



Speech by

LINDA LAVARCH

STATE MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Hansard 27 October 1999

APPROPRIATION BILL Estimates Committee B Report

Mrs LAVARCH (Kurwongbah—ALP) (3.26 p.m.): Before I speak to the report on Estimates Committee B, which examines the portfolios of the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Arts, the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and the Minister for Emergency Services, I would like to express two big thank yous. My first big thank you is to the chair of our committee, the member for Bulimba, Pat Purcell, not only for the excellent way he conducted the committee hearings for the time that I was there, but also for his compassion and understanding when I found myself in a dreadful situation of no long being able to sit during the committee meeting because of excruciating back pain. At one stage I thought that if my problem had occurred while we were examining the Estimates for Emergency Services I might have needed the Minister to call on her best officers to have me taken out on a stretcher. I thank the committee chair for that understanding. When one reads through the Hansard of the committee hearings, one realises just how much he had to go through to have me replaced. He was able to find a replacement for me. My second big thank you is to the member for Ferny Grove who at such short notice became my replacement on the committee.

In speaking to the three portfolios covered by this committee, I would firstly like to comment on the portfolio of the Minister for Police and Corrective Services and in particular the Capital Acquisition program and the Police Beat program. In relation to the Capital Acquisition program the point was made by the chair of the committee that the 1998-99 financial year had a budgeted amount of \$500,000. In effect, that is for the purchase of police housing. However, \$1.1m was expended. In his answer the Minister explained that there were some occasions when there were some good buys that they could not pass up, but there were also some occasions of necessity. In my electorate I had an occasion of necessity. That was in Dayboro where a problem had arisen for which the only resolution was to purchase a home for the second police officer. I thank the Minister for Police and Corrective Services for his response and for making sure that that second home was made available. The situation is now resolved in Dayboro to the benefit of all Dayboro residents.

I wholeheartedly endorse the sentiments of my colleagues in relation to the Police Beat program. This program is a resounding success. In Kurwongbah we have not only a Police Beat shopfront but also a community Police Beat which operates at Bray Park. I have reported to the Chamber previously that both of these Police Beats are an invaluable asset to the Pine Rivers community. I commend the Minister for his unwavering support of these programs.

Before the end of the calendar year 1999 I want to comment that it is just amazing that somebody's short-sightedness back in the 1960s and 1970s, in developing computers that only understand dates with two figures at the end, has cost us a great deal of public money in contingency planning programs for potential Y2K problems. That is the case no more so than in the area of Police and Corrective Services.

I turn to the portfolio of Emergency Services. I commend all emergency services personnel throughout Queensland for their dedication and commitment to saving lives. I also thank the Minister for her commitment to responding to the needs of the communities throughout Queensland. This is

demonstrated nowhere more than in the Capital Works Program, which sees \$6.4m provided for new ambulance stations, as well as refurbishment and residences throughout Queensland.

The electorate of Kurwongbah is one of the beneficiaries of the Capital Works Program, with a much-needed replacement ambulance station in the Brendale/Eatons Hill area. The current Brendale Ambulance Station is run out of an industrial shed. An allocation of \$450,000 has been made to build a new station at Eatons Hill. I will be holding a public meeting on Monday, 6 December so that residents can view the plans for the new station. I will also be seeking community support by setting up a local ambulance committee.

Time expired.
