



Speech by

Peta-Kaye Croft

MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

Hansard Thursday, 8 June 2006

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Ms CROFT (Broadwater—ALP) (9.44 pm): The 2006 state budget is the financial strategy Queensland needs to build a state for today and for tomorrow. Queenslanders want to see their home state growing and prosperous—a state governed with a plan to drive business, jobs and improved services. The Treasurer has delivered a budget that recognises Queensland's current good position, an outcome from this government's strong economic management. The Treasurer has announced the abolition of hire duty tax and unquoted marketable securities tax and further reform to payroll tax. In addition, the Treasurer has honoured a commitment to review land tax each year and introduced a new first-home owners transfer concession for the purchase of vacant land.

Many residents are concerned about the future availability of water and many ask me what the government is doing to address this important issue. Funding has been allocated to accelerate the two megadam projects in south-east Queensland, water related land purchases and the construction of pipelines connecting dams in south-east Queensland. There is also funding to support recycling projects and to address leaking water mains and the promotion of efficient water use.

The budget also demonstrates this government's recognition that many people in Queensland are still finding everyday living tough and that many communities are dealing with hardship. There are significant increases in this budget for portfolios that were forgotten by the opposition for years. The Beattie government has increased the Disability Services budget by 186 per cent since 1998 to \$633 million in this budget. The 2006-07 budget also provides new recurrent and capital funding of \$133.2 million and \$4.9 million respectively over four years for child safety initiatives.

Queenslanders have a right to be able to access quality health care. Many Gold Coast residents require treatment from specialist areas located in hospitals in Brisbane and from statewide service organisations. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the government's health action plan. The plan provides funding to provide more doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. The health plan provides funding for more equipment, shorter waiting times and better facilities. The Beattie government's health action plan has committed more than \$6.4 billion to deliver on our promise to fix the system, but after this year's state budget a record \$9.7 billion has been committed to deliver to Queenslanders an improved public health system. Pay agreements have been reached with medical staff and nurses, and negotiations are near completion for allied health professionals. These EBAs will go a long way to assisting the government to meet the objectives of the health plan to attract and retain staff for public hospitals.

The staff at the Gold Coast Hospital are hardworking, dedicated professionals. I have visited the emergency department and met with the amazing staff there several times. I have worked with staff from the paediatric unit on a number of projects and was pleased to be at the recent new birthing centre opening, and I know that all of the staff involved were very excited about it. Many residents tell me about the exceptional care provided to them or to a family member when visiting the Gold Coast Hospital. I often hear about the understanding and caring manner in which this service is provided. So to all of the hardworking staff at the Gold Coast Hospital: thank you for the great work you do. I certainly hope that the funding provided in this budget supports that great work.

The number of acute hospital beds at the Gold Coast Hospital will dramatically increase as part of a raft of health funding for the southern Queensland region announced in this budget. The budget provides for \$3.2 million of funding to begin refurbishment of cardiac facilities on the Gold Coast and there is \$2.12 million to complete the Gold Coast Hospital emergency department and increase the number of acute beds by 30. Some \$9 million has been allocated from increased statewide funding of \$27 million to the Gold Coast Hospital to reduce elective surgery waiting lists for category 1 and category 2 patients in the areas of orthopaedic, ear, nose and throat and vascular surgery. There is significant funding for improved renal services directly for the Gold Coast. Some \$1.07 million has been provided for nine additional renal places at the Gold Coast, new cancer services and improved cardiac services.

Mental health services on the Gold Coast will receive \$1.74 million for the employment of additional specialist mental health staff and \$96,000 for a mental health intervention team in the West Moreton Health Service District to work with police and ambulance officers to defuse situations involving people with a mental illness and to avert the development of crisis situations.

The state budget provides funding for another important roads project in the electorate. There is an allocation of \$18.99 million for the Hope Island duplication project. The community consultation for stages 1 and 2 of this project has begun and I look forward to work starting next year. Another project that I have worked on since my election is the duplication from two to four lanes of the Gold Coast Highway between Government Road and Robert Street. Funding has been provided in this budget to meet the Beattie government's promise at the last election to begin this \$57 million road upgrade.

It is crucial that we continue to give our kids in our schools the best possible facilities for their education. That is why I am pleased to see an allocation of \$525,000 in the budget for Coombabah State School to continue a major resource centre upgrade to support ICT initiatives with a total cost of \$838,000. This was also an election commitment. There is also an allocation of \$22,000 for targeted maintenance of external surfaces at Coombabah State High School. I will continue to lobby the minister for more funding to be made available to schools for maintenance work.

The much-needed Hollywell Fire Station upgrade project is a step closer to reality with an allocation of \$532,000 in this budget. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I know the officers at Hollywell are really looking forward to the upgrade that will include a training room and new locker rooms for the station.

In critical law and order funding, \$70,000 is allocated to continue construction of the Biggera Waters Police Beat with a total cost of \$470,000 and \$428,000 for new police beat at Broadwater.

Local Clubs Win from Budget

The Broadwater area's sports and recreation clubs are part of the fabric of the Gold Coast. It's critical that we value them because they are also the lifeblood of a significant proportion of residents in the area. I am so pleased the following funding has been allocated to local sporting clubs.

A \$989,693 major sporting facilities grant to the Paradise Point Bowls Club, to construct an outdoor synthetic lawn bowls green incorporating shade cover and lighting. The Bowls Club Committee has worked very hard on this project that will go along way to increasing participation.

A \$100,000 minor sporting facilities grant to the Runaway Bay Junior Rugby League Football Club to construct a multipurpose training facility incorporating a gymnasium, storage and first aid room to support rugby league at Runaway Bay.

A \$92,248 minor sporting facilities grant to the Dodgers Touch Club to Upgrade lighting to 100 lux on three fields at Cos Zantiotis Park, Labrador

Mr Speaker the 2006 state budget is exciting news for business, local community groups and residents. There is of course much more I could mention about the budget and the projects it provides for. I encourage residents to contact my office should they need further information on the 2006 state budget. I congratulate the treasurer, the Premier and commend the bill to the House.