been silent on their requests for a waiver of the payroll tax deferred under their COVID-19 provisions. The situation whereby accrued payroll tax liabilities will come due at the same time as payroll tax recommences and the JobKeeper stimulus is due to wind down, is hardly a recipe for business confidence or creating more jobs.

Perhaps more concerning is the fact that the Treasurer has not made any effort to make structural reform to the Queensland economy or to tackle the big issues that are holding back business from employing more Queenslanders. At 15.5 per cent, Queensland has the worst youth unemployment rate in the nation. We have heard a senior Labor minister say that the youth unemployment crisis is a problem that cannot be solved. It is a disgrace and it is not good enough. Some 70,000 young Queenslanders between the ages of 15 and 24 are in the unemployment queue today. Labor is wasting the potential of Queensland's young people.

We have heard much about the \$1 billion that this government is supposedly going to spend on training. Unfortunately, this government's record on training is less than stellar. When it comes to training and vocational education, Labor are all talk and no action. Labor's glossy brochures cannot hide the fact that apprenticeship and traineeship commencements and completions have fallen off a cliff on its watch. Course completions between December 2014 and March 2020 have declined by nearly one-third—32.7 per cent. Labor's training failure is one reason Queensland has suffered the highest unemployment rate in the country under the Palaszczuk government.

I acknowledge that there is investment with an expansion of the existing free apprenticeships for under-21s program. It is encouraging that the government has announced that it is now extending this program to Queenslanders under 25. While this is a positive step forward, it falls short of the training opportunities that Queenslanders need to improve their employment opportunities and given Labor's record on training it is reasonable to be sceptical about their ability to deliver.

I will shift now to how this budget fails my electorate. During the recent election I was pleased to see Labor's election commitment to build new halls at both Buderim Mountain State School and Chancellor State College's secondary campus, particularly when Labor could not bring themselves to make a single local election commitment in Buderim in the 2017 election—not a single dollar. As a consequence, one of the most disappointing aspects of this budget is that not more than a month after their much hyped announcement Labor could not even bring themselves to fund their own election commitment to build new school halls for schools in my electorate. This omission is even more galling when considered in light of the \$3.2 million in funding for extensions to an existing multipurpose hall at Caloundra State School. It begs the question as to why a school that has an existing hall servicing 560 students has received funding ahead of two schools in my electorate that do not have any school hall and have a combined student population of 3,500 students.

Given the Buderim Mountain State School hall has been shovel ready for many months, the only conclusion that I can arrive at is the fact that these funding decisions have been made through the lens of Labor's political interests. It is a little too coincidental that an extension to an existing hall in one of Labor's target seats has been funded while far more compelling projects at schools that have no hall have been ignored. I call on the Labor government to make funding decisions on the basis of student need and not to further their own political objectives.

While speaking about my local state high schools, I would also like to draw attention to an omission of any funding to provide school based police officers for Chancellor State College and Mountain Creek State High School. These are important commitments and something I have campaigned for since being elected in 2017. I believe school based police officers are an important tool



to proactively and positively engage with at-risk youth. My local teachers, students, parents, principals and local police have all told me of their support for a full-time school based police officer to service the more than 5,700 students who attend Chancellor State College and Mountain Creek State High School. It is time for Labor to listen to our community's voice and deliver a school based police officer.

This budget reserves perhaps its biggest slap in the face for parents and students attending Chancellor State College's primary campus. For years I have called on the Labor state government and the Sunshine Coast Council to work together to fix the longstanding issue of Scholars Drive. Scholars Drive is a disaster waiting to happen. What should be a 10-minute round trip to pick up and drop off students at Chancellor State College's primary campus is often a 45-minute excursion, and a dangerous one at that. It is an issue that was raised in parliament as far back as 2006. That is why I have worked collaboratively with Councillor Christian Dickson to navigate a path to solving this issue.

To that end, on 1 June this year I submitted a detailed School Transport Infrastructure Program funding application which sought funding from the state government of a shade under \$485,000 to deliver, in partnership with the Sunshine Coast Council, an alternative exit to Scholars Drive which would be known as the Jade Link. It was also to fund improvements to facilitate pedestrian access around Chancellor State College's primary campus. I table that application for the information of my community and for the attention of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

*Tabled paper:* Queensland Transport, School Transport Infrastructure Program (STIP) Ideas Application form made by the member for Buderim, Mr Brent Mickelberg MP [\[371\]](#)

After more than five months I am still waiting for a response to this application.

In fact, rather than listen to the community and deliver the improvements that the Sippy Downs community has been asking for, this Labor government has instead decided to spend \$90,000 building bike racks at the Chancellor State College's primary campus under the exact same School Transport Infrastructure Program. Do not get me wrong: bike racks are nice, but I am pretty confident that if we surveyed parents, students and teachers at Chancellor State College's primary campus the overwhelming request would be to fix Scholars Drive rather than spend \$90,000 on bike racks. I implore the minister to listen to the voice of the Sippy Downs community and fix Scholars Drive. Unlike some of his colleagues, Minister Bailey has shown in the past that he is prepared to listen. So this is the perfect opportunity to show the people of Sippy Downs, and indeed the rest of Queensland, that politics can be put aside when the safety of our community is at stake.

On that note, I would like to acknowledge that funding in the budget for upgrades in the area known as the Buderim-Mooloolah interchange, or what locals might identify as the intersections and roundabouts between Mooloolaba Road, Wisers Road and Sugar Road. The amount of \$10 million is committed in the budget to upgrade this stretch of road over the next three years. There is also additional funding in the budget to improve—

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.




**Mr MICKELBERG:** In the brief time I have left, I would like to address two key projects that constrain the Sunshine Coast's future. The first is Labor's failure to get on with the job of fixing the Mooloolah River interchange on the Sunshine Motorway. This is a critical upgrade that will save lives and remove a bottleneck which chokes traffic every single day. Residents and tourists alike are met daily with long lines of traffic backing up for kilometres due to the poor design of the interchange. Worst still, all too frequently our local emergency services personnel have to respond to serious motor vehicle accidents—sometimes fatal.

In 2017, Building Queensland described the area as 'congested and lacking capacity to accommodate forecast travel demand'. The business case has been delayed countless times. After being told it would be finished by the end of this year, it looks from the budget papers that we will still be waiting after the next budget is handed down. The time for analysis has long past. Labor need to finalise the business case now and get on with building the Mooloolah River interchange. I could speak for much longer on that project, but the final project I will address is the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line.

What can I say other than it looks like Labor's 'go slow' continues. After promising to start construction on these critical rail upgrades in 2009 when the Premier was sitting around the cabinet table, the Sunshine Coast is still waiting for works to commence. The new member for Nicklin came in here last night trying to talk a big game about delivering for his electorate and he did not mention rail duplication once. He did not mention it in his maiden speech either. Given his electorate stands to

benefit more than any other electorate in the state, you would think he would want to talk about it at least once. I am sure that, being the fearless advocate that he is, he will be pushing the Minister for Transport and Main Roads to stop talking and to start building. I look forward to seeing it.

I should forgive him given that he only moved into the Nicklin electorate in September. The people of Nicklin deserve better. Queenslanders deserve better than what is in this budget. This budget failed small business. It failed the Sunshine Coast. It failed the more than 214,000 Queenslanders sitting in unemployment queues. Worst of all, with their \$28 billion deception, this budget confirms that Labor will always put their interests ahead of the people of Queensland.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (7.32 pm): It is an honour to be elected for the fifth term by the good people of the Cleveland district, the seat of Oodgeroo, and I thank them again for their strong support. It is also a privilege today to deliver my 12th speech on a budget. I want to start by commending the Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, and the LNP federal government team for their strong and swift response to the coronavirus international threat. That response was, firstly, in the form of the national cabinet framework that coordinated our nation's response—Queensland benefited from that; and the economic response that kept industries and small businesses afloat. The national accounts confirm this week that Australia's economic recovery is well underway. Again, Queensland as a state benefited.

Then there was the jobs response. The JobKeeper program has been an economic lifeline to millions of Australian workers and hundreds of thousands of small businesses—many still doing it tough though—but it saved thousands of Queensland jobs. Queensland again benefited. Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the LNP government have saved lives and livelihoods.

As has been pointed out in this budget, this budget borrows seven times more than what Labor promised leading up to the election—a figure of \$28 billion—taking the total debt to a record \$130 billion. Little of the borrowings is invested in job-creating infrastructure, and the unemployment is still forecast to be the worst in the nation in four years time.

A question can be asked: what could be done better in the Cleveland area and the Redlands Coast to grow jobs and the economy with some of the \$28 billion borrowed? The first thing is that we could really use our own regional action plan. The Redlands, sadly, still after many years is lumped in with Brisbane, so we have the Brisbane and Redlands RAP. Surely it is not too hard to create a Redlands Coast RAP for the budget to increase the visibility of the Redlands coast figures as happens in other regions.

In terms of health services and the Redland Hospital, what could some of the extra \$28 billion do? Redland Hospital has been under-resourced for decades. In the last term, the government supported two small projects worth less than the \$2 million—a maternity water birthing suite and a small investment in ED maintenance. They were nice projects but not the needed upgrade. It took the government five years just to repeat the masterplan already conducted for the hospital by the LNP government. That was done in 2012 and completed by 2014. It took five years just to repeat the masterplan.

