



Speech by

CHRIS CUMMINS

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Hansard 20 June 2002

BUDGET SPEECH 2002

Mr CUMMINS (Kawana—ALP) (11.47 p.m.): It is with much pleasure that I can report good news for Sunshine Coast residents in this year's state government budget. Sunshine Coast residents will share in the benefits of the Beattie Labor government's state budget. The 2002-03 budget provides money for the types of activities that will impact on the lives of all families in the local area. It focuses on essential service areas such as Families, Education, Health, law and order while maintaining a commitment to the development of the Smart State.

There are many more positive outcomes within this budget for families in my electorate. However, considering the lateness of the hour, I seek leave to incorporate the remainder of my speech in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The Peter Beattie State Government has shown with record Funding for my Electorate that our commitment is GENUINE!

The 2002-03 State Budget provides money for the range of activities that will impact on the lives of all our families.

This State Budget focuses on essential service areas such as Families, Education, Health and Law and Order while maintaining a commitment to the development of the Smart State. Great News for my Electorate includes:

\$10.3 million for the TAFE at Mountain Creek, as part of \$13.05 million for the Cooloola Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE.

\$11 million towards construction of the Kawana Arterial link between the Nicklin Way at Warana and the Sunshine Coast Motorway (west).

\$5.5 million for Sunshine Coast employment programs.

\$1.6 million for Home Assist Secure Scheme to help the elderly remain safe and comfortable in their own homes.

\$3 million for the establishment of Chancellor High School.

\$606,000 to further develop Great Walks of Queensland on the Sunshine Coast.

\$400,000 for Mountain Creek High School to build new classrooms/education facilities.

\$257,000 for maintenance/upgrades to public housing

\$64,000 for Buderim Mountain School for maintenance/ upgrades/painting.

\$75,000 towards Kawana Tennis Club four new Tennis Courts.

\$75,000 towards extending Maroochy Beach Gymnastic's Association Gym.

\$36,000 for the Headland Bowls Club for improvements.

\$33,000 for Sunshine Coast Netball Association towards shade & seating.

\$10,000 for Sunshine Coast Hockey Association towards shade structures.

And \$4.6 million towards Energex upgrades of our electricity supply right across the Sunshine Coast.

All Queenslanders should applaud the additional 200 health professionals, 382 teachers and 307 police officers to be employed around the State next financial year and will obviously benefit from the record funding being pumped into vital areas such as Families, Health and Education.

EDUCATION up by 5.8 percent to \$4.2 billion.

Around 25% of the total general State Government sector budget is spent on Education, reflecting the State Government's commitment to this vital portfolio.

This Budget will deliver a landmark year for Education as the Beattie Government commits to plans for significant reforms to Queensland's school system.

This year's substantial investment in Education will progress the Queensland the Smart State—Education and Training Reforms for our Future, whilst Significantly increasing resources for Teachers, Students and also improving facilities.

More than \$158 million over the next four years to help undertake the most significant reform package in the history of the Queensland school system including investment in Information and Communication Technologies and enhancing pathways for young people from school to work, training or further education. This will include the trial of a full-time preparatory (or prep) year, Improved access for students and teachers to information and communication technology and proposals that aim to make Senior schooling fit better with vocational Education, Training and work opportunities.

We want to build a prosperous future for our State based on a highly educated, skilled and flexible workforce.

The focus of this Budget is on delivering an education system that can respond effectively to the demands of a rapidly changing and technology focused society.

MORE TEACHERS

An extra 158 teachers, over and above annual growth, will be employed in 2003 to provide intensive learning support to students and schools most in need. This is the third instalment in the Government's commitment to employ 800 extra teachers over four years. In addition, 224 teachers will be employed to meet enrolment growth.

\$75.3 million has been provided for State School Teacher salary increases.

\$158.3 million over four years for the Reforms, including 3000 more computers, 19,400 replacement computers, another 1600 classrooms connected to the Internet, ICT training and support for teachers and support for secondary school students to improve retention rates;

\$60 million over four years for services to students with disabilities;

382 Extra Teachers which includes 158 Teachers allocated over and above usual annual growth;

\$151 million to continue to improve student literacy;

\$16.7 million to renovate schools under the Triple R program.

