



Speech by

**Pat Purcell**

**MEMBER FOR BULIMBA**

Hansard Friday, 18 June 2004

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## **STATE BUDGET 2004**

**Mr PURCELL** (Bulimba—ALP) (12.45 p.m.): I will refrain from making any comments about the previous speaker's contribution. It is a pleasure to rise to speak in the budget reply debate for 2004. It shows the faith that the people of Queensland placed in the Beattie Labor government, with Terry Mackenroth as Treasurer, has not been misplaced. They have placed this faith in the Beattie government and its ministers for some time now. I think that they will continue to do that given the budget handed down this year. I know that people realise that even though money is tight they will get a fair shake under a Labor government.

The people of Bulimba are big winners in 2004. Local schools in Bulimba are some of the major winners. Norman Park State School will receive \$3.4 million to complete the new three-story teaching block. The new state-of-the-art building will be the result of many hours of planning and consultation. It would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the input some people have made on behalf of the school community and the community as a whole.

Andrew Walker, the Principal of Norman Park State School, has not been there long but has handled the issue very well. Wendy Cox is the very energetic president of the P&C. To take the phrase from someone else, Wendy is a 'can do' person. She can do, which is not like the other bloke who cannot. Wendy works very hard. There is nothing that she believes the school cannot achieve. I acknowledge Kerri Schrauf, the vice-president of the P&C, and Jenny Power, the Treasurer of the P&C. I acknowledge a very good mate of mine John Cameron who, as well as being a member of the P&C and having children at the school, offered invaluable experience as an architect. I know that I have not mentioned everybody who has played a role in this project and for that I apologise. I know that many hours have been spent discussing this over cups of coffee and tea. A public meeting was held to get people to come along. The school is over 100 years old. It has a lot of tradition. A lot of people who live in the Norman Park area have attachment to that area. A lot of past students have an interest in what happens at Norman Park.

When finished the new classroom block will present a standard by which others will be judged. I must mention here that the Project Services section of Rob Schwarten's department has been involved. I know that it will see that we get the best possible school we can. The planning that has gone into this is to be commended. I thank the government for ensuring that the highest of standards are being maintained and corners are not cut.

Morningside State School is another winner in this budget. It has been allocated \$360,000 for the upgrade of special education classrooms along with \$17,000 for reflooring and approximately \$860,000 for reroofing. All the schools in my electorate are very old because Bulimba was settled for a long time. Without the sorts of funds that the Beattie government is making available my state schools would not be able to survive.

This and other programs whilst I have been the member for Bulimba have been invaluable to the schools in bringing them up to the mark. I must mention the Principal of Morningside State School, Pam Singleton. She has worked very hard on behalf of the school and works closely with her school community. She is commended for her dedication and hard work. She certainly has around her a great team of

teachers who work very hard to give those children at Morningside school the best education they can possibly get.

The Bulimba State School has received \$250,000 for additional toilets. This is one of the schools where the number of students had to be capped because of the growth rate now in Bulimba and the other inner-city areas in my electorate of Hawthorne, Norman Park, Morningside, Cannon Hill, Murarrie and parts of Camp Hill and Carina. More facilities are needed, because we have expanded the capacity of the school to cater for the students. It is very difficult to put a cap on schools. We put lines on a map so that people think that that is the area that the school can handle but then another 1,200 dwellings are built inside that area. I can assure you that that blows you out of the water. That is the sort of growth rate in some areas of my electorate, and that is just in Bulimba Point. There are more dwellings being built in Hawthorne and other areas. It is a very popular place for people to want to live.

Bulimba State School under the guidance of Principal Michael Zeuschner was a worthy winner of Queensland's greenest and healthiest school for 2002. Michael is another one of those principals who has gathered around him a great team of teachers. I think teachers fight to go to Bulimba school to teach. It is a great environment. They work very well together, and I commend them for the great job they do for our children who go there. All up, we are extremely fortunate in the Bulimba electorate in having some of the state's best and most dedicated principals and teachers. I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of them for the effort they put in for our children.

