



Speech by

CARRYN SULLIVAN

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

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BUDGET DEBATE 2001

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.56 p.m.): I am delighted to rise to add my full support to the Beattie government's first budget in its second term. I applaud the Treasurer, the Honourable Terry Mackenroth, and his diligent staff for bringing down what can only be described as a fair and reasonable deal across a broad spectrum of groups within the community throughout Queensland.

This is a first for me, and I am proud to say that I had a small influence on at least one of the outcomes. Prior to the 17 February state election, I made a promise and, with the help of a number of people who helped me lobby, I was able to secure funding for that promise. That is good news for the residents of Pumicestone. It shows that they have put their faith in a government of its word. Premier Peter Beattie's government promised and it delivered. As the Treasurer stated, no new taxes; not one promise broken.

The announcement of the funding for a Morayfield police shopfront in this year's budget was well received by the residents of Caboolture south and Morayfield. People who have lobbied hard and sent letters of support for the proposal should be commended for their efforts. The local councillor, Lynette Devereaux, and the Morayfield Shopping Centre Manager, Sharon White, also put their weight behind the push for more police in an effort to ease the growing concerns of both residents and shoppers about the crime rate, particularly car theft. I congratulate Minister Tony McGrady and his hardworking staff on taking the necessary measures to ensure that the safety and security of residents remains a primary focus for this government.

As a retired but still registered primary schoolteacher and the mother of two high-school aged children, I take great interest in education at all levels. I recognise its importance and I am proud to say that the government has delivered a record \$4.3 billion Education Budget, which accounts for just less than one quarter of all government spending. The Minister for Education, the Honourable Anna Bligh, and her outstanding staff ought to be congratulated on the equitable way in which the funding has been allocated throughout this state.

Ms Keech: Hear, hear! I agree with that.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: I take the member's interjection and thank her. This Education budget is positive. It delivers a profound increase of 8.9 per cent in the state government's funding for the Education portfolio and a 9.1 per cent increase in state funding to Queensland's schools. At least 135 additional teachers will be employed in 2001-02 as part of the Beattie government's commitment to employ an additional 800 teachers over four years and there will be \$50 million for a much-welcomed Triple R maintenance program over three years. A sum of \$220m is provided for teachers' salaries across the state.

On a local level, in Pumicestone funds have been approved for \$279,366 in total education capital spending, including \$53,460 for Caboolture High School's phase 3 renewal program, \$80,277 for the construction of a special education unit with a covered link at the Caboolture High School, a \$17,500 contribution towards the provision of a bus set-down area at the high school, \$145,629 for a relocatable building for Minimbah State School and \$200,000 growth funding for 60 additional student places at Caboolture TAFE.

The Beattie government has delivered on its promises in health. There are significant increases in funding and resources, with a total of \$382 million for hospitals and other health facilities, including \$10 million for upgrading state nursing homes. I congratulate the minister, the Honourable Wendy Edmond, and her dedicated staff not only for putting priorities on the expected health areas but also for making funds available for some new initiatives as well.

The reduction of waiting lists is always a difficult task, but the Beattie government has tackled it head on by providing an extra \$15 million for elective surgery and an extra \$5 million for oral health. This funding will help people who have been waiting for a lengthy time for public health dental services and I will ensure that the Caboolture Dental Clinic gets its fair share as it is a high demand area.

Ms Keech: I know you will, because you are such a good member.

Mrs CARRYN SULLIVAN: I thank the honourable member for her compliment. Queensland's public dental health service is now the largest in Australia with 194 mobile clinics and 255 fixed clinics in operation.

A key initiative is providing \$5.6 million to place 100 nurses in secondary schools across the state. A sum of \$5.37 million has been allocated to community organisations over two years to help tackle alcohol and illicit drug abuse.

On the local scene, the Caboolture Hospital received \$650,000 for an intensive care unit and a boost of \$3.3 million per year for critical care services. Home Assist in Pumicestone is to receive a further \$128,000 and \$58,000 will be made available to assist not-for-profit community organisations to provide crisis accommodation for people who are homeless, in crisis and in need of transitional support.