There has been no ICU for the last six years, despite my calls for that to happen in this place and outside. The Redlands community was left unprepared for the COVID outbreak—without an ICU and without a single ICU bed. The LNP campaign—which included federal member Andrew Laming's \$30 million LNP catalytic commitment—and community pressure has embarrassed the government finally to act and to match the LNP's commitment by announcing an ICU, more beds and a car park. I call on the government to pick up the pace and fast-track their delivery.

In terms of palliative care service, we need to see an increase in that service at the Redland Hospital to a 10-bed unit and an additional commitment to in-home care through some of the \$171 million palliative care funding that is in the budget. We need to build on the palliative care service that I was proud to deliver as part of an LNP government from 2012 to 2014. We need to stop the ambulance ramping. We need to work on the fact that the ED waiting times have blown out again. The government spend over the last six years has not kept pace with the ED demand in our region. Redlanders are waiting longer than they should.

The government's handling of health services in the Redlands is typified by the satellite hospital debacle. The Treasurer in his budget—on page 11 of the Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3—states that the satellite hospital will be built in Cleveland. It is called the Cleveland Satellite Hospital. The Brisbane and Redlands Regional Action Plan on pages 2 and 3, a second document, confirms this budget paper announcement—that it is Cleveland. The health minister then in question time on Thursday tried to downplay this budget stuff-up, twice muffing it up trying to say it is just in the RAP but omitting the reference in the budget paper proper—Budget Paper No. 3.

It is also interesting that in the hard copy of the RAP, the Cleveland satellite hospital is referred to as item No. 36, but there is no No. 36 on the diagram. There is every item from Nos 1 to 35 on the map but just not this one. Why is that? Is it just the government's incompetence with health that we have grown used to in the Redlands or is it something more than that?

In the Treasurer's budget, the satellite hospital was or is earmarked for Cleveland. Contrast that with the former health minister, the new health minister and local Labor MPs who all said it should go to Redland Bay. You cannot put one satellite hospital in two different towns. It is like promising a hospital for Cairns and delivering it in Townsville and then saying, 'Oh, well, it went to somewhere in North Queensland—nothing to look at here.'

Why are there conflicting views between government MPs? Is it because the Cleveland satellite hospital, as it is described in the budget, was planned for Cleveland first but moved to Redland Bay in a last-minute panic decision to try to save the member for Redlands at the election? If it is true that the government moved the satellite hospital from Cleveland to Redland Bay to save their MP, then the people of Cleveland and Redlands coast would find this political interference in the provision of health services completely unacceptable. The minister needs to come clean and answer these questions: was the satellite hospital originally earmarked for Cleveland and, if so, why move it to Redland Bay?

In terms of education and training, some of that \$28 billion could mean more investment in schools infrastructure. Cleveland State High School, for example, continues to grow well past 2,000 students and needs more investment, and a second campus would be a possible future solution; for example, using the old DPI site in Ormiston. We do welcome the investment in the budget. In terms of the Redland District Special School, we welcome the commitment to additional classrooms for a wonderful school that services all of the Redlands coast in our region. We committed \$1 million to upgrade and refurbish the old and tired hall at the Wellington Point State High School, and I ask the education minister to seriously consider this priority need for the Wellington Point State High School.

The Ormiston State School is another example. I also ask the minister to replace the two demountable STEM classrooms that she recently had removed from the school. Girls and boys deserve the full access they had until the program was cut by the removal of the classrooms, so I encourage the minister to look at it again and replace the removed demountables with permanent buildings so that STEM can thrive. The investment to replace the existing amenities block at Dunwich State School is welcome, but more could be done. In terms of air-conditioning, I look forward to the LNP's air-conditioning plan for all state schools to be fast-tracked and rolled out throughout my electorate.

In terms of TAFE and training, we welcomed the investment in TAFE at Alexandra Hills. In 2012 and 2014 the LNP government invested in a struggling Alexandra Hills TAFE, which we inherited, and passed it on in good shape.

In terms of transport and roads infrastructure, with some of the \$28 billion of extra borrowings we could go back and look at the Eastern Busway—as the LNP committed to do with a \$5 million study—to get the full busway back on track. This will be important as we look at potentially having the Olympics in South-East Queensland. We will need to revisit that so we can get things moving again, unlike the five intersections that were to be upgraded in the last period of government on the transitway. None were completed—a broken election promise.

In terms of rail duplication, the Cleveland line was called the 'misery line' because of the government's cuts to train services. Labor's rail fail resulted in the slashing of over 40 services on the Cleveland line alone. The rail duplication from Cleveland to Manly continues to be needed to create greater capacity. When we look at Cross River Rail—and the government talks that up—it is useless to the Redlands without the duplication of the railway line from Cleveland to Manly.

In terms of roads and some of that borrowed \$28 billion, it is really important to ensure that the duplication of the full length of Cleveland-Redland Bay Road happens on time and on budget. Sadly, the government has allowed only \$4 million in the 2020-21 period of the \$97 million that is in the budget. We need to fast-track this project and get it moving, not leave it at the snail's pace it is currently planned for. Sadly, a significant amount of that funding falls outside of the forward estimates, which would mean it will not be completed as a project in the next four years, which would be another broken election promise. We could look at the duplication of Mount Cotton Road from Duncan Road to McKenzie. The government promised many years ago to duplicate that at a cost of around \$200 million. They completed about \$30 million of it, the low-hanging fruit, and left the rest. I do welcome the Gateway Motorway Old Cleveland Road onramp upgrade, which was the result of our campaign for Cleveland commuters.

I want to thank the residents of North Stradbroke Island for their support, registering another good win in booths on a two-party preferred basis. It was very sobering for the Labor Party on the island. The Labor vote completely collapsed. Despite a good candidate, a record low six per cent of the vote at Point Lookout is incredibly sobering. The implications of that for the Labor government are that residents have clearly rejected the government's direction on North Stradbroke Island and the now discredited 'Tradbroke Island' plan. The government has no mandate to continue with its divisive policies and strategies on North Stradbroke Island. With Jackie Trad now gone, we have a chance to stop the division and adopt a more inclusive approach. I ask and invite the government to take a different tack, a more inclusive approach, to all on North Stradbroke Island.

We welcome the further investment in the budget but, as with the \$40 million previously, it was not then optimally targeted—as is some of the funding in this budget. It is not responsive to the whole island. If we look at areas that are being overdeveloped, like the headlands area—a very environmentally sensitive area of North Stradbroke Island at Point Lookout—the location of the whale interpretive centre there is something that has caused a lot of angst in the community. The project is a good project; it is just the wrong location. We need to seriously look at that. There are a range of other things we could look at for North Stradbroke Island, but I will cover those at another time.

I support the traditional owners' and other residents' calls for a parliamentary inquiry into the secret land deals, overdevelopment, Chinese developers, koala habitat clearing, financial irregularities and financial performance of the \$40 million or so spent with little to show for it. Will the government finally listen to the calls of the Quandamooka people, conservation groups, small businesses and other residents and agree to an independent parliamentary inquiry into these pressing Stradbroke island issues?

The North Stradbroke Island ETS has clearly failed. The tourism strategy there has not been as successful as it could have been. The government has cut out the chamber of commerce from the economic recovery, and that says a lot in itself when you cut out the chamber of commerce, which represents business, from economic recovery plans when they create the jobs in the small businesses. We need to look at this again. For example, closing down camping grounds at peak Christmas season directly impacts the jobs of those who work in the camping grounds and indirectly impacts all of the local businesses that need the grounds open. I am happy to share our 10-point economic plan for Straddie's recovery with the government in a bipartisan approach to get things back on a better track.

In terms of water infrastructure, we could talk about what more we could do with the \$28 billion; for example, putting the gates back on Leslie Harrison Dam. In relation to marine infrastructure, some of that \$28 billion could be used to create more sustainable fishing through the use of artificial reefs in Moreton Bay, dredging the channel around the jetty at Wellington Point to make it safe for the VMR and the medivacs and making the boat ramp safe with a breakwater to protect it from south-easterlies. All of this is important, and I call on the government to support this shovel-ready project. This is an irresponsible budget of heavy borrowings and missed opportunities.



**Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Investment) (7.48 pm), in reply: The appropriation bills before the House give effect to the Palaszczuk government's 2020 budget—a budget that delivers on our election commitments and plots the course for Queensland's economic recovery from COVID-19. The budget delivers for the people of Queensland, so let me start at the top. Let me start with the best: the state electorate of Woodridge.

I am very honoured to be re-elected as the state member for Woodridge. I am pleased to say that the budget invests in Woodridge schools, including: a canteen upgrade at Browns Plains State High School; a security fence at Crestmead State School; refurbishment of the prep and arts centre at Harrisfield State School; additional classrooms at Logan Special School and Marsden State School; and refurbishment of the special education building at Woodridge State School.

The budget also invests more than \$20 million in this financial year alone to expand Logan Hospital and upgrade its maternity services. It delivers more funds for the expansion of the Logan Hospital, including the new multistorey car park, additional funding for a range of sporting groups and additional funding for essential community and social services.

The passage of these bills will represent the endorsement by the Queensland parliament of a budget that has already been endorsed many times over. It was endorsed by the people of Queensland when we took our economic recovery plan to the state election in October. There was a clear contest in the election between the LNP's reckless drive to surplus and the need for deficits funded by borrowings. As early as 13 October 2020, I announced our government's clear position: four to five years of deficits which would have to be funded from borrowings.

