



Speech by

GEOFF WILSON

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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APPROPRIATION BILL, ESTIMATES COMMITTEE F

Mr WILSON (Ferry Grove—ALP) (2.30 p.m.): It is a great pleasure that I speak as a member of Estimates Committee F. During the Budget debate I put forward my view that it was a classic Budget for a Beattie Labor Government—or for any Labor Government—because it was a Budget directed towards the battlers, families and local communities. Those principles underline the entire Budget. It was a balanced and sound Budget.

I refer to the two portfolio areas covered by Estimates Committee F. Firstly, I refer to the portfolio of Mines and Energy and a couple of matters that are of significance to my local area, which are covered in the Ministerial Portfolio Statements. As the Minister for Mines and Energy is only too well aware, the Ferry Grove electorate is a rapidly growing electorate. The suburban part of the electorate is expanding rapidly towards the north-west into the Samford Valley. The suburbs of Ferry Grove and Upper Kedron are increasing in size, as are the estates within Samford Valley, Samford Downs and nearby areas. That growth has meant a higher demand for electricity reticulation to that area.

I am pleased to see that funds are within the Budget to complete the initiative that was commenced in the previous Budget of a new substation at Samford, including a 33,000 voltage overhead line that runs 15 kilometres from Samford to Brendale. This new substation will cost \$3.6m. The substation will supply additional electricity capacity to cater for growth in Mount Nebo, Mount Glorious and Samford.

Another very worthwhile initiative is the investment by Powerlink of approximately \$7.5m to establish a 110 kV switching substation at Upper Kedron. That will upgrade the capacity and reliability of the electricity supply in my local area. The supply of electricity within the Samford Valley, particularly Mount Glorious and Mount Nebo, is a very, very important matter. Fortunately, a lot of that valley has retained a lot of its natural vegetation and there is still a lot of wildlife. Therefore, the risks of damage to the powerlines and power disruption are considerably greater than there would be in the metropolitan area. These initiatives to increase the reliability and continuity of electricity supply for Mount Nebo, Mount Glorious and the Samford Valley are warmly welcomed.

I commend the Minister for Energex's quick response to community concerns about power outages. I have found that every time I need to respond to a constituent's complaint about power outages in the valley, Energex responds very, very quickly to that concern and gets on to the problem.

I now want to make a couple of observations in relation to the portfolio of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations. Much of the Ministerial Portfolio Statements relating to Employment concerned labour market programs, which are listed within the committee's report. I want to make it very clear to this Chamber—if it was not already clear—that the coalition Opposition is deadset ideologically opposed to labour market programs. The Leader of the Liberal Party has called them phoney jobs. They have no heart in getting young people especially and long-term unemployed people skilled and trained so that they can take up employment. The coalition would abolish, as they did Federally, many of the labour market programs.

Time expired.
