



Speech by

**Peter Lawlor**

**MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT**

Hansard Thursday, 8 June 2006

---

## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Mr LAWLOR** (Southport—ALP) (2.30 pm): This is the ninth budget of the Beattie government, and it is another excellent budget for Queensland. It is also the Treasurer's first budget, and I congratulate her and her ministerial and departmental staff on what has been a well-received budget. Even the likes of News Ltd journalist Terry McCrann, not a noted Labor sympathiser, described this budget as 'very good'. However, he did suggest that it would be even better if there were more borrowing for capital works. It just goes to show how at odds the opposition is with even commentators like Terry McCrann—

**Mr Wallace:** And each other.

**Mr LAWLOR:** And each other, of course. I take that interjection. Debt itself is not a bad thing. Certainly a strong economy such as Queensland's can carry the debt involved in this budget without adversely affecting Queensland's AAA credit rating.

I notice in a cheap and nasty pamphlet that the opposition has put around—it is so cheap that it has not even been proofread—on the back page it has 'the debt sting' and I quote—

Because Labor has failed to build for our future, they will no increase their borrowings to build Capital Works by 400 per cent.

It is not even English. I do not know what it means. Perhaps it was written by the member for Burnett, who fessed up a couple of months ago to requiring remedial reading classes. Certainly he would get no argument from anyone on the government side. The Queensland economy is the envy of all Australian governments. The resource sector is booming, the unemployment rate is close to a 30-year low, and infrastructure and business investment are at record levels. Most of this is due to the prudent management of the state's finances by the Beattie government. Queensland has net financial assets of \$5,155 per capita, whilst other states have average net financial liabilities of \$111 per capita.

I would also like to mention comments that were made by the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party and they relate to future planning. I go back to this quite often, and that is the issue of the Gold Coast rail line. That was ripped up by a coalition government 40 years ago. Members might ask, 'Why do you go back that far?' The reason is that this is a planning issue that was in the hands of the coalition, and they take the moral high ground whenever planning is mentioned, with the suggestion that they are the only ones who can do it. This is one of the most disastrous decisions ever made for the Gold Coast.

In about 1966 they ripped up the rail line to the Gold Coast and, worse still, flogged off the land corridor to all of their mates. As a result, the decision by the Labor government subsequently to put the line to the Gold Coast was a very expensive and demanding issue because of the acquisition costs and the engineering issues that were raised. The coalition ripped up the line so quickly, because there was a groundswell of opposition to the removal of the line, that they left a locomotive at Coolangatta, and it had to be dismantled and brought back by rail.

This budget tackles the health issues on the Gold Coast head-on and affirms the Beattie government's commitment to dedicate significant funding to improve the state's health system. It is a solid package of health initiatives contained in a solid, wide-ranging budget. The Southport electorate has

received big boosts for its schools, training and skilling its workforce, and giving a helping hand for sporting clubs. There is also additional money for police infrastructure, emergency services, transport and roads, and community organisations.

Significant health funding specifically for the Southport electorate includes \$3.2 million to refurbish cardiac facilities, \$2.12 million to complete the Gold Coast Hospital emergency department and increase the number of acute beds by 30, and \$1.07 million to provide nine additional renal haemodialysis places.

In accordance with the ruling of the Speaker, I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

In addition, the Southport electorate will share in a package of health funding including:

- \$4.5 million for new cancer services in the Gold Coast Health Service District from a statewide commitment of \$63.8 million for the treatment and care of cancer patients across the state
- \$9 million, 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/throat and vascular surgery
- \$2.57 million towards enhancement of haemodialysis services on the Gold Coast
- \$600,000 to place 20 self care dialysis units in sites around the State, including Southport, to progress models of care which accommodate renal dialysis as close as practical to where a patient lives
- \$1.74 million to support community mental health services in the Gold Coast Health Services District through the employment of additional specialist mental health staff
- \$96,000 for a Mental Health Intervention Team in the West Moreton Health Service District, to work with police and ambulance officers to de-escalate situations involving people with a mental illness and avert the development of crisis situations
- \$1.5 million, from a statewide commitment of \$39 million, for enhanced cardiac services in the Gold Coast Health Service District including undertaking additional procedures to implant pacemakers, employing a nurse specialising in heart failure and enhancing the cardiac rehabilitation service

The Budget had also focussed on another key priority area—education—by providing significant funding for improvements to Southport's schools including:

- \$142,000 to Southport State High School to continue remodelling the catering area with a total cost of \$143,000
- \$302,000 to Musgrave Hill State School to continue a major classroom upgrade to support practical learning initiatives with a total cost of \$541,000
- \$11,000 through the Triple R Maintenance Program for repainting at Southport State School
- \$79,000 for high priority maintenance related to flooring at Arundel State School, Southport State High School and Southport State School
- \$83,000 for targeted maintenance of external surfaces at Keebra Park State High School and the swimming pool at Southport State High School

The Budget also contains solutions for the skills shortage in Southport.