Members also will remember the then LNP leader, the member for Nanango, making her train wreck promise to deliver a surplus within three years, which she promptly revised to four years when she realised she was in complete contradiction with the then deputy leader of the opposition, the member for Everton. It was such a reckless promise that the Labor Party made a TV ad about it and we broadcast that TV ad across the length and breadth of Queensland. We even had the Liberal Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, come into Queensland to say he supported the member for Nanango's reckless surplus promise, even though he himself was delivering a decade of deficits.

Nobody could be in any doubt during the course of the state election about the position of the two major political parties. The LNP were saying a surplus in four years, and the government made it abundantly clear there had to be deficits across four to five years which would be funded from additional borrowings. The people made their choice and what we are delivering is what the people of Queensland voted for. To do anything other than borrow would be to slow our recovery. Even accounting for the borrowings that we made clear before the state election, our budget was also endorsed on the day of its release by the ratings agencies Moody's and S&P Global. Moody's noted that 'Queensland entered the coronavirus crisis from a position of relative fiscal strength', while S&P Global confirmed Queensland's AA-plus credit rating in a review that trumpeted Queensland on 'a solid path to fiscal recovery'.

Our budget was endorsed by various stakeholders—from LNP preselection candidate Nick Behrens, to economic columnist of the *Australian* newspaper Adam Creighton, to CEO of the Queensland Resources Council and former Liberal federal resources minister Ian Macfarlane. Our budget and economic recovery plan have also been endorsed by the proliferation of positive economic data for Queensland that has been published in recent weeks. Our rebound in retail sales, building approvals and household lending have all outpaced the national average. Queensland is the only state that has recovered all of the jobs we lost during COVID-19. We lost 205,400 jobs and we have put on 205,900 jobs. Collectively, the other states and territories still need to recover 223,000 jobs just to return to pre-crisis levels.

Crucially, on Wednesday this week, we received the strongest budget endorsement of all. The national accounts revealed that Queensland was leading Australia out of recession, posting a quarterly growth rate of 6.8 per cent—the fastest in the country and Queensland's fastest rate in 17 years. We are the only state with an economy larger than it was before the crisis. Queensland's economic growth is already the best relative to all states and territories.

Of course, good economic fortunes are no accident. Queensland's nation-leading economic growth is testament to our nation-leading health response to a pandemic that still ravages the globe. As of late yesterday, almost 65 million cases of COVID-19 had presented worldwide, and the virus has claimed nearly 1.5 million lives. The fact that the Palaszczyk Labor government can deliver a budget that primes our great state for economic recovery is ultimately an endorsement of our tireless frontline service workers—a front line that our government has proudly restored and strengthened since we were first elected in 2015.

As I stand here this evening seeking the parliament's endorsement of our budget, I take the Leader of the Opposition to be a man of his word and that he will do as he said he would do—namely, support the government when he sees positive action. We could not ask for more positive action than the electoral, economic and community response to our government's health response, our government's economic recovery plan and the commitments we have made to Queenslanders in this budget.

I would like once again to thank the public servants of the Queensland Public Service—public servants in the truest sense of the word—who have worked around the clock to produce the state budget. They are officers of the Queensland Treasury, along with officers from other Queensland government departments and agencies. To publish a full set of budget documents of more than 1,000 pages just 31 days after a state election is a monumental feat and one that cannot be diminished by the critiques of those less capable.

In that vein, it would be remiss of me not to address the issues raised by members opposite in their contributions to the debate over the past two days. The Leader of the Opposition's long anticipated budget reply speech was a withered rather than a withering attempt to land the blows that had failed to connect in the past week. The last great hope of the LNP, the member for Broadwater, led with his chin on borrowings, on infrastructure, on jobs and on spurious measures that nobody quotes, like net worth, that he generously decided to bring up and take a loss on.

The Leader of the Opposition revealed that the LNP remains now, as it was before the election, a party deeply conflicted. The Leader of the Opposition trotted out the same lines he has been trying to shop around all week on borrowings, and once again the response fell flat. The Leader of the Opposition is trying to sell a product that no-one is buying. That is because with this budget Labor put to bed the myth perpetrated by the LNP for more than a decade that borrowings in Queensland are somehow worse, somehow more problematic, than the borrowings of any other government in Australia.

By the end of the forward estimates, our debt is lower than New South Wales and lower than Victoria whether you look at net debt, gross debt, total debt, net debt as a share of revenue, gross debt as a share of revenue, net debt as a share of output, gross debt as a share of output, net debt per person or gross debt per person. Whichever way you look at it—in a way that even the LNP will understand—debt is lower in Queensland. Queenslanders are smart enough to know that the \$4 billion our government committed to in stimulus measures before the state election—following the advice of the Governor of the Reserve Bank, the Liberal Prime Minister Scott Morrison and the Liberal federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg—is distinct from the borrowings that government will require to compensate for lost revenue. Even the LNP's go-to fount of all economic wisdom, Gene Tunney, had projected before the budget a total debt figure that incorporated both our \$4 billion in stimulus and a separate amount of borrowings for revenue shortfalls.

Like all governments, our government is enduring revenue writedowns across the forward estimates. All Australian governments, except the iron ore sufficient Western Australian government, are posting operating deficits in this financial year, and the majority of Australian governments are posting operating deficits in every year of the forward estimates. Only the LNP opposition in Queensland is seeking to make savage cuts to our Public Service in order to deliver a reckless rush to surplus. They said so before the election and nothing has changed. Not one thing has changed under the leadership of the member for Broadwater—who said at the beginning of this week, in an op-ed in the *Courier-Mail* that you should not borrow and that the LNP will not borrow to fund deficits. If you are not going to borrow to fund deficits, there is only one way to remove the deficit and that is to cut. As I reiterated in the months before the budget was delivered, our government does not want to borrow but, given the alternative of austerity, cutting services, sacking workers and selling assets, our government sees that there is no choice—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DICK:** Given that our government has finally dealt with the LNP's obsession with destructive debt in Queensland, the Leader of the Opposition is now pulling items out of the balance sheet seemingly at random to get the elusive gotcha moment. His latest flight of fancy is non-financial public sector net worth. Who knows what obscure line item he will get out of the budget next? Leases and other similar arrangements? Then again, maybe not because that number includes the rent for 1 William Street, that monument to Campbell Newman and Campbell Newman's arrogance, a \$650 million white elephant coveted by the Leader of the Opposition. Where does that appear?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Members to my left will cease all interjections.

**Mr DICK:** Net worth appears for the first time on page 115 of Budget Paper No. 2, such is its importance in budget discussions. Of course, net worth was never mentioned by the member for Clayfield as treasurer when he delivered his first, second and third budgets. Again, that is probably with good reason, because net worth went down a billion dollars under the Newman LNP government.

The reality is that the Queensland government's net worth will go up under Labor. It will increase by \$150 million between this financial year and the end of 2024 and it will increase by \$3.6 billion relative to the level we inherited from the LNP in 2015. Like so many other things they do, this is a foolish argument for the opposition to be making. Net worth is a function of valuations; it is not a measure of the productive effect of investment.

I will tell honourable members what is a measure of economic effect of investment: state final demand. By that measure Queensland is leading the nation with the highest quarterly growth in 17 years. The increase in New South Wales's net worth beyond the value of their capital program is simply an accounting treatment that anticipates future revaluations of non-financial assets, actuarial investments and adjustments to their superannuation liabilities. What the Berejiklian government is doing is using an accounting revaluation to fatten up assets for privatisation. That is exactly what the New South Wales government is doing. No wonder they are responding so positively to privatisation, because it is—

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): I call the Treasurer.

**Mr DICK:** Thank you for what you are doing as Deputy Speaker in this House. We take a more conservative approach to revaluing our property, plant and equipment and our revaluations have smaller adjustments to our superannuation liability which, unlike in New South Wales, is fully funded. The only time the LNP seek to defend public servants is when they talk about the defined benefit superannuation liability. They simply cannot land a blow because, as I have said on many occasions and as is now enshrined by law, Labor will guarantee the retirement savings of all public servants in our defined benefit superannuation scheme.

**Ms Grace:** And always will.

**Mr DICK:** Correct. I take the interjection from the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations. Our side of politics goes beyond just looking after public servants in their retirement; we look after public servants when they serve. We do not sack our public servants. We back them; the LNP sack them. We build the front line to deliver Queenslanders the high-quality public services they deserve and have rightly come to expect. That is why this budget further strengthens our front line. The Leader of the Opposition accuses us, quite dishonestly—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Kawana and member for Gympie, you are both warned.

**Mr DICK:**—of ‘giving up on unemployment’. What a dishonest comment by the Leader of the Opposition when the record shows the complete opposite. Queensland is the only state that has recovered all of the jobs we lost during COVID-19. Whilst this is an achievement that our government is proud of, we have no illusions about the challenges that lie ahead. Our government welcomes the forecast 86,000 new Queenslanders who will come from other states. We are happy to help New South Wales and other states bring down their unemployment rates, and we relish the opportunity to create jobs as more Australians come to Queensland and call our great and beautiful state home.