HEALTH FUNDING up by 6.7 percent to \$4.3 billion.

More than \$160 million over four years in a package of initiatives to deliver health services including Home and Community Care, extra Emergency department staff, Hospital information management upgrades and the provision of vital medical equipment.

Record recurrent health funding targets vital services.

More than 200 additional front-line health staff, major investments in new medical technology and a continuing effort to reduce waiting times for elective surgery are key initiatives in this State Health Budget.

This budget marks the completion of projects in Labor's 10-year \$2.8 billion Statewide Health Building Program, the largest health capital works program ever undertaken in Australia.

Labor has re-built the State's health system.

One of Queensland Health's greatest asset, is its staff.

This budget provides for the employment of a range of additional staff to deliver front-line health services, including more nurses, doctors and allied health professionals.

I can give an assurance that every effort will be made to continue to attract and retain our nurse workforce against a background of national and international shortages.

Other Highlights in the Health Budget include:

\$38.6 million for high tech Hospital Equipment

\$10.6 million to enhance Mental Health Services, including the employment of 55 extra staff

an extra \$7.3 million for Home and Community Care services.

\$2.4 million to enhance services on the Sunshine Coast, including 30 extra beds at Nambour and funding for two additional ICU beds.

an extra \$4 million for additional medical staff in Emergency Departments state-wide and extra medical, nursing and allied health staff for adult rehabilitation services.

LAW & ORDER up 6.8% to \$917 million.

Under the Beattie Labor Government, police funding has increased by \$177 million or about 24% since the 1999-00 budget. We are spending more on police and putting more police on the beat than any Government before us!

In addition, more than \$115 million will be provided over four years for a law and order package that will include enhancement of the Police service information management systems and capital infrastructure, improvements to the Queensland Coronial System and drug court trials.

A net increase to Police numbers of more than 300 officers will again form the corner stone of this year's budget.

This Government is delivering on its commitment to have Police numbers increased by record amounts to reach the target of 9100 officers by 2005.

307 additional Police positions and 47 civilian positions.

\$30.5 million to continue major capital works projects.

\$21 million for the ongoing implementation of the Police Service information Management Strategic plan 2001-10, including a range of projects that will contribute to an Integrated Justice Information System.

\$1.5 million in funding to progress new Tactical Crime Squads.

An additional \$2 million to extend the drug court trial,

\$1.7 million to expand urinalysis drug testing Statewide for offenders on supervision orders.

An extra \$100,000 to expand sex offender management programs.

All police regions will receive a budget increase. This will provide additional capacity for enhanced delivery of services to the Queensland community.

The Beattie Labor Government is committed to ensuring Queensland courts are modern, accessible and safe. In 2002-03 a further \$39 million will be invested on new courts and upgrades to our existing facilities.

A New Confiscation Regime

A Criminal Assets Confiscation Unit will be established in the ODPP as part of the government's new confiscation regime.

In addition to a new civil confiscation scheme, the existing conviction-based scheme will be expanded and strengthened, providing major weapons in the fight against drug trafficking and organised crime.

These new laws will give Law Enforcement agencies powers to seize assets and freeze bank accounts of criminals. The Criminal Assets Confiscation Unit will work with Police to gather evidence and act against criminals. Proof that our Government is Tough on Crime!

COMMUNITY CONFERENCING

The State's Community Conferencing program will be expanded to the Sunshine Coast. I've been actively lobbying for the introduction of community conferencing and it's great to see the Minister for Families Judy Spence has heard the calls and recognised the need for the option on the Sunshine Coast. I thank both her & the Treasurer on behalf of Sunshine Coast residents.

This Community Conferencing program has proven to be highly effective in not only making young offenders face up to the consequences of their actions but has also served to keep them out of the juvenile justice system.

The Community Conferencing option allows police and the courts to divert young offenders aged between 10 and 16 from further contact with the formal youth justice system.

It's purpose is to reach a formal agreement—signed by the young person, the police and the victim—on how the young person can repair the harm that has been caused.

Office of the State Coroner

The Budget provides funding of \$13.7 million over the next four years to comprehensively overhaul Queensland's coronial system and establish an Office of the State Coroner.