I am also pleased to note that the budget allows for an additional \$3.52 million towards the establishment of a Special Operations Unit and the relocation of the Balmoral Fire Station. This will take the total project cost to \$8 million. That was announced by the Premier. I thank him for that and for turning the first sod. The centre, which is currently under construction, will be designed to deal with natural disasters and terrorism. Future state responses for all services such fire, ambulance, chemical emergency, special operations and major disasters will be planned and coordinated from this centre as well as incorporating a replacement site for the Balmoral Fire Station.

I am personally pleased to see that \$292 million will be invested by Energex to upgrade the capacity performance of the distribution network infrastructure in the greater Brisbane area. By this investment, Energex is realising the population explosion in the inner-city areas of Brisbane, particularly in areas like my electorate where a 32 perch block is split from one block into two blocks for houses. In some of the RB4 and RB5 areas in the electorate, they are putting up eight, 10 or 12 units on those sites. So members can see that power usage is going through the roof in Bulimba. I am pleased to see that Energex is going to invest in the future of my electorate.

There is huge growth in the Bulimba electorate in the residential area as well as in corporate and industrial estates. There is a block of land next to the meatworks that had two cows and a horse on it. That was about all it carried. It is now an area which employs over 3,500 people in the industrial estate. Metroplex is right next to the bridge on the left-hand side as you drive over. If you look, you will see a great industrial estate there. It is yet to be finished. There will be a hotel and other marine aquatic areas hopefully down to the river, because it runs right to the river. I think the Lord Mayor promised in the election that a CityCat would do a pick-up there from a ramp. If over 4,000 or 5,000 people are to work there, we need to be able to get them to and from work. The best way to do it, of course, is on the river.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr PURCELL:** There are some horses and cattle still there, because the meatworks is next door. Many people in Bulimba do not realise that it is the most modern meatworks in Australia and possibly anywhere in the world. The reason they do not realise it is there is that there are no smells, no noise, no nothing. It just gets on with the business. It is the best meatworks, and I must commend its owners and operators. They have done a marvellous job. It has some upgrades still happening at the moment, but it is doing everything it possibly can so that it is not a nuisance as it was previously when we owned it.

Bulimba residents are most fortunate in having close access from the electorate to the PA, Mater, RBH and other major public hospitals. The \$5.1 billion which this budget allows for health will ensure that waiting lists are reduced. Having a little bit to do with all of those hospitals, I must say that they are first class—the people who work in them, the doctors and nurses. You could go anywhere in the world and not get as good a level of service—definitely not better—as you would get at any of the hospitals that operate in Brisbane. It is a health service that certainly came from a very low base when we came to power, and it is now up and running on its toes. I welcome the new minister. I know that he is doing a marvellous job in knocking down the waiting lists.

I also welcome the \$419,000 allocated in this budget to community organisations in the Bulimba electorate under the Home and Community Care program. I will not go through those because I can see the Deputy Whip looking at me fairly hard. On the one hand, the Bulimba electorate is a high-growth residential area, while on the other I am very proud to say that we have a high percentage of older residents, many of whom were born there and have lived there all of their lives—just proving what a

wonderful area it is. The funding will ensure that they will be able to continue to live in their homes for a longer period and avoid any early admissions to residential care.

Some \$4.8 billion for Education, \$4 billion for Transport and Main Roads, \$454 million for Disability Services and \$267 million for the new Department of Child Safety all add up to a win-win situation for Queenslanders. As I said before, I will continue to support the Beattie Labor government with this type of budget, and faith in this government has been well placed. All Queenslanders are winners in this budget. I congratulate the Treasurer on this budget and for ensuring that Queensland remains the best state in Australia by focusing on services that matter most to Queensland families. With that, I support the bill.