



Speech by

**DESLEY SCOTT**

**MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE**

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**STATE BUDGET 2003-04**

**Mrs DESLEY SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (9.32 p.m.): How proud I am tonight to stand here as a member of the Australian Labor Party and, in particular, a member of this government that truly values each individual and places a high priority on essential services, such as health, education, families, care of the disabled, housing and the safety of its citizens. In recent months I, like others, have been dismayed at the policies emanating from Canberra which, if implemented, would take us closer and closer to the American model in areas such as health policy. I never want to live in a society that is prepared to accept that health services and a good education are the sole prerogative of the wealthy.

This budget delivers on health for the people of Queensland. I applaud the measures in this budget, which will see an increase of 6.9 per cent—a record amount of \$4.6 billion. Some of the initiatives that will have a positive effect on the people of Logan include—

opening of a new 30-bed ward at Logan Hospital;

13 new staff positions;

\$1.5 million new CT Scanner; and

\$165,000 for medical imaging, colonoscopes, gastroscopes and two anaesthetic trolleys;

In the Logan-Beaudesert region—

\$2 million will go to medical in-patient services;

\$500,000 to intensive care;

\$500,000 to renal services;

\$100,000 to cancer treatment services; and

\$105,000 to emergency services

In Logan Central, \$4.1 million has been allocated for a community health centre, which is part of a \$7.5 million project. That will build a modern, three-storey building.

This Health budget sees a \$300 million increase, which will be used throughout the state for wage increases, operating cost increases, increased and enhanced services and, importantly, \$10 million of that funding will go to cut hospital waiting lists. Rehabilitation services throughout the state will also receive an additional \$4.2 million and an additional 32 staff and mental health services in Logan will have an additional seven clinical staff.

I would like to commend Ms Sabrina Walsh and her staff at Logan Hospital for the outstanding service that they perform. Yes, our medical professionals are very hard working and we thank them sincerely for their caring and commitment to delivering first-class health services.

Closely associated with our health services is the Home and Community Care Services—or HACC—funding which makes it possible for our seniors to stay in their own homes. The support offered by the highly professional and caring nurses from organisations such as St Luke's Nursing and Blue Care is simply wonderful. They truly do become like family members who take such a personal interest in their clients.

Other services that are provided are respite at Logan central, where Fay Jones and her staff ensure that our seniors spend some happy social times together, and Meals on Wheels where Jim

McDonald and his vast band of loyal volunteers ensure that their clients enjoy tasty, healthy meals. Our state HACC funding will be boosted by at least \$7.5 million.

Within the Emergency Services portfolio, we will also see an additional 110 ambulance officers. I commend the government for making the difficult decision to bring in the ambulance levy so that every Queenslander will be covered for ambulance services wherever they happen to be anywhere in Australia. Our ambos deserve our support.

In last year's budget, I welcomed the large increase of 17.5 per cent to Families. These are the areas that truly define what a Labor government is all about. This year it is so heartening to see the increase in Disability Services funding. This is one area which, unless we have experienced what it is like to care for a child or perhaps a parent with a severe disability, we simply could never understand. To have total care for someone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year is nothing but an act of supreme love.

Budgets are never easy, but at some stage decisions need to be made as to where priorities lie. I commend the Treasurer, the Premier and those ministers who set the direction for this budget. We will see a state funding increase of \$290.5 million over four years or, in percentage terms, 43 per cent. The future directions for Disability Services will set out a blueprint for the way we will deliver services into the future. We all want to see a better quality of services for the disabled as well as increased respite services and better support for carers.

The Woodridge electorate is looking fantastic. People are proud of where they live, our volunteer organisations are active and second to none and, thanks to community renewal, many of the issues and challenges of the past are being addressed. While the Woodridge area is now in the transition period of its renewal funding, Kingston still has 12 months to go, with some \$1.3 million. A major project in the next 12 months will be the construction of an aquatic and leisure centre in conjunction with the Loganlea renewal area in the electorate of my neighbour, Tom Barton. With a \$1 million boost from the Department of Sport and Recreation, this will be a stunning reminder to my community of just what community renewal has meant to Logan city.

**Dr Lesley Clark:** And what a good member can achieve.

**Mrs DESLEY SCOTT:** I thank the member for Barron River very much.

Another major project now in its second stage is the Station Road upgrade, which will complete the revitalisation of the railway and shopping precinct. Part of this project has been undertaken by the year 9 students of Woodridge State High School, who have designed and produced stunning street banners and mosaic tiles which will beautify the area. Other diverse projects have been the youth radio mentoring project, the Endeavour community garden, the Fax-Back domestic violence initiative, the Logan legal advice service, the Ryan's Place project, our Blue Dash and East-West bus services, and many beautification projects such as our parks and streetscapes. Long after our community renewal funding ceases, the benefits will continue on into the future. This program has resulted in the transformation of my community, and we say a heartfelt thankyou particularly to the Housing Minister, the Hon. Robert Schwarten, who has been such a strong supporter and advocate for the program. Madam Deputy Speaker, I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

When I consider what is happening in my schools it fills me with a great deal of promise for the future. Our students are being nurtured and challenged by very dedicated teachers and my principals are men and women of vision. Our schools are already taking part in education trials as we prepare for our new direction in education. I welcome the increase in education funding of 5.8% bringing the education budget to \$4.488 billion. Capital works funding has also received a boost by 4.8%. This budget allows for an increase of 636 extra teachers in 2004 which will improve our class-size ratios. I welcome the \$402,000 allocated to my schools for repainting and roofing and a special grant of \$268,000 for repair of C and D Blocks at Harris Field. Woodridge High will continue on to phase 3 of their renewal program with a grant of \$739,000. It is an absolute joy to visit my schools and I commend our hard-working teachers. In Logan City we are privileged to have the full range of education services from pre-school, primary, high, both public and private schools, through to TAFE and our Griffith University. But Mr Speaker: An education is of no use, unless we are able to improve the job opportunities for our young people, as well as mature-age workers. Woodridge has long had a record of high unemployment. Due to our low-cost housing, people are attracted to the area when they first arrive in this state—many interstate arrivals, plus a great number of new migrants and refugee families. However, initiatives such as Breaking the Unemployment Cycle and many Community Jobs Plan Projects are offering training and excellent opportunities for participants. Our government has made a huge commitment to jobs, training and youth services with a record \$877.3m. Building a smart State, requires skilled workers and it is expected that in 2003/2004, 44,000 apprentices and trainees will begin their training. This government is serious about skilling our young people for a bright future.

When I look at our housing budget, which is so important, particularly with a Federal Government that has gutted our Commonwealth/State Housing Agreement, I see the absolute commitment of this government to ensuring adequate housing for low income families with an increase of 11% in the budget to a high of \$528m. However, we fight a difficult battle with such a large increase in population. In my electorate, I am pleased to see funds for Urban Renewal allocated of \$2.9m with additional \$510,000 to upgrade existing homes and \$528,000 for new construction.

Mr Speaker: There are many other initiatives in this budget which will have a positive effect on my constituents, such as an additional tactical crime squad and the increase in the Police Budget to \$1 billion which will deliver an additional 300 Police across the state. The Drug Court Trial at Beenleigh will be extended, Noise Barriers, Traffic Safety Improvements, and many more. My constituents have welcomed this budget which delivers true Labor heartland policies to care for the most vulnerable in our society, yet encourages the big picture items such as investment and construction which drive the

business sector of our great state. I commend the Treasurer for delivering a responsible budget with a good underlying financial position and look forward to a bright and prosperous future for our state.