Our budget is fundamentally about jobs and nowhere is that more evident than our job-generating infrastructure budget. Here again the Leader of the Opposition was eager to showcase his innumeracy by wrongly claiming our government is underinvesting in infrastructure—another dishonest claim by the member for Broadwater. Of course, capital spending under the LNP was cut every year of their government. By contrast, the budget reinforces that the Palaszczuk government has made no cuts to the capital program since we were elected in 2015.

As we have said many times this past week, our government’s budget unveils a four-year investment program of infrastructure of \$56 billion, a 10-year record. This includes \$14.8 billion in the current financial year supporting 46,000 jobs across the length and breadth of our great state. The volume of capital delivered by the Palaszczuk government has increased every year since we came to office, supporting tens of thousands of jobs around the state each and every year. Over the previous and current financial years we will deliver \$1.4 billion more in capital projects than we promised at the last budget.

I love to talk about infrastructure delivery because the Palaszczuk government is streets ahead of the LNP, who consistently delivered less than 90 per cent of their capital program, which was smaller than ours to begin with. In 2020-21 we are on track to deliver a capital program 14 per cent larger than the program identified in last year’s budget. That is \$1.9 billion more in projects this financial year that we are bringing forward to back jobs as part of our budget. Infrastructure delivery is a worthy goal of our government but an own goal from the Leader of the Opposition. After the interminable speech from the Leader of the Opposition—he spoke for even longer than I did, and that is saying something—we briefly heard from the faithful deputy, the member for Toowoomba South.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members to my left, it is starting to get very noisy.

**Mr DICK:** The Deputy Leader of the Opposition somehow managed to burn twice as fast but half as bright. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the man who would be treasurer, said he would like to have seen a budget more like the Morrison federal budget or more like the New South Wales Berejiklian government’s budget. If the alternative treasurer wants Queensland to be more like the Morrison government or the Berejiklian government, I assume he aspires to those governments’ stupendous

debt-to-revenue ratios, because that is what ratings agencies assess. That means in the alternative treasurer's alternative budget world, to be more like New South Wales he would increase Queensland's total debt to—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock.

**Mrs Frecklington:** No-one cares.

**Mr DICK:** I take the interjection from the member for Nanango, who says no-one cares. Certainly no-one cared about her leadership. If the alternative treasurer wants Queensland to be more like the Morrison government or the Berejiklian government, then he wants to aspire to their governments' stupendous debt-to-revenue ratios, which is what ratings agencies observe about governments. That means in the alternative treasurer's alternative budget world, to be more like New South Wales he would increase Queensland's total debt to \$147 billion. That is \$17 billion more than the level of debt that he said in his speech in this budget debate was 'unbelievable'. I will tell him what is unbelievable: the economic incompetence of the LNP.

If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition wanted Queensland to be more like the Morrison government, he would be cheering us to take on another \$30 billion in debt this financial year alone. It is embarrassing. It is completely embarrassing. This captures the central tension that torments the LNP. According to the LNP the debt is too large, but at the same time our borrowings are not enough. According to the LNP, the budget was too late and—

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Stop the clock. Member for Chatsworth, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr DICK:** According to the LNP, the debt is too large and then borrowings are not enough. We were too late with the budget; now we are too soon. This is a party that was divided before the election and it is divided now. As the Premier has quite properly said, there is no future for the LNP unless they become the Liberal Party and the National Party, and every LNP member in regional and rural Queensland knows it. They are being cannibalised by the Katter party and One Nation. There is no future for those rural MPs for as long as the Liberal Party continues to dominate their party room.

Before I turn to the other members of the LNP I want to make special mention of the Greens—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I warn all members there is a list on the table and I will start exercising the powers under the standing orders. I want members to have some decorum and be orderly.

**Mr DICK:** Well, I will tell you this much, Madam Deputy Speaker: we are not seeing much humility and grace tonight from the LNP! Before I go to other members of the LNP, I make special mention of the contribution of the Greens political party member for Maiwar. The member for Maiwar consistently disparages our government's excellent record on social housing which has seen Queensland deliver the largest investment into social housing construction since the Second World War. It is constantly denigrated by the Greens political party member for Maiwar. I welcome to the parliament the newest member of the parliament elected by the LNP: the Greens political party member for South Brisbane. Although they claim—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members, I appreciate that there may be some provocation. I gave clear instructions this morning when it came to our temporary Speakers that they should be treated as though they have the full authority of the chair and I have not seen that occurring. In a moment, if we do not have some order, I will ask the House to be silent and I will not issue warnings; I will immediately remove people from the chamber.

**Mr DICK:** The member for South Brisbane is the newest member of this House elected by the LNP because of a grubby political preference deal entered into between the Greens and the LNP. The only reason that Jackie Trad lost her seat in South Brisbane was a grubby political deal that the Greens political party entered into with the LNP, much to their eternal shame. It wouldn't bother—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Treasurer, I would like you to withdraw the unparliamentary language that was used.

**Mr DICK:** I withdraw. Because of a completely unprincipled—



**Mr Millar** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Gregory, you can leave the chamber under standing order 253A for one hour. I am sorry that that may mean you will miss your leader's and the Premier's valedictory statements. So be it.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Gregory withdrew from the chamber at 8.12 pm.*

**Mr DICK:** I do not listen to anything the Greens say, because they are capable of saying and doing anything to get elected to this House. The government and I will not be lectured to on their misrepresentation of our investment in prisons and youth justice to advance their political purposes. They have to do better if they are going to hold the high ground of political virtue that they lecture to everyone else on.

I turn to the contribution of the member for Nanango. The member dusted off the pre-election speeches that served the LNP so well, reciting the hits about high unemployment, high bankruptcies, low confidence and high debt—all the old tunes from the member for Nanango. These claims had no resonance with the people of Queensland before the election and they have no basis in fact now. It was particularly disappointing to see the member for Nanango wheel out the tired and bad-faith borrowings argument—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, you can leave. You are on a warning from earlier. They are cumulative.

*Whereupon the honourable member for Buderim withdrew from the chamber at 8.13 pm.*

**Mr DICK:** It was particularly disappointing to see the member for Nanango wheel out the tired and bad-faith borrowings arguments repeated by her colleagues. The \$28 billion in borrowings the member for Nanango rejected in her speech might at one time have covered most of the LNP's otherwise unfunded election promises but, as we know, when it came to covering the full suite of election promises the LNP embraced cuts and rejected borrowings—and the people of Queensland rejected them. The member for Everton reprised the other half of the double act—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Nanango will cease her interjections.

**Mr DICK:**—in a wideranging and free-wheeling contribution. Seeking desperately to distance himself from the train wreck costings press conference before the election, he ventured into self-adoration. What a speech it was. Although he claimed there was nothing in this budget for his electorate, the member for Everton came up with an ingenious infrastructure project of his own. The member might cast aspersions about vanity and delusion, but he was very keen to mention the big statue that he wanted the people of Everton to build to him. The member for Everton said—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order with respect to your rulings about decorum in this place and interjections. It is very hard for members not to interject when the Treasurer is talking about vanity of members and so forth. If we are to maintain decorum then it has to start with the speaker on his feet, the Treasurer.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Kawana. If there are members who are the subject of a statement by the person on their feet, I always offer some latitude and always have. In this case, there are plenty of people who are not the subject of that who are a collective. I am sorry, but that is just not the way. Everyone in this House knows that there are to be no interjections and that it is always at the Speaker's discretion. The member on his feet has the call and most other members have had an opportunity to make a contribution to this debate.

**Mr DICK:** The member wants to criticise others about vanity and self-adoration. This is the man who said in the parliament that the people in his electorate want to build a statue to him because 'they worship him'. They were his words in the House. He said that the people would build a statue to his greatness and would put an epitaph on it—'in memoriam'. The shadow treasurer, sadly, fell 100 days short of delivering his first budget.

Then we heard from the member for Clayfield. As the Premier said, the member for Broadwater has the band back again—out of time and out of tune but they are all playing again. While reflecting on the budget of 2020 he took us down the time tunnel to the budgets of the Newman LNP government. He gave that great reprise, 'keeping the dream alive' of the Newman era. It might have been better if he had taken his own advice and remained in stoic silence for three years—that is what we had for three years—but he thought he would come back. He spent the entire time addressing the 2020 budget

talking about the three budgets he delivered under the Newman government. No matter how much the LNP say they want to distance themselves from the Newman LNP government, as soon as they get the opportunity they cannot wait to tell people how good that government was.

Of course, the member for Kawana touched very briefly—I think it was a matter of minutes—on economic matters before repeating the falsehood that New South Wales was not borrowing to cover operating costs. Of course, the Berejiklian government is borrowing to cover operating costs; that is the truth. He said one thing but the truth is the other. The member for Kawana was obsessed more with the style of the budget than with its substance, which I suppose is par for the course for the member for Kawana. He chose to waste time in his remarks fixating on an off-the-cuff photo taken in my office on budget morning looking out the window. I can assure the member for Kawana that he will have plenty of time to perfect his impersonations. It will be a long four years for the member for Kawana, staring out the window. He does not have to watch his back, because nobody is coming and nobody cares.