"Southport will receive one of the ten new Skilling Solutions Queensland customer service centres in 2006/07, as committed to in the Government's Queensland Skills Plan, released in March", he said.

"Southport will share in the \$10.66 million allocated in this year's budget to establish Skilling Solutions in ten locations throughout the State."

"Skilling Solutions customer service centres will provide unequalled access to information and assistance on training and career opportunities to people in Southport and the South Coast Region."

Under the Queensland Skills Plan, Southport will share in more than \$2.45 million allocated to the South Coast Region in 2006/07 to increase the number of trades apprenticeship training places and the number of Certificate IV and above training places.

A total of 2,360 additional trades apprenticeship training places and 1,990 additional Certificate IV and above training places will be created in the South Coast Region by 2010.

The total Government Contribution to this initiative for the South Coast Region is \$17.9 million over four years.

Southport will also share in:

- \$6.2 million in recurrent funding throughout 06/07 to create an estimated 1,492 jobs through the Government's Breaking the Unemployment Cycle initiative; and
- \$105.5 million in 06/07 for 6.8 million hours of vocational education and training in the South Coast region.

More than \$27,000 in funding will also go to local sport and recreation clubs throughout Southport, to help increase physical activity opportunities through a wide range of planning, participation and education and training initiatives, including,

- \$4,000 to the AFL Gold Coast Juniors to develop a strategic plan to support Australian football on the Gold Coast
- \$4,000 to the Gold Coast Stingrays Australian Football Club to attend the Australian Football National Coaching Conference in Melbourne in 2007.

He said the Budget delivered \$428,000 to continue replacement of the Southport Police Station and \$13,000 in continued funding for the purchase of LiveScan fingerprinting technology at the Southport Watchhouse. This technology allows immediate processing and cross checking of a national database to assist in identifying offenders.

A total of \$980,000 is also allocated to continue the proposed redevelopment and upgrading of the Southport Fire Station.

Southport will share in 20 new paramedics for the South Coast Region as part of the 2004-05 commitment to recruit 240 extra paramedics across the State over three years at a total cost of \$35.9 million.

In addition, the Queensland Government will be recruiting 144 new ambulance officers across Queensland at a cost of \$35.3 million over three years and 35 new communications officers at a cost of \$12.4 million over four years.

In tourism funding, \$201,000 goes to Gold Coast Tourism to encourage tourists to the region through destination-based marketing. The region will also receive a share of \$1 million a year over four years in new initiative funding for tourism marketing and development

\$621,000 in base funding will be provided to Gold Coast Tourism for various activities including employment of marketing managers and for the promotion of major convention activities

He further outlined funding across a range of other areas for the Gold Coast, including:

#### **Transport and Main Roads**

- \$10.1 million to continue construction of bus infrastructure in South East Queensland with a total cost of \$60 million. Bus Infrastructure includes bus priority measures (HOV, T2, Bus Lanes), bus interchanges, signature stops, park n ride facilities and real time information
- \$8 million towards widening to four lanes between Robert Street and Stevens Street, on the Gold Coast Highway (Helensvale—Southport), at a total cost of \$20 million
- \$6.5 million for planning and land acquisition (including corridor preservation) for the intra-regional transport corridor (new four-lane link between Stapylton and Nerang-Broadbeach Road), at a total cost of \$23 million
- \$3.45 million to complete pavement overlay between Central Street and Melia Court, on Labrador—Carrara Road, at a total cost of \$4.63 million
- \$3.35 million towards bus priority works on Smith Street from the Gold Coast Highway to 4km west, at a total cost of \$6.05 million
- \$2.3 million to continue planning for the widening of Smith Street Connection Road to six lanes, between the Pacific Motorway and High Street (in sections), at a total cost of \$68 million
- \$1.7 million to continue work on development of a high quality public transport system, including bus priority measures, from Helensvale and Parkwood to Broadbeach and on to Coolangatta
- \$1.7 million for asphalt resurfacing sections between Winchester Street and Rudd Street, on Southport—Burleigh Road
- \$1.6 million for construction / installation of bus and high occupancy vehicle priority measurers on major road corridors on the Gold Coast with a total cost of \$72.81 million
- \$1.2 million to complete pavement reconstruction at the Pacific Motorway interchange off-ramp, on Smith Street Connection Road, at a total cost of \$2.25 million
- \$900,000 to complete asphalt resurfacing between Bailey Crescent and Ashmore Road, on the Southport—Nerang Road, at a total cost of \$1.2 million
- \$500,000 towards duplication from two to four lanes between Government Road and Robert Street, on the Gold Coast Highway (Helensvale—Southport), at a total cost of \$57 million
- \$480,000 towards widening Southport—Nerang Road to four lanes between Minnie Street and Queen Street, at a total cost of \$38 million
- \$300,000 towards works to delineate/mark/sign between Helensvale and Arundel, on the Gold Coast Highway (Helensvale—Southport), at a total cost of \$933,000
- \$300,000 to improve traffic signals at Pine Ridge Road and Captain Cook Drive intersection, on the Gold Coast Highway (Helensvale—Southport).
- \$300,000 to commence concept planning for six-lane upgrade between the Gold Coast Highway and Southport—Nerang Road, on Labrador—Carrara Road, at a total cost of \$600,000
- \$100,000 to commence concept planning for Ashmore Road intersection upgrade, on Labrador—Carrara Road, at a total cost of \$200,000

#### **Communities**

- \$978,000 to continue the fitout of the Southport Child Safety Service centre at a total cost of 1.08 million
- \$547,000 to continue providing foster residential care services to children and young people in need at a total cost of \$1.64 million
- \$214,000 to continue to provide foster care to 43-47 children/young people with moderate to high support needs by a departmentally approved foster or relative (kinship) carer in the carer's home in the Gold Coast North/South Child Safety Service Centre catchment area, at a total cost of \$643,000
- \$9.66 million to support people with disabilities and their families, including, \$2.9 million to support adults in the community, \$2.69 million in general funding to non-government organisations for various services and \$1.29 million to support people finishing school with the transition to adult life
- \$4.63 million to continue development of the Arundel Industrial Park for low impact industry with a total cost of \$5.47 million
- \$845,000 in ongoing funding to the Domestic Violence Regional Service—Gold Coast to provide counselling, referral and support for women and children affected by domestic violence, women accessing court services and to work with men to encourage them to modify their violent behaviour with a total cost of \$2.54 million
- \$2.87 million to upgrade public housing dwellings in the South Coast region, for example upgrading kitchens and bathrooms as well as disability modifications
- \$1.13 million to continue the second phase of the Community Renewal program, which will establish operations in the Gold Coast South renewal area incorporating the new areas of Labrador and Varsity Lakes, with a total cost of \$4.53 million
- \$3.7 million to complete construction of 16 medium density units with a total cost of \$3.83 million
- \$1.11 million to complete construction of rental accommodation for low income single people at a total cost of \$3.6 million
- \$595,000 in continued funding for the Gold Coast North Home Assist Secure program, which is a service to provide free information and advice about home maintenance and security. Subsidised assistance with home maintenance, repairs, minor modifications and security is also available to people who are eligible

- \$240,000 in ongoing funding to the Gold Coast Community Housing Association under the Community Rent Scheme to provide short and medium-term accommodation to public housing applicants in need of immediate housing at a total cost of \$2.09 million
- \$83,000 in ongoing funding to the following organisations for child care services: A.B. Paterson College Outside School Hours Care, Guardian Angels Outside School Hours Care, Musgrave Hill State School After School Care, Silver Bridle Action Group, Southport State School Outside School Hours Care and Time for Kids
- \$71,000 to the Gold Coast Community Housing Association to continue the drug court residential program with a total cost of \$98,000
- \$41,000 to the Safe and Confident Living Program to provide support services for older people, including enhancing safety and well-being, with a total cost of \$122,000
- \$30,000 to upgrade Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing dwellings, such as upgrading kitchens and bathrooms or making disability modifications, in the South Coast region.

I commend the budget to the House.