



Speech by

**BARBARA STONE**

**MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD**

---

Hansard 21 June 2001

**BUDGET DEBATE 2001**

**Ms STONE** (Springwood—ALP) (9.00 p.m.): I rise to participate positively in tonight's debate. The Beattie Labor government is continuing to provide responsible economic management for all Queenslanders. This budget gets back to basics. It is doing the things that need to be done. There are significant increases in funding to the areas of high priority such as jobs, health, education and police. This budget also focuses on new infrastructure and supporting industries for the future.

Let's look at employment. In the Logan area the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative has been successful; 328 long-term unemployed people have gained up to six months paid work and job experience on 24 community projects, which have received funding totalling \$3.68 million under the Community Jobs Plan. The Community Jobs Plan is yet another excellent initiative that has a direct effect on the people of Springwood. Currently the plan is under way and involves several schools in my electorate.

I had the pleasure of visiting the participants at Springwood State High School. The participants spoke positively of the plan and the new skills they were learning, while the school community is extremely pleased with the landscaping it has gained. The plan will continue at Springwood Road State School, Springwood Central State School, Kimberley Park State School and Shailer Park State School, all of which will benefit greatly from these projects.

I am pleased that job and training opportunities will continue under the \$470 million Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative. The people of Springwood know that the recent federal budget delivered not one job creation incentive to assist Australia's young people. It is refreshing to see real political will and initiative demonstrated by the Queensland government in relation to youth employment. \$10 million has been allocated to the Youth for the Environment and Communities program that will give young, unemployed people a taste of working in green jobs. This program will link unemployed young people with careers in an industry of growing importance and growing employment opportunities. At the same time they will be participating in projects to improve the natural environments of their local communities.

The Community Jobs Plan and the Youth for the Environment and Local Communities program are just two of the many programs under this government that deliver positive long-term outcomes for the people of Springwood. I will work hard to ensure job opportunities continue to be created for the people of Springwood.

Long-term unemployed people aged over 45 are suffering. Their knowledge and skills are being wasted and we as a community are not gaining the benefits of their talents. The Beattie Labor government is reaching out with a helping hand. The Experience Pays program provides cash incentives to private employers to employ a long-term unemployed person aged 45 years or over for a 12-month period.

I stated in my maiden speech that I am staunchly committed to ensuring that people get the opportunities to study at various levels and at various times throughout their lives, that is, a commitment to lifelong learning. This government will allocate \$726.4 million for vocational education and training services. TAFE Queensland's 16 institutes expect to offer around 350,000 student places in the year 2001-02. Construction of a new campus at Browns Plains is a direct benefit to the people of Springwood. Recently the east-west bus link service was introduced. The people of Springwood will be

able to access this facility via this new bus service. The people of Springwood now have a greater choice of where they access the TAFE network.

When we think of training, we think of the Smart State. Recently I visited the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, a centre that is truly representative of the Smart State. It is committed to excellence in research and postgraduate teaching in biology, chemistry and computing. New knowledge industries are vital to our nation's future and growth. \$100 million has been allocated to set up an innovative Smart State research facility fund to facilitate the development of the science, technology and communication infrastructure needed to attract knowledge industries to Queensland.

It is also comforting to many Queenslanders to see the Labor government take a responsible and careful view of new areas of scientific discovery. Biotechnology is raising significant social and ethical issues. This government had declared its support for biotechnology on the basis that it will be scientifically, socially and ethically responsible, and I congratulate the government on the stand that it has taken on this.

One of the duties I enjoy most is going to our schools and talking to students, staff and parents. What is so exciting is that the children I talk to cannot tell me what jobs they will be doing in the future because their jobs do not exist at the moment; we cannot put a name on them at this point. Science, technology and knowledge are advancing faster than ever before in human history. Information technology and telecommunications are rapidly expanding, offering new opportunities and pathways to successful and rewarding careers. That is why it is so important to prepare our children.

An amount of \$3 million over the next three years is provided for the ongoing expansion of the new basics program—a program that consists of an innovative framework of curriculum, teaching and assessment to equip students for the new workplace and industries of the future. This government is addressing the needs of an ever-changing society through the development of responsible education policies such as the QSE-2010. Additional teachers, the \$50 million Triple R maintenance program and a record budget in education are a sign of this government's commitment to build stronger school systems, support our teachers and realise the vision of the Smart State.

When I first became the candidate for the seat of Springwood I visited many of the schools in the electorate. The Springwood Road State School was of particular concern to me. They had an increasing number of enrolments which had put pressure on the existing facilities. The music program had to be put on the back shelf as no classroom was available to be used as a music room. This was only one of the problems of the overcrowded school. Today I thank the former Minister for Education, the Honourable Dean Wells, and the current minister, the Honourable Anna Bligh, for taking the time to listen to my representations on behalf of the school community. Shortly, the construction of a fantastic music room designed by the school community will begin. That will certainly go a long way to facilitate the development of the many talented music students at the school.

This government is listening. It listened to the concerns of the Springwood Road State School and has delivered \$173,000 for a two-space relocatable building. I know this will go a long way to enhancing the learning environment at the school. I am confident that this grassroots consultation will continue to flourish over the term of this government, and I will continue to be a strong voice for the people of Springwood and represent their issues.