In conclusion, the solemn truth of this budget is that it delivers on our promises to the people of Queensland. The recovery from COVID will be long and sometimes difficult, but the 2020 budget charts our course and proves that there is only one side of politics that Queenslanders trust to pull our economy out of a recession that still ravages the rest of the world. The history of Queensland tells us that in times of crisis the people of our state always turn to Labor to provide the strong and certain hand to guide our maroon ship to a safer shore. That is why the people of Queensland, the business community, the ratings agencies and the economic data we have seen to date all endorse our economic recovery plan. It is incumbent upon this parliament to honour this goodwill by delivering a definitive and conclusive endorsement of the Palaszczuk Labor government's 2020 budget. I commend the appropriation bills to the House.

Question put—That the bills be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bills read a second time.

### Referral to Portfolio Committees

**Mr SPEAKER:** In accordance with standing order 177(2), the Appropriation (Parliament) (2020-2021) Bill and the Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill stand referred to the portfolio committees.

### SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (8.20 pm), by leave, without notice: I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 23 February 2021.

### VALEDICTORY



**Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (8.20 pm): When 2020 began, we had some indication—but not yet a complete realisation—of the unprecedented health and economic emergency that was to come for Queensland, Australia and the world. COVID-19 is so named because it began in 2019, but 2020 is the year it dominated. However, I measure our success in dealing with the pandemic in the way we have prevented it from overwhelming us. When I say 'our success', I mean our state and our community. The credit for dealing with coronavirus is shared by our health workers, our medical authorities and the people of this great state. We learnt to stay home if necessary to protect our workmates. We adapted to working from home. We adapted to meeting online. Parents and teachers stepped up when students had to learn from home. We adapted to social distancing, masks, hand sanitiser, contact tracing, isolation, gathering restrictions, trading restrictions and no dancing.

We found a new and moving way to celebrate Anzac Day—sombre and reflective but not the crowds and the parade. We enjoyed an Ekka long weekend but no Ekka. Of course, 2020 was the year that Queensland saved Australian sport. The AFL season, up to and including the grand final, the Super Netball season, the WNBL, Supercars and the Melbourne Storm all came to Queensland, and we were delighted to host them. Our road maps and our economic recovery plan have guided us through COVID and now, because of our strong health response, we can move on.

Nothing that Queensland Health or the government did to mitigate the danger of COVID-19 would have worked without public and private sacrifice and commitment, but I must pay tribute to our health workers and in particular the Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, and her team. As early as 10 January, Dr Young had the foresight to send a communique to GPs and EDs alerting them to an outbreak in China. On 21 January she declared it a public health event of state significance and a week later the first case in Queensland was confirmed. That day, 29 January, we were the first state to declare a public health emergency. Under daily, weekly, monthly pressure to make vital decisions, the Chief Health Officer did so calmly, intelligently and with an unwavering attention to detail to protect Queenslanders and to protect our state. Queensland owes Dr Young a deep debt of gratitude.

Nevertheless, despite the pandemic, we got on with life this year. In January we celebrated the New Year followed by Chinese New Year and Tet celebrations in my electorate and elsewhere and then Australia Day. Eight new schools opened, including Brisbane's first inner-urban high school in half a century—Fortitude Valley. Under another government that would not have happened. In my electorate I attended a wonderful graduation event for Skilling Queenslanders for Work graduates and the Qantas pilot training academy was opened in Toowoomba.

In February we planted a tree at the naming of Jacaranda Place, the brand new adolescent mental health facility looking after young people in our state who need the very best care. Operations began at Milvehcoe, the military vehicle manufacturing facility at Redbank in Ipswich. We moved to further protect our world famous Gold Coast surfing reserve and a statue was unveiled to Johnathan Thurston at the open day for the marvellous new Townsville Stadium. And we delivered the news that every classroom, every staffroom and every library in every state school would be air-conditioned.

In March we announced our plans to further extend the Gold Coast Light Rail from Burleigh to the airport. Business case funding for that has now been locked in, while work continues on the section from Broadbeach to Burleigh. In March the local government elections were held, the first under COVID. In April the implementation of the Gold Coast Spit master plan continued with preliminary designs for two community projects.

In May we passed Australia's toughest mine safety laws, with executives facing up to 20 years jail if workers die because of their criminal negligence. In June we announced that regional Queensland power bills will fall for the third year in a row for households and for small businesses.

In July we delivered on our commitment to bring security of payment for the 240,000 Queenslanders who work in the building and construction industry. We moved to clarify adoption as a genuine option to be considered for vulnerable young Queenslanders under changes to the state's Child Safety Act. And we introduced legislation to ban single-use plastic items, starting with straws, stirrers, cutlery and plates.

In August we held community cabinet in Cairns, inspecting and announcing progress on the Smithfield bypass, the hospital and the Cairns Convention Centre and we progressed a path to treaty with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders.

In September we passed a landmark bill to enable legal recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practices. We observed the 20th anniversary of our state's official recognition of Australian South Sea Islanders' continuing contributions to Queensland and we legislated to make wage theft a crime.

In October Boeing announced Queensland is to be the final production home for unmanned defence aircraft—the first military aircraft to be designed, engineered and manufactured in Australia in more than 50 years.

Other regional highlights included the start of work on Maryborough's new munitions manufacturing facility. We committed to fund stage 2 of Townsville's Houghton pipeline. The new Proserpine Entertainment Centre will get even more state funding and we saw this year how the Whitsunday region is becoming a major Australian aquaculture hub. In Mackay the completion of the Mackay Ring Road is great news.

Construction will start next year on a billion dollar wind farm north of Rocky. Work started on Australia's biggest solar farm on the Western Downs near Chinchilla. We unveiled the site for a new hospital in Bundaberg, inspected Gladstone's brand new ED and we are going to expand the Redland Hospital.

Out west we further extended cluster fence funding to protect our vital pastoral and agricultural sector. Throughout the year, work has powered ahead on Cross River Rail—tunnelling, new stations and local manufacturing and supply opportunities.

Then came the election. We have spoken at length in this sitting fortnight about the more than one thousand commitments that are already underway, but I will reiterate and re-emphasise my thanks and the thanks of my government to the people of Queensland for continuing their faith in us for another term—the first four-year term.

As always for individuals and families, this year there have been moments of joy, occasions of pride and days of deep grief and sadness. We mourned for Hannah and her children. We will never forget what happened, nor any other family who has experienced tragedy. Hundreds gathered at the local park and many joined mourners at their funeral. We also farewelled our dear friend and parliamentary colleague Tim Mulherin. I know Erin Mulherin was very grateful for the kind words that were said about Tim across the political divide and she asked me to pass that on to everyone in this chamber. I know his family was touched by the genuine tributes.

We congratulated the 2020 Queensland Greats—Bruce and Denise Morcombe, Professor James Morton, Betty Taylor, Nancy Bates, Angus Lane, Father Mick Lowcock, PCYC Queensland and the late Darby McCarthy. Dr Dinesh Palipana was announced as the 2021 Queensland Australian of the Year while Aunty McRose Elu, Daniel and William Clarke and Natasha Johnston are the Senior, Young and Local Hero winners. Best wishes to them at the national awards.

I am incredibly proud of Queensland's public servants. I thank our frontline workers and first responders: the men and women of our police, fire and emergency services. I especially acknowledge Commissioner Katarina Carroll, Deputy Commissioner Steve Gollschewski, who is our State Disaster Coordinator, and Chief Superintendent Mark Whelan for all of their hard work. I thank our nurses, doctors and paramedics, our child protection staff, our teachers, our disability support workers, our youth workers and the administration staff who make their work possible. I wish them all a very merry and safe Christmas.

I asked much of my cabinet in 2020 and they responded with hard work, commitment, vision and leadership. I am very proud to serve with this team. I thank my deputy Steven Miles, my Treasurer Cameron Dick, Minister Grace Grace, the Leader of the House Yvette D'Ath and to every one of my ministers, including those we recently farewelled—Kate Jones, Anthony Lynham, Coralie O'Rourke and Jackie Trad—I offer my deep thanks and appreciation for your service. I am proud to work with all 51 of my caucus colleagues, those who have returned and we especially welcome our new members.

My sincere thanks also go to the director-general of my department, Dave Stewart, and to all of the heads of departments who work incredibly hard every single day. I thank all my departmental staff who assist us so conscientiously and so well. I thank my office led by Jim Murphy, Denise Spinks and Shane Doherty who provide unflagging support. I thank them and grant them a day off for Christmas. My special thanks go to Jackie Hughes for her commitment, patience and grace as she retires to spend more time with her family. She has been with me on and off for over a decade. I think everybody knows how well she has served and is loved. We wish her all the very best in her retirement. I thank all ministerial staff across all of government and everyone who has given of themselves this year.

The workload in my electorate office has been heavy this year, as it has been for all honourable members, and I am privileged to be able to rely on my staff and volunteers. I thank Virginia Healy, Lauren Fortnum, Eileen Wood and Jackson Oswald. I thank all electorate officers across the state for the work that they do across all political offices.

Oscar Wilde famously said he chose his friends for their good looks, he chose his acquaintances for their good characters and he chose his enemies for their good intellects. Hmm. Those opposite did not get it! He also advised people to forgive their enemies because, he said, nothing annoys them so much. But, of course, in this place we have no enemies, but fellow travellers whose GPS is set to a different voice. I wish the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Opposition, the two Davids, all opposition and crossbench members and their families a very, very happy Christmas—and also to the member for Kawana!

