



Speech by

**ANDREW McNAMARA**

**MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY**

---

Hansard 20 June 2002

### **BUDGET SPEECH 2002**

**Mr McNAMARA** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (2.52 p.m.): It is with great pleasure that I rise to support the appropriation bills. This year's budget delivers for all Queenslanders, but particularly families and children, as we have just heard. I congratulate the Treasurer on openly targeting the critical areas of education, health, families and disability services. The budget papers provided are incredibly detailed and transparent. I wish to thank the Treasurer and his staff and department for the effort that went into making details of this year's government expenditure so accessible to a member such as myself. It is important that I am able to quickly and accurately inform the people of my electorate of Hervey Bay what is in the budget for them, and these documents allow me to do that.

There are a couple of very important global figures which I would like to mention before turning to some specifics in my electorate. This budget provides for expenditure on education to rise by 5.8 per cent, on health by 6.7 per cent, on disability services by 8.8 per cent, and on family services by 15.5 per cent. These are very significant expenditure increases on the areas which I know my electorate considers to be the most important. Education, health and disability and family services were the issues which came up over and over when I was doorknocking in the 18 months leading up to last year's election. Of course, the budget also addresses the other area of critical concern—jobs—by providing for a Capital Works Program of \$4.8 billion, with 56 per cent of that to be spent outside Brisbane.

In the constant public debate about the need to improve services in areas such as education and health, I think we sometimes miss the big picture—the sheer scale of government expenditure. There is in some quarters a mistaken perception that the only items of interest in the budget are new programs or projects, as if the billions of dollars of recurrent expenditure and funds to finish partly completed projects are of no consequence. This approach is wrong and misleading. For example, the budget allocation for Education Queensland of \$5.1 billion includes around \$3 billion in wages alone. Education Queensland currently has around 62,000 people on the fortnightly payroll. The impact of this portfolio on the entire Queensland economy and on the prosperity of every town and city in Queensland with a school cannot be overestimated. The Education wages bill is the lifeblood of many towns, but too often discussion about education is limited to consideration of those matters which are funded from the two per cent of the Education budget which is discretionary.

I wish to turn now to briefly consider some of the new and ongoing projects to be funded in this budget in my electorate. I am particularly pleased about two new announcements in the education area. Pialba State School is to receive \$120,000 to allow for the construction of a new activities hall. This is a project which the school management and P&C have been pursuing for some years, and I have been working with them since being elected. I know that the deputy principal, Trevor McDonald, will be particularly pleased as he has been a strong and consistent supporter of this project. I thank him for the help that he has given me in understanding the school's need for this facility. I am also delighted with the announcement of \$286,000 for expansion of the Kawungan State School's Learning and Development Centre (Technology). This centre provides IT training for teachers in my region. It is vital that teachers have the appropriate skills to teach students properly in the ever-changing area of information technology. The expansion of the Learning and Development Centre is great news for Hervey Bay as it consolidates our growing reputation as a regional centre of education.

I am also delighted with the provision of \$906,000 to fund the Great Walk of Queensland track on Fraser Island. This is a very different capital works project which will create a significant tourism attraction on the island. It will offer a new tourism experience and attract a different group of tourists to explore Fraser Island in a low-impact way. This project will be a winner not just for the tourist operators but also for all businesses in Hervey Bay which benefit from tourists coming to the city.

I am also very pleased with the announcement of \$400,000 as the first part of a \$1.5 million upgrade of the Hervey Bay Police Station. The Hervey Bay Police Station is a very hardworking facility but it is now at capacity. Land has been purchased for the extension, which will include extra accommodation for the criminal investigation branch and other police functions. The Hervey Bay police do a great job, and I have the highest regard for Senior Sergeant Bernie Martin and his staff. They need and deserve these new facilities.

Time does not permit me to list all of the important ongoing or new funding for projects in my electorate, but I note that they will have a significant impact on services and facilities for residents and tourists alike.

Urangan State High, which is a first-class school under the leadership of principal Ross Zelow, will receive \$20,000 to complete construction of its administration building and \$150,000 for extra classroom space. There is \$55,000 provided in this budget for the repainting of buildings at Hervey Bay State High School and at Urangan Point State School.

I welcome the allocation of \$300,000 for upgrades to the Hervey Bay and Maryborough nursing homes. These are vital facilities, and the upgrades will please residents and their families.

This year will also see completion of the construction of the bund wall at the Urangan boat harbour to provide a permanent spoil disposal option and keep the harbour well dredged. The Urangan boat harbour is a vital economic asset for Hervey Bay. The fact that the \$3.2 million provided in this budget is to complete the job started in the previous budget year in no way lessens the importance of the project. I know that all users of the harbour are delighted to see the funding provided to finish the work and allow for dredging ahead of next year's whale-watching season.

I welcome the eight new rangers for Fraser Island. I am also very pleased to see the provision of \$1 million to complete the new police station on Fraser Island this year. I particularly welcome the allocation of more than \$1.1 million for housing works. Hervey Bay's population is now 46,000, on the latest census figures. It is the largest city in the Wide Bay, and that population growth is expected to continue to 54,000 in 2010 and 74,000 in 2020. This budget caters for that growth. It is a budget for people, for families and especially for children. It provides opportunities for jobs and has a proper emphasis on education, training, health, tourism, disability services and families. I am proud to support this budget and commend the Treasurer for his skilful mix of improved service provision and capital works projects. I commend the bills to the House.