For some time now the St Matthews Primary School at Loganholme has been fighting for the safety of the children entering and leaving the school grounds by crossing Bryants Road. It gives me great pleasure that, once again, the local community has been heard. I stated in my maiden speech and during the time I campaigned that the most important job I have is to listen to the electorate. Today I can say that not only have I listened and represented this school community, but the Minister has also listened. To the Minister for Transport, the Honourable Steve Bredhauer, I say thank you on behalf of the school community.

An amount of \$50,000 has been provided for a bus and car set-down area at St Matthews Primary School. I know that not only are the parents concerned about curriculum and school facilities but the safety of their children is their highest priority. I am proud to be part of a government that has listened to that message. I look forward to working with the minister during the creation of the Springwood South East Busway interchange, which is due to begin later this year. This will improve public transport opportunities for the people of Springwood and will also drastically reduce the travelling time to the city.

The construction of the Springwood interchange will provide employment directly and indirectly due to the increase in travellers to the Springwood business area. The Springwood business area is home to the only two high-rise, privately funded towers in the Pacific Motorway corridor. The bus interchange and new ramp for motor vehicle access will provide direct access to the business district. This business district is also home to the Department of State Development. I am pleased that financial support will be continued for the delivery of workshops and seminars to further develop business opportunities and entrepreneurial businesses. Throughout the state the workshops and seminars

proved to be popular, with over 33,000 attendees last year. Another developing area in my electorate is Loganholme. The opening of the Pacific Motorway has led to the development around the Logan Hyperdome and the Loganholme industrial estate. I am sure that this development will continue to prosper under the Beattie Labor government.

The people of Springwood often tell me that they want a safe and secure community. This budget contains a range of law and order initiatives to tackle crime and make our communities safer. The Police Service budget will be the largest in the service's history and the building of the Loganholme Police Station has been well received by the local community. The people of Loganholme, Shailer Park, Cornubia and Logandale will be well serviced by the construction of a new 24-hour police station at Loganholme. This will reduce pressure on existing police officers in the Slacks Creek and Logan districts. With the introduction of another police station, police numbers will further increase in the electorate. This police station is another example of the Beattie Labor government's commitment to tackling crime in the suburbs.

Springwood people are very active and enjoy the sporting and recreation venues across the electorate. This government is putting \$1.5 million into campaigns that will encourage more people, including me, to get up and get active. Funds will also be used to assist community sport and recreation organisations to develop and deliver services. It is with immense joy that I have attended many sporting carnivals, trophy days and sporting events throughout my electorate. Many of these clubs and events are fully dependent upon volunteers. I take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers in the sporting community for contributing to the health and enjoyment of our local community. Because of the contribution of volunteers, I am pleased to see the continuation of the popular Thanks Coach, Thanks Ref campaign.

Another new initiative for local sporting organisations is \$500,000 to encourage parents to become involved in sports administration. This program will include forums, workshops and training resources to support the continued development of coaches, instructors, officials and volunteers. Sport and recreation are an essential part of the Australian way of life. I look forward to representing my sporting clubs to ensure that they receive a fair share of these funds in order to develop. Child protection is another issue that is important to all members. I am extremely pleased to see the announcement of 50 new child protection workers. This means that the Beattie Labor government has introduced 250 new front-line child protection workers in three years. This budget has increased spending in the areas of disabilities by 11.6 per cent and families by 12 per cent, the biggest percentage increase in any department. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work done by the minister, Judy Spence, who has been working hard on significant issues in these areas. This massive increase obviously is the result of her dedication and representations in these areas.

This government has focused on families, people with disabilities, the young, the unemployed and the mature. A greater number of retirees will have access to government concessions and business discounts through a fairer Seniors Card means test. Seniors aged 60 to 64 who have a low income Health Care Card issued by the Commonwealth government will be eligible for the benefits of a Seniors Card. They will receive concessions on electricity, registration and transport. This is about giving back to those who have contributed to our communities for decades.

The people of Queensland are tired of having basic services and resources slashed at the hands of a mean-spirited federal government. This state government has continued to pick up the \$20 million shortfall in funding to Queensland's public dental health services dropped by the Howard coalition government—a government that I am sure the people of Queensland will pay back in the same way, that is, drop the Howard coalition government and elect a government that is committed to providing a quality health system, like the Beazley Labor team. Over 16,000 people who have been waiting for public health dental services will be assisted. Funding will be directed to clinics like Logan, where demand is high and waiting lists are long. This will certainly have a direct effect on my constituents in Springwood. I am proud to be a part of a government that is committed to a quality health care system for all Queenslanders.

The Beattie government has invested in the long-term future of this state through record spending in education and programs such as New Basics and 2010. I am confident that investment in knowledge industries will result in long-term employment and economic outcomes for the people of Queensland. This budget is not only about giving the money for the vehicle of the Public Service to operate; this budget is about people. It is about investing in their futures, investing in education and their health services. The people of Queensland voted overwhelmingly to elect the Beattie government for another term. Their confidence has not been misplaced. This budget is responsible and affordable—a budget for all Queenslanders. I congratulate the Treasurer on his first budget and the great work he does as Deputy Premier.

---