I also extend best wishes to the parliamentary media gallery led by presiding member Steve Wardill and merry Christmas to all reporters throughout the state who cover Queensland politics. We all enjoyed each other's company on the road during the campaign—most of the time! I do think that the night at Longboard in Townsville was a highlight.

We are grateful for the dedication of the Parliamentary Service this year. From new procedures around COVID-19 to this busy end to the parliamentary year with the opening of parliament, budget week and then two weeks of estimates committee hearings—it sounded like a really good idea at the time. I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the way you have presided over the chamber. We congratulate you

once again on your reappointment. Thanks also to the former and current deputy speakers and the panel of temporary speakers, including the first Torres Strait Islander temporary speaker of the Queensland parliament, the member for Cook.


I thank the Clerk, Neil Laurie—gee, he has a mighty job and he always does it so, so well—Deputy Clerk, Michael Ries, and the Acting First Clerk Assistant, Erin Pasley—who got married last week and came back to work—and all the other Clerks at the Table.

I also recognise and thank the Office of the Queensland Parliamentary Counsel under the leadership of Tony Keyes; Director of Corporate Services and Electorate Office Liaison, Craig Atkinson; Director of Property and Facility Services, Stewart Johnson; and all the gardeners, cleaning and maintenance staff—everybody who makes this place tick. We personally thank them.

The Director, Information Services and Parliamentary Librarian, Janet Prowse, and all her staff, including the Parliamentary Library; the Parliamentary Reporting and Broadcasting Service staff led by the Chief Hansard Reporter, Jo Mathers; Sergeant-at-Arms Michael Watkin and all the parliamentary attendants and security officers; Financial and Administrative Services; IT; the committee office; and Human Resources and their staff and leaders Lynne Armstrong, Ryan Cherry, Robyn Moore, Peter Morris, Mark Richardson, James Robertson, Peta Sweeney and Bernice Watson. To Head Executive Chef, Andrew McCrea, Manager of Catering Services, Simon Neale, and Functions Co-ordinator, Megan Lomas, I am so proud of all the catering staff for the way they present the very, very best of Queensland produce.

Finally, as I draw to a close, allow me to publicly acknowledge my family and friends. I thank my mum and dad for their great support this year and my sisters, nieces and nephew for their love and support. I pay tribute to my beautiful Nana whom I lost this year, Beryl Erskine, and my Uncle Joe Tofoni, whom I lost just a few weeks ago.

In conclusion, may I reiterate that the story of this year has been a collective effort. The courage and resilience of Queenslanders has seen us through the worst of the pandemic. In 2021, we will continue working together for a stronger Queensland whose best days do indeed lie ahead of us. I wish every single person here the very best for the remainder of 2020, a safe and happy Christmas and a wonderful new year and we look forward to coming back here next year to this House where we will work once again in the best interests of the people whom we were elected to serve.

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (8.36 pm): I also would like to make a contribution and thank the Premier for her words. Mr Speaker, I wish to start by wishing you all the best for the festive season. Can I thank you for the way that you conduct yourself in this place. You are always firm, but you are always fair. Your encouragement for us to put forward some new members to fill those temporary panel of speaker positions has been a wise decision. It makes us better placed to understand how this place ticks. I assure you we will continue to improve our behaviour when those temporary speakers are in place.

The Clerk of the Parliament, Neil, has one of the toughest jobs. He has to be there to give us advice. He has to keep this place running well. He has to accept petitions from the member for Coomera. These are busy, trying jobs. I thank the Deputy Clerk and, indeed, all of the parliamentary staff.

I thank those who we do not see inside this chamber, without whom this place would not be the special place it is. I refer to some of the people that the Premier mentioned, the caterers, the cleaners, the groundskeepers, maintenance and the security guards without whom this place would not be the safe place that it is for us. I know how hard it is for rural and regional members to be away from their family. They spend a lot of time in this place. It is those little touches that mean so very much. At Christmas I think it is appropriate that we pause and thank them.

I thank the Public Service, the front line, who have been tested in a trying year. It has been a trying year for everybody. Some businesses who have never experienced hardship would have done it very, very tough this year and not by any means of their making. It has been a challenging year for workers, with the uncertainty of waking up to a different world, having to do different procedures in their job, regardless of what it is.

It has been a tough year for us politically. I take this time to acknowledge some of our colleagues who are no longer with us in this parliament. In particular, I mention two very good human beings and very good members who contested the election, that is, the former members for Bundaberg and Nicklin—David Batt and Marty Hunt. I welcome and congratulate the new members for those seats, but

pay tribute to two fine individuals. To the former members for Caloundra, Hervey Bay and Pumicestone—Mark McArdle, Ted Sorensen and Simone Wilson—thank you for your service. We wish you well.

To our candidates and to all candidates: it takes a bit of ticker to put your hand up and be judged. In some cases you are judged in a contest that you do not have a lot of prospect of winning. It shows a lot about the people who do that in order to stand up for their values. I acknowledge our candidates who ran in a very tough situation.

I thank two people who are sitting behind me, the member for Nanango and the member for Everton. Your hard work and decency have been admired in 2020. For me personally, the fact that you would be willing to make a contribution into the future at the level that you are shows the sort of people that you are. It also shows the kind of opposition that we will be. We are better for your contribution.

To the gentleman sitting beside me, the man referred to before as the man who would be Treasurer: I hope so. The member for Toowoomba South is a fine person and I am glad to call him my deputy.

I acknowledge the Manager of Opposition Business. We thought we would have a bit of continuity because I understand how much those opposite enjoy having the member for Kawana here.

**Mr Bleijie:** It is admiration—or obsession.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It is. I always enjoy seeing relationships blossom. Despite being combatants in a contest of minds, the respect that the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business have for each other is a beautiful thing.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Member, there are standing orders that must be adhered to.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Yes, they come from different political points of view and I enjoy the contest. However, I also enjoy the level of respect shown in the way that they conduct themselves.


With your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I want to place on record an acknowledgment of a few of the longer serving staff members who are retiring this year, some of whom have quite amazing years of service. One staff member has 30 years of service and that is David Blake who worked in the kitchen until March. Colin Ogle worked in Finance for 25 years, Wendy Rollo worked in HR for 27 years and Stephen Wickson worked in security. This year, a couple of staff members have racked up quite impressive years of service, but there are a couple in particular I would mention. In the next couple of months Ian Jackson, the electorate officer in Southern Downs, will crack 40 years. However, Ian runs a distant second to Mary-Ann Lloyd in Hansard who, in 2020, will crack 45 years service.

**Mr Nicholls:** Forty-five years of listening to this!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Exactly. I finish by thanking and wishing well the Premier and her troops. Congratulations on your electorate victory. To the crossbench, we congratulate you as well. We wish you and your families all the best. I thank the media for keeping us on our toes and ensuring good governance in this state. They are an important part of this.

Finally, I refer to those who will not be listening to this, that is, the majority of Queenslanders. I say to you that, although at times we throw barbs at each other, we do so because we believe in our values. Regardless of where we come from, we have a set of values. All 93 members would not be here without them. We get up every day to try to make the state a better place.

It has been a trying year for all of us. This year there will be people who will go to Christmas in a worse position than they have ever been in. To those people I say, we are thinking of you. Over the break let us take the time to think about those who are less fortunate. Let us attempt to make a contribution to those less fortunate. In 2021, let us do our best to make this state the best it can be.

 **Ms BOLTON** (Noosa—Ind) (8.44 pm): It is again a great honour to deliver the Valedictory speech on behalf of the crossbench in wrapping up a year that could never have been foreseen and one that no-one would wish to see again any time soon. For the six of us who were here in the 56th Parliament, it is good to be back. For our newest crossbencher, a warm welcome. In the back row you are in good hands. However, with the doubling of Greens up here, we could be in trouble!

Previously the word ‘pandemic’ had been just that, a word. The reality is that its impacts and enduring changes to our communities, Queensland, across Australia and the globe have forever changed us. It has brought both sorrows and progress, many tears and, yes, some cheers. Out of every

challenge we have been confronted with there has been action and opportunity for refinement and betterment. COVID-19 has been a mirror. It has reflected our shortfalls as well as our enormous strengths. Importantly, it has highlighted what is relevant and what we need to concentrate on.

Throughout the year the members of the crossbench have continued to bring forward exactly this: priorities from our electorates, as well as the broader state, whether COVID related or not, unfiltered and raw in true grassroots style. This has included the consistent call for harnessing water to drought proof or the sun and wind for power; raising awareness of the flaws in our systems, including a committee process that requires an independent chair, which is no reflection on our committee chair—where are you, Mr Russo—to function objectively; the issue of red and other tapes that stops or slows the ability to resolve longstanding issues, and we have a number of those; the voices from our communities that seek the simplicity of straight answers and some common sense; a needed review of sessional orders, and I have brought that up before, to ensure that all in this chamber have opportunities to speak; and seeking the basics that all Queenslanders should be able to access, such as affordable housing options.

As members of parliament, just like all Queenslanders, we seek this simplicity and yet, at times, the most basic of questions and efforts lead to our scarce resources being used to end up where we started. Going in circles is a waste. That is not the fault of anyone. It is the very system itself, the culture that has pervaded where reasons why we cannot override the very reasons why we must. Is this from fear to step outside the tick boxes? Whatever it is, we shelved that culture during the COVID emergency and we need to leave it on the shelf where it was put. We need solutions and resolutions, not absolutions.

