



Speech by

**KEN TURNER**

**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Hansard 16 September 1999

**1999 STATE BUDGET**

**Mr TURNER** (Thuringowa—IND) (12.09 a.m.): I congratulate the Minister, Anna Bligh, on the Youth Justice Program. This is an excellent initiative and hopefully our wayward youth can be rehabilitated back into the community. I acknowledge also funding for the highway from Bluewater to Leichhardt Creek, which was in a very sorry state and extremely dangerous, with major potholes that could easily swallow a Mini Minor. It is well under way.

In April this year the Beattie Government Ministers rode into Thuringowa for a Cabinet meeting, spouting that they were honouring their election promise by listening to the people and building partnerships with communities. They promised to build a police station in Deeragun. The Minister even sent me plans of the new building, which I published in newsletters and community papers, informing residents of the good news. I have had numerous approaches from constituents from Deeragun, Mount Low and Bushland Beach who are all concerned with the rise in crime in that area. I have written to the police with regard to people's anxiety caused by delays in police responding to calls for help.

I had brought all of these matters to the attention of the Minister and his response at the Cabinet meeting, that is, an announcement that a police station would be built, was very welcome. It is very disappointing for me and all residents in the area to find that this project is not included in the Budget. I believe a person is only as good as their word, and that also applies to Governments.

I am also saddened by the lack of funding for unmet needs for people with disabilities. The Unmet Needs campaign also is bitterly disappointed at the Government's lack of response to unmet need for people with disabilities and their families in Queensland.

**Mr Reynolds:** What about the extra \$20m?

**Mr TURNER:** That is peanuts.

Whilst the campaign is pleased to see the Moving Ahead program for school leavers funded by \$2m annually, the second Labor Budget does nothing to help the thousands of Queenslanders still needing services after Labor's first positive Budget. How can the Smart State with "the best economy in Australia" so neglect its citizens with a disability when other States contribute so much per person? How can a Government with a low tax base supposedly committed to improving services for its citizens further reduce its tax base when its social welfare spending is at such appallingly low levels compared with those of other States? The Government's most recent data shows \$125m in new funding is required to address unmet need in Queensland. In this Budget, the Government has lowered racing taxes, reduced land tax and payroll tax and eliminated stamp duty exemption for foreign share trading. These Budget highlights are of no help to funding needs for people with disabilities. It is time that these members of our community had their needs addressed.

I delivered a speech in this House informing members that I was trying to obtain a purpose-built fishing vessel for seniors and people with disabilities. We formed the Leisure Accessible Club Inc. and have applied for funding through the Gaming Machine Community Benefit Fund. So far we have heard nothing and I am very anxious in case this funding will also be rejected. There are a lot of excited people in Townsville and Thuringowa and I hope their optimism will not be dashed. When this club is up and functioning, I intend to approach the major centres with the concept and form a network of clubs in Queensland to provide recreation services and information for people who cannot participate in able-bodied recreation. I anticipate interaction between clubs and more travel becoming possible for members, which will mean more money injected into the Queensland economy. I cannot overemphasise the importance of funding for this project, and I call on the Beattie Government to provide the funding for the fishing vessel.