



Speech by

CHRISTINE SMITH

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Hansard 20 June 2002

BUDGET SPEECH 2002

Mrs SMITH (Burleigh—ALP) (3.41 p.m.): I am proud to stand here today and acknowledge that this fifth state budget of the Beattie Labor government is all about families. It focuses on essential service areas such as education, health and law and order. It provides money for the type of activities that will impact on the lives of every family in the Burleigh electorate.

Families play a critical role in the life of Queensland communities. As part of an ongoing commitment to putting families first, this budget supports a package of initiatives designed to give children the best start, to value and support the role of families and to create safe and supportive communities. This year's budget provides a boost in new funding for education and training. Every child deserves the best possible education. Queensland requires a skilled and adaptable work force which relies on our young people accessing high quality and relevant education and training.

I am especially pleased that \$200,000 has been allocated to upgrade the Special Education Unit at Miami State High School. Students in this unit are mainly vision and/or hearing impaired and are working in classrooms that are less than ideal. The staff in this unit create miracles every day. Textbooks are translated into braille so that the visually impaired students have access to the same subjects as their peers. I congratulate the teachers and volunteers on their dedication to these students and on the outcomes they achieve in very trying conditions.

The Beattie Labor government's commitment of \$120 million to complete planning and enable construction to commence on the Tugun bypass was very good news to the residents of my electorate, particularly those on the southern side. It is now up to the federal government to match this figure, and I plead with the member for McPherson to take this up with her government.

Detailed planning of an extension of the railway line from Robina to Tugun is also under way. The rail extension study is well advanced and the first report on a potential rail corridor will soon be released for public comment.

Residents in public housing in the Burleigh electorate will benefit from a \$1.125 million maintenance program. These funds will be used to update kitchens and bathrooms, to install insect and security screens and for external repainting and other unplanned maintenance. I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Housing, the Hon. Robert Schwarten, for his intervention on behalf of the residents in a public housing complex in Thirteenth Avenue, Palm Beach. These residents, who are mostly elderly or have a disability, would have to be the most house proud people I have met in a long time. They keep the gardens immaculate and one gentleman carves statues and novelty pieces to place around the garden. The car park for these units is underground and the residents were having problems with vandals and were rightly concerned for the safety of themselves and their property. They requested that the car park be secured with gates—a simple request, but one which was met with a strong 'Can't do'. After I contacted the Minister and pleaded their cause, he authorised the gates. Those tenants are now happy and secure in their homes.

The budget allocated a further \$7 million for the continuing reconstruction of the Tallebudgera Outdoor Recreation Centre. This is part of an \$18 million upgrade to the centre. Stage one includes a multipurpose sports hall and will be followed by a new swimming pool and accommodation block. The Tallebudgera Beach School is based within this centre and hosts groups of schoolchildren from all over Queensland. It is a wonderful asset to the Burleigh electorate.

An additional 69 police officers for the Gold Coast over the next three years and a dedicated 14-officer Tactical Crime Squad on the Gold Coast will ensure that the coast continues to receive the high level of service they are entitled to expect.

When the Gold Coast *Bulletin* waxes lyrical about a Beattie Labor government budget, we must be doing something right. I congratulate the Treasurer on his budget with a heart, and I commend the bill to the House.