One of the biggest success stories of the Beattie Labor government is the Community Renewal Program being funded and implemented across the state. I am fortunate to have in my electorate the program in the Caboolture South-Morayfield area. Locals have embraced the concept, which has instilled pride in the area, and they are working towards building a better and safer community. The notional allocation for the Caboolture South-Morayfield project over the next three years is \$2.7 million. Expended funds to date amount to \$696,441 and approved funds are \$900,000. Projects under way include footpaths, tree scapes, lighting, public meeting rooms and improvements to parks. These works were identified by the residents as areas of need and I congratulate the Minister for Housing, the Honourable Robert Swarten, and his loyal staff on their help in improving the area's facilities and the quality of life of the local residents.

The Department of Housing has allocated \$600,000 for a continuing public housing Capital Works Program in Pumicestone, and there has been a significant rise from \$74.3 million to \$90.1 million in public housing maintenance across the state. My senior electorate officer, Ralda Reid, and myself, along with Department of Housing staffers Phil Frethey and Diana Roper, toured areas of affordable housing recently to engage the extent of maintenance needed. The residents we spoke to were genuinely happy with their accommodation, just wanting minor works carried out. I am pleased that the Department of Housing has put in place a number of job opportunities that involve 190 apprentices under the Housing Industry Trade Training Scheme, HITT, providing the skills that those young people need to gain future full-time employment.

Not enough is said about the interstate migration of people from other states to Queensland and its effects on job figures. The member for Robina scoffed at the suggestion that the migration affects job figures, but if he would familiarise himself with the statistics, he would see that they show 19,012 southerners alone came to live in Queensland during the 1999-2000 period, which is a dramatic increase of 10 per cent over the previous year. In my electorate, I am told that just under 1,000 new residents have moved into the area this year, and other areas have had similar increases. Despite this, the Beattie Labor government is creating real jobs and real opportunities for Queenslanders.

I congratulate the Premier and his efficient staff on maintaining their emphasis on job creation and training. A sum of \$100 million has been allocated to the Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative to help create 13,200 jobs and \$726.4 million will be invested in vocational training and education, including \$538.8 million for TAFE Queensland. This reflects the government's objective to create a highly skilled and adaptable work force to meet the needs of our state as a Smart State.

Unlike the federal government with its GST and BAS debacle, this state government has not deserted small business; in fact, quite the opposite. This is evident in the fact that 18 State Development officers have been funded to help small business. We are very fortunate to have one in Caboolture which all Pumicestone businesses can access. In fact, I am currently working with the director, Kim Steer, on more ways in which businesses on Bribie Island and surrounds can have even greater access to what State Development has to offer.

A sum of \$17 million has been allocated over the next four years for initiatives designed to develop business. This is supported by funding for business advisers, development officers, workshops

and seminars. Those measures will enhance management skills, and should help in more efficient productivity leading, in the long-term, to more employment.

On the environment, an expanded maintenance program of \$40 million over four years has been allocated to enhance national parks, and will include improved access and the employment of 140 trainee rangers. We are fortunate to have access to 10 of those in Pumicestone and they have been learning a variety of skills from hands-on experience. The budget will also provide the necessary funding for equipment and supplies to help them maintain the parks. The recently passed South East Queensland Forestry Agreement was a landmark in native forest management and will go a long way to protect those environmentally sensitive, biodiverse areas. A sum of \$6.1 million has been allocated to secure some of those and some coastal lands.

The government will continue the Better Parks initiative with a further commitment to \$2.8 million, and I would like to congratulate the Minister for Environment, the Honourable Dean Wells, and his helpful staff for continuing to promote the importance of the environment and the productive consultation process throughout the wider community to develop a Queensland parks system master plan. That is a demonstration of this government's commitment to enhancing the state's protected areas. Now, protected lands, including national parks, occupy four per cent of Queensland, which is a three per cent increase since 1990.

The Seniors Card was a Goss Labor government initiative, and I thank the Minister for Families, Youth and Community Care, the Honourable Judy Spence, and her conscientious staff for allowing a greater number of our retirees access to a number of government concessions and business discounts through a fairer Seniors Card means test. The government has expanded the Seniors Card test to recognise 60 to 64 year olds who have a low income health care card. This move will see a further 1,430 seniors now become eligible for the benefits that a lot of other Queenslanders enjoy. This government is simply giving a little bit back to those who have given a lot.

One of the key elements of my first speech in this House highlighted the plight of foster carers. I am pleased to announce that \$8.4 million in additional funding will go to this worthy group. I trust that it will be enough to make a difference to their lives and those who are entrusted in their care. Time does not permit me to cover all aspects of this budget, but I hope that it makes a worthwhile difference to many, many Queenslanders.