The new Office of the State Coroner will ensure comprehensive and timely coronial investigations of suspicious and accidental deaths, better detection of trends in particular deaths and informed recommendations which prevent future similar deaths and injuries.

The funding will specifically be used to

Increase the capacity for post-mortems

Provide additional grief counselling services and information to help victims' families; and

Participate in the National Coronial Information System which is a database for sharing data with other states and the Commonwealth to help detect national trends.

Many of the changes to the State's coronial system will be embodied in a new Coroners Act to be introduced into Parliament later this year.

A BUDGET FOR THE SMART STATE

This Budget will enhance Queensland's position as the Smart State and provide a platform for growth in real jobs and the economy. Queensland is currently creating jobs at a much faster rate than the national average!

It is a philosophy that we want to apply to everything we do, to give children, their parents and their grandparents, the skills and ability to adapt and move forward with the changes in our global society.

JOBS

Over the twelve months to May, Queensland created over 30 percent of the jobs created in Australia and almost 80 percent of the national full time jobs.

As a result we expect our unemployment rate to fall to a year average 7.5%—the lowest in over a decade. We are committed to provided more & more NEW Jobs!

FAMILIES Department Funding up 15.5 percent to \$518 million.

Families are crucial to the Government's vision for Queensland's future. The importance of Queensland Families to the Government's vision for the future of our State is clearly visible in this 2002-2003 Budget as it shows we will increase funding by \$188 million over the next four years. This commitment continues the determined efforts we have made to make up for decades of neglect.

The commitment has confirmed Families are a key Beattie Government priority.

The additional funding ensures the government has now met its fiscal commitments that resulted from the Forde Inquiry.

We have also increased funding of \$3 million to support children and young people in care who have high or complex needs, and additional funding of \$2.8 million for the development and implementation of responsive placement options for out-of-home care.

SENIORS

Our State Government has elevated the needs of elderly Queenslanders to Cabinet status with Queensland's first Minister for Seniors, the Hon. Judy Spence. Our Government is determined to develop a long-term plan for the ageing population and promote a more positive image of older people and ageing.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics report from the 2002 Census showed that Queensland's population was ageing at a greater rate than the Australian average.

This is the beginning of a long-term response to our changing demographics and the challenges ahead.

We are planning new to ensure that an ageing population will be an integral part of our future community with an active and valued place in society.

We will also encourage positive interaction between older and younger people. It is important for the different generations to experience positive interactions before mistrust and negative attitudes can take hold.

Disability Funding Increases by \$27 million

An 8.8% increase in State expenditure on disability services in Queensland this year would provide an additional \$26.89 million in services and support.

Critical non-government service providers including Endeavour Foundation and the Cerebral Palsy League had received substantial support from this year's state budget.

With a \$5 million recurrent increase in funding, the Endeavour Foundation now receives \$21.6 million in state government support.

The Cerebral Palsy League will receive \$0.8 million funding to address viability issues.

Queenslanders with disabilities will also benefit from \$4.6 million extra funding, to be provided to the non-government sector to help them address increasing demand for services and develop long-term strategies to ensure sustainable models of support for people with a disability into the future.

\$10 million to deliver commitments including respite and alternative support options and support for people with a disability to move from institutional settings to community-based living arrangements.

\$6 million for capital projects, including respite and family support facilities, innovative housing and the upgrade of accommodation facilities.

The Commonwealth had already acknowledged that Queensland had committed more than double any other State or Territory in growth funds.

However, significant unmet needs remain and this Federal Government should not be considering reducing support for some of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of our society.

Historical under-funding of Disability Services in Queensland had been significantly redressed by the Beattie government and we need the support of the Federal Government to continue improving the lives of all Queenslanders with a Disability.

We have a commitment to build the capacity of the Queensland Disability Services system but the Commonwealth must also increase its support.

There are still many more Positives for the Sunshine Coast from this State Government Budget for 2002/2003 and I am sure it will be well received by our community!

This is a responsible Budget!

This Budget Delivers for the Sunshine Coast!

This is a BUDGET with REAL HEART!