The Katter boys—we have one here—presented several private member's bills. Even though those did not get across the line, they have demonstrated again how very diverse coast-to-country needs and thoughts are. Here in the south-east corner we are blessed by not living and working in constant extremes. Our access to health and other services are a given and, by sheer volume of numbers, have a majority. We must always look after our bush folk. They are good people, living and working where the majority would not be prepared to.

The member for Maiwar brought forward injustices. Even though as a crossbench we may not agree on some of those, the intent is always honourable and in the very best interests of the sectors being fought for. There is a fine balance when discussing freedoms, including the right to protest, and vastly differing viewpoints have been brought forward. Taking away someone else's freedom to get across the message of freedom and rights could be considered an oxymoron. It is an interesting debate and one that may not be resolved for some time to come.

The members for Mirani and Whitsunday brought unique aspects to this chamber as has our newest addition, the member for South Brisbane, this week. This should all be celebrated. Diversity of thought from a diverse Queensland is essential to capture all viewpoints versus the homogenous process of the block vote. Independent MPs and minor parties bring texture and objectivity to debate, and it is this that we must always retain as part of the decision-making process. Even though in this new term we have been separated in the rejigging of our office space, we will always share that place of relatively apolitical and non-aligned debate, regardless of what is touted incorrectly during election time.

The work of crossbenchers is extensive, as every bill must be covered and speeches prepared; in addition, tackling the underpinning frameworks and processes that no longer serve us well, causing a collective raising of eyebrows across Queensland. This includes when bills are introduced not in accordance with the *Notice Paper* or have extensive amendments issued at the last moment. This is not conducive to informed debate from lack of investigation and consultation time. Then speeches written through the night are not able to be delivered due to those time allocation restrictions.

Even though I have been a lone soldier amongst my fellow crossbenchers in the 56th Parliament by supporting the business program motion as a method of efficiency, I find it now difficult to do so. We query why sessional and standing orders are not amended to ensure all members have opportunity to speak. This is not difficult and we cannot imagine why anyone in this chamber would object in the aims of equity and fairness.

One of the greatest successes of the crossbench was the finalisation of our successful private member's motion to see parliamentary staffing resources determined by an independent authority. This will bring parity across the political landscape and benefit future MPs and their communities. It has only taken 30 years, but I thank all of the crossbench members for their united efforts and thank one of my interns, Dom, who worked with me on this.

There are many questions that remain unanswered from the 56th Parliament that I trust will be resolved in the 57th. Why do we speak of equality and multiculturalism and yet not give time at the start of parliament for differing beliefs and reflections to be honoured? Why is it not considered appropriate to extend sitting hours to accommodate extra debate on important bills? When will we reach a consensus to move beyond what does not work effectively? We need to lead the way in how we can debate, legislate and mitigate without the wasting of much time arguing on matters that are irrelevant to Queenslanders. To create jobs, why do we import product when we can build, make, grow and sew our own?

If we are genuine about eradicating homelessness and home stress and duress, why do we not just get on and construct affordable accommodations to community design and management, not to outdated views? We have said it before and we will keep saying it until this is resolved. Fifty years ago we addressed this, yet now in our smart, innovative and learned world we struggle with the basics. Should we be embarrassed? Absolutely.

For all of these questions that are unanswered there are many that have been. Communities across Queensland have benefited from decisions, finances and implementations during and in the COVID recovery that would be up there with the best in the globe at all levels of government. National cabinet was of enormous benefit, and I trust that into the future the bipartisan collaboration that is sought becomes more the norm versus the exception.

To all who have been on the front line during this pandemic, you have our deep gratitude. Our health workers, police, paramedics, SES and way beyond, teachers, supermarket staff, childcare workers and so many more—all who did not have a choice to work from home or to not work at all. These essential Queenslanders never complained in going above and beyond. How do we ever say thank you without it sounding trite?

Across Queensland there was consideration when there were concerns about the decisions being made—what was really happening which may have not been apparent. We had nurses sleeping in their cars in order to keep their own vulnerable at home safe and those in industries that we did not foresee as being at risk now dealing with their own physical and mental health. Whilst we are celebrating the opening of borders and a return to normality, we must now look after those who looked after us.

To the Premier, all ministers, parliamentary staff and departments of the 56th Parliament: your tireless work and efforts during one of the toughest years will not be forgotten. So many would be unaware of your sleepless nights, taking phone calls from MPs at the oddest hours, the tolerance of our demands during the emergency and covering in the most dire of situations—the trauma of lost jobs and businesses, how ineffective we felt as we tried to console the thousands that lined up outside Centrelink or could not bury their loved ones with a proper service, facilities shut down, social isolation, increased trauma. Only every single member in this chamber understands the lengths they have gone to and the cost to them personally and to their families.

To our newest MPs and additions to ministerial roles: congratulations and go well. We need you to be real and accessible and to fight to create greater efficiencies so our dollars go further and our efforts are realised. Just because something has been done a certain way in history does not mean that you need to follow.

To our Clerk, Neil: again, how would we have survived the pandemic, the famous telephony rollout and then the disruption of elections without you and your team?

Mr Speaker, there were some funny moments and, even though you did not laugh at them, I detected a curling upwards at the corner of your mouth. I am not mentioning any names, however, the call to withdraw unparliamentary language when we were all scratching our heads as to what the unparliamentary word actually was may still be being googled. To do what you do with a House full of what at times seem like unruly teenagers can only be attributed to the patience that not many have. It was an honour to second your nomination to be our Speaker of the 57<sup>th</sup> Parliament.


To everyone from IT to catering, library services, security and housekeeping: your efficiency, assistance and smiles are deeply appreciated and we hope that you always see that, even if we do not say it enough.

To my fellow crossbenchers: thank you. To think that in our often deeply opposing views we managed to get through another year without denigration, agitation or litigation is remarkable and testimony to what we set out to do: demonstrate that you can have differences and robust debate without getting personal.



To all who have been returned to your seats: hearty congratulations. To those who retired: celebrations for your contributions to your communities and chambers. To those we lost: our very best wishes. Only those who have stood for and lost an election can understand what it feels like. We hope that you will continue to do great works in your community and run again. To all who ran their campaigns with dignity and respect for the electorates contested: thank you. To those who did not: misinformation and deceptive advertising is disrespectful to voters and to yourselves.

How humbled and honoured we as crossbenchers are to stand in this chamber of the people's house, united in our efforts to resolve issues confronting our communities and across the state and build that future sought by the people we represent. We send heartfelt wishes to all on both sides of the House for the Christmas season and the New Year, and blessings to you and your families, your communities and your staff. May Santa bring rain where needed, without added flooding, may the summer storms have less ferocity than the Speaker when his back is niggling and, most of all, may we bring the certainty sought in Queensland and across Australia regarding our borders into the future. Merry Christmas, everyone. Bring on 2021!


 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (8.57 pm): Very briefly, because I do not seek to delay the last day of the 2020 parliamentary sitting year much further, but can I say as the Leader of the House moving this motion that I thank the Premier for her leadership. I thank all of the government members for their efforts throughout the 56th Parliament and the start of the 57th Parliament. I thank you as Leader of the House for your contributions over the year. It has been significant.

I also pass on my best to the opposition. It has been an extraordinary year. I concur with the comments by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the crossbench in terms of their thanks to all of the staff of the parliament. To make this parliament work in a COVID environment was not easy. I acknowledge your efforts, Mr Speaker, and thank you for your leadership as well. I congratulate you again on your appointment as Mr Speaker. It was extraordinary to make this place work. We need to acknowledge the Clerk, all of the attendants and the staff who cleaned every seat as we moved around. I thank the Manager of Opposition Business for agreeing to give us a list of the ministers to be asked questions in question time, to give us the opportunity to move around and to socially distance. I take the comments of the Leader of the Opposition: it is about respect. I respect this institution. I respect the position of Manager of Opposition Business. I thank all of the staff here and thank them so much for making sure we could continue our important work in this House in a COVID-safe way. They have helped us to do what we have been able to do for the people of Queensland throughout 2020.

Can I provide a Christmas present to all members who have been asking me whether we will see the sitting calendar. I table the 2021 parliamentary sitting calendar for everybody.


*Tabled paper:* Memo, dated 4 December 2020, from the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and Leader of the House, Hon. Yvette D'Ath, to members of the Parliament, advising of the 2021 parliamentary sitting calendar [372].

I wish all members and all staff of the parliament a very safe and very merry Christmas. I hope you get some time with family and friends. I look forward to seeing you again in 2021. I am sure you are all looking forward to listening to the debate on the business motion each week for the next four years.

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (9.00 pm): I am not one for many words in this chamber. The great thing about the valedictory is that it has no time limitations.

**Ms GRACE:** Mr Speaker—

**Mr BLEIJIE:** Can I wish everybody a merry Christmas.

 **Mr SPEAKER:** I thought I knew what the member for McConnel was going to move then!

Honourable members, I want to make a few remarks. I did make some remarks at the end of the last parliament, some three months ago, but there are a few additional things I would like to add. As all of you would know, if you are the last speaker at an event, when you have had three or four speakers before you, some of what you want to say has been said. I certainly want to acknowledge some of the same people who have already been acknowledged.

