



Speech by
Mr TERRY SULLIVAN
MEMBER FOR CHERMSIDE

Hansard 23 August 2000

APPROPRIATION BILL, ESTIMATES COMMITTEE D

Mr SULLIVAN (ChermSIDE—ALP) (4.23 p.m.): In supporting the recommendations of Estimates Committee D, I thank the chair, Ms Karen Struthers, the member for Archerfield, for her excellent leadership of the committee and thank the research and support staff for their work in helping the committee to proceed so smoothly.

The areas of Health and Education take up about 50% of the State's total Budget and are, of course, major influences on the lives of so many individuals and families in our State. I am pleased to be a member of the caucus Health and Education committees. I thank Minister Wendy Edmond and Minister Dean Wells for their leadership and encouragement in participating in those committees.

With respect to the specific areas of expenditure in Health, I support the additional \$9.3m to enhance adult acute and community mental health services throughout the State, specifically, the siting of the new mental health unit at the Prince Charles Hospital. Recently, I had the advantage of touring that unit with my parliamentary colleague John Goss and I was impressed not only by the facilities but also by the attention and care that the staff give to their patients. It takes special people to work with patients who have a mental illness. I congratulate the continuing staff and the new staff who have come to the Prince Charles mental health unit on the work that they have done and are continuing to do.

I also welcome the extra \$4.5m in State funding for home and community care services, which will attract an extra \$8.2m in Commonwealth funding. My current electorate of ChermSIDE and the new electorate of Stafford, for which I hope to be the elected representative next year, contains one of the highest percentage of residents aged over 60 throughout the State. Therefore, it is not surprising that home and community care services are in high demand in the inner northern suburbs of northern Brisbane, which has such a high elderly population. I congratulate groups such as the Bernie Brae Senior Citizens Centre on their coordination of services to residents of the north side area through the Home and Community Care and the Home Assist and Home Secure Programs, which operate out of Bernie Brae.

Also, I was pleased that funding has been made available for the treatment of diabetes in the Prince Charles Hospital district. This area runs from the Brisbane River north to the Pine Rivers Shire and has more than 10,000 patients with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. I am really pleased that the Minister has put finances in the community health teams, which will be helping in the preventive side of diabetes rather than waiting for the patient to come to the more acute stage of the illness and, therefore, require intensive treatment, acute treatment, in hospitals.

I congratulate the Minister also on the smooth co-location of the Holy Spirit Northside hospital in the grounds of the Prince Charles Hospital. I congratulate both the Queensland Health and the Holy Spirit staff and executive directors on the work that they have done in making this a very smooth transition. The co-location is going well. It is worthy of note that there have been 10 years of transplants at the Prince Charles Hospital, with heart, lung and heart/lung transplants. That work is continuing and particular note should be taken of the paediatric cardiac services that are provided.

In terms of the education outlays, I congratulate the Minister on the secondary schools renewal program. Both the Wavell State High School and Kedron State High School are old schools which, in their day, provided the most modern facilities to the students but which, as the years have gone by, have fallen behind the State average, or fallen behind the standards that apply in the newer schools. This shot in the arm is not only going to improve the educational standard but also the morale of those who work in 50 year old buildings. The Minister is really taking a leading role in this program in making sure that students from the older suburbs receive a fair treatment so that it is not just people in the newer areas where the new schools are being built who have modern equipment.

From the educational side of things, I take particular pride in the Minister's work in looking at boys' educational outcomes. This is linked in some ways to behaviour management funding as well. As a teacher of more than 20 years in boys schools and the father of four boys, I know that there can be difficulties in the education of boys. The money and effort that the Minister is putting into numeracy and literacy programs is most welcome.

Finally, I encourage the Minister and the department to keep going with overseas students and offshore programs, because the export income that is generated for this State is really making us a leader as the Smart State. I congratulate both Ministers and their departments and support the recommendation of the committee.