While some returning members may think this place is the same as it ever was, I do think the spirit of the season has been evident amongst members. I have seen the decorations in offices. It was a pleasure to see so many people come to the lighting of the Christmas tree. I now have the biggest red button that I think any Speaker has had to this point.

I want to take issue, Leader of the Opposition, with something you said. People are watching. Parliament TV has never been more popular. I understand there were up to something like 700 subscribers.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** It is not true. I congratulate the Premier on her return to the government benches and to the Leader of the Opposition on his elevation. I congratulate the Deputy Premier on his new role and, I am sure I speak for all members, express our genuine appreciation for the work you have done in managing the COVID arrangements with the Chief Health Officer.

I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on being appointed to that role as well as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. They have become known as the two Davids. It does sound a bit more like a sitcom than a leadership team, perhaps. It is on my list on Netflix and I look forward to watching the show over the next four years.

I also want to place on record my thanks and appreciation to the former leader of the opposition, the member for Nanango, for the positive way she made a contribution in the parliament. While she may disagree, there was a significant deal of respect that was shown. She probably got away with more than she perhaps should have at times. I also acknowledge the former deputy leader of the opposition, the member for Everton.

I am very pleased to see the return of the best of frenemies the Leader of the House and the Manager of Opposition Business. It is the mutual admiration society. It is pleasing to watch just how collegiate you can be at times. I thank the members of the Committee of the Legislative Assembly, both the one for the 56th Parliament as well as the one for the 57th Parliament, for the work you have done.

I welcome my new Deputy Speaker, the member for Greenslopes. I thank him for taking that position on. I want to thank the new panel of temporary speakers for putting their hands up. I appreciate the words of support that have clearly been thrown at them from all members. It is terrific to see just how constructive and supportive you can be. The former deputy speaker has been elevated to cabinet. I want to say thank you to Scott Stewart, the member for Townsville, for the work he did.

I have already placed on record my thanks to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, however, I do want to say that the opening of parliament was a mammoth task to put together just 3½ weeks after election day. The Parliamentary Service, led by the Clerk, delivered this ceremonial event with COVID restrictions. On behalf of all members, I put on record my deep appreciation for their work. Special thanks should go to Leah Illott who coordinated the garden party event and Erin Pasley who coordinated events on the first sitting day of the opening week, including my presentation to the Governor. As you have heard, it was a big week for Erin because she got married last Thursday. Accepting all of our good wishes, we look forward to hearing more about the exciting new chapter of her life.

I thank the clerks at the table for always providing advice during sittings to me, the Deputy Speaker and the temporary panel. I thank the Table Office staff, led by Erin Pasley, and our Hansard staff, led by Jo Mathers, for their work.

I want to very quickly mention the fact—and the Leader of the House touched on this—that our ability to have a functioning parliament in a COVID environment was a very difficult task. It could only work with cooperation. That is exactly what we saw. I again pay tribute and pass on my thanks to the attendants who were constantly spraying, cleaning and ensuring we had a safe work environment. They did an enormous job. We owe them a great deal of gratitude. There were some great things to come out of the COVID arrangements. We have had party voting. It seems to have worked very well. I will state right now that I think it is a terrific system and I would love to see it continue into the future.

The other thing that members would be aware of is that we set up a virtual parliament environment in the Annexe. That parliament, which was never used, is ready to use if we should ever require it again, and let us hope we do not. The ability to put that together should not be underestimated. It was essentially like putting together a regional parliament. It was establishing a full chamber with all of the necessary elements. I do not want that work to go unrecognised because it was an extremely big effort to ensure we had options as a parliament to continue democracy in Queensland.

Some things I am very happy with. Having a full chamber again is terrific. It is wonderful to see. I made a very brief remark about this on my election as Speaker, but we have seen some great tactics in the House this year, including revolving door members—members coming into the chamber for short periods but clearly with the view to create shock and awe during question time. I am pleased to see everyone back because it is a lot easier to know who is where and what they will be doing.

I also thank our parliamentary attendants led by Angie Jones and Cliff Ku. They have gone above and beyond this year, as we have said. I would like to also thank the functions and catering team, particularly the Executive Chef, Andrew McCrea; the Manager of Catering Services, Simon Neale; and the Function Coordinator, Megan Lomas. I have been advised that the Strangers Dining Room has been getting excellent reviews from customers. This is a great credit to our functions and catering team.

I wish to thank Janet Prowse, Director of Information Services, and the team at the Parliamentary Library for their important work supporting members and preparing cultural and historical displays. In the spirit of the season, let us spare a thought for our committee secretaries and the Committee Office staff members led by First Clerk Assistant Committees, Bernice Watson. No, I am not talking about the festive season; I am talking about the estimates season. With a bit more levity, given the time frames, our Committee Office is working tirelessly to deliver estimates, and they too deserve our respect and admiration.

I want to put on record my appreciation for the staff members in Property and Facility Services, led by Stewart Johnston, Director of Property and Facility Services—and a very big North Queensland Cowboys fan like me—and Mark Richardson, Manager of Precinct Services. On behalf of all members, I wish to record our gratitude for the work of all the gardeners and cleaning and maintenance staff on this precinct.

I would like to thank the parliamentary education team of Katina Webb, Rebecca Quinnell and Jackie Hinchy for their efforts in bringing parliament to students right across the state. It is one of the greatest pleasures I have as Speaker, to go to schools and speak to young people and to see them take an interest in participating in our democracy in even a small way. I also wish to thank our communications team of Lyneta Darlington and Brittany Honan for their efforts supporting the work of the parliament.

I want to thank electorate office staff. I know all of you join me in that. They are the people who represent us as members of parliament when we are not there. They are the face of the electorate so often when we cannot be. They do an enormous amount of work. They are the ones who just keep the machine moving, particularly when regional members are travelling. Sometimes members are not there for a week at a time and it is a lot for them to take on. They do a terrific job and have a very, very bright and welcoming attitude towards your constituents and mine.

Also, I want to make a comment for those members—and I am sorry, member for Everton—who have rooms at parliament. Everyone knows about that one.

**Mr Bleijie:** And Oodgeroo.

**Mr SPEAKER:** And Oodgeroo. Yes, I am sorry, member for Oodgeroo. Our parliamentary staff who look after members for whom this place is their home away from home do a terrific job. It is not easy. It can be very isolating, but those staff who are here to give you a hand are just terrific. I want to pass on my thanks to them for making this place feel like a home away from home as best they can.

Finally, I wish to thank Craig Atkinson, Director of Corporate Services and Electorate Office Liaison; Peter Morris, Manager of HR Services; and James Robertson, Manager of Financial and Administrative Services. I thank James again who emceed the garden party. I would like to thank the records unit led by Peta Sweeney; the Sergeant at Arms, Michael Watkin; and precinct security for their work. I would like to thank the parliamentary media gallery and president Steven Wardill for their service to Queensland and for their tolerance of the election campaign.

Finally, I want to make a few personal thanks. I want to thank my Mulgrave electorate officers Bec Spencer and Kylie Bock for their service to the people of my electorate. I would also like to thank my staff in the Speaker's office—the irrepressible George Hasanakos, Coral-Leah Kemp and the soon-to-be departing Elly Bott, who, as I made reference to, is off to become a nurse and is going to do a terrific job in her new chosen career.

I thank my parents, Warren and Linda, who support my wife, Kerry, and my children—Tristan, Layla and Kobi—when I am not around to do that. They do such an important job keeping me going well. I also want to put on record that I lost my grandmother this year, Premier. It was a very, very challenging time for our family. It was pre COVID. She never saw this enormous new world that we are all currently living in. I think quite often that I am not sure what she would have made of it, but she certainly saw a lot over her time.

Estimates is still to come. The year is not over. Once it is I hope that all associated with parliament get a well-earned rest. I hope all of you can spend time with your families.

I leave you with these thoughts. We have for many years talked about digital disruption and what it has done to our economy and our society. There is an irony that it is that digital disruption which has made the biggest disruption that we have had with COVID all that more manageable and it has actually connected us in a way that we may otherwise not have had.

From my family to yours, have a merry Christmas and enjoy a safe and happy festive season. I look forward to seeing all of you as we come back in February next year.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT



**Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Leader of the House) (9.14 pm): Mr Speaker, with your indulgence, I am going to give one more thankyou. I do not normally mention my staff, but I am going to thank Darren Cann in my office. He has made my job a lot easier as Leader of the House in the 56th Parliament and in the 57th. I thank you. Darren, this is for you. I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 9.14 pm.

## ATTENDANCE

Andrew, Bailey, Bates, Bennett, Berkman, Bleijie, Bolton, Boothman, Boyce, Boyd, Brown, Bush, Camm, Crandon, Crawford, Crisafulli, D'Ath, Dametto, de Brenni, Dick, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gerber, Gilbert, Grace, Harper, Hart, Healy, Hinchliffe, Howard, Hunt, Janetzki, Katter, Kelly, King A, King S, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lister, Lui, MacMahon, Madden, Mander, McCallum, McDonald, McMahon, McMillan, Mellish, Mickelberg, Miles, Millar, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mullen, Nicholls, O'Connor, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Power, Pugh, Purdie, Richards, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Scanlon, Simpson, Skelton, Smith, Stevens, Stewart, Sullivan, Tantari, Walker, Watts, Weir, Whiting