



Speech by

Peter Lawlor

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Hansard Thursday, 10 August 2006

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL (ESTIMATES COMMITTEE G)

Mr LAWLOR (Southport—ALP) (5.00 pm): I support the report of Estimates Committee G, which examined the proposed expenditure set out in Appropriation Bill 2006 for the organisational units within the portfolios of the Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Water and the Minister for Primary Industries and Fisheries. Firstly, I thank the research director, Rob Hansen, and his executive assistant, Narelle Robinson. As is always the case with parliamentary staff, they were efficient, conscientious and pleasant at the same time. The same applies to the Hansard reporters, whom I also thank, along with the ministers and their ministerial and departmental staff, who approached the hearing in such a professional manner. I also thank my fellow committee members and chair Julie Attwood, who conducted the hearing with fairness and efficiency.

In the Natural Resources, Mines and Water budget for 2006-07 there is an increase of 22.7 per cent to \$591.6 million. This budget allocation includes \$69 million for strategic land purchases, which includes \$50 million to accelerate land acquisitions for the proposed dams on the Logan and Mary rivers; \$11.64 million for the implementation of the Blueprint for the Bush initiatives during 2006-07, which includes \$4 million for the State Rural Leasehold Land Strategy and \$3 million for Reclaim the Bush—a Pest Offensive; and \$11.8 million for water reforms to ensure security of supply, maximise sustainability and efficiency of use and promote recycling and increase knowledge of water systems. There is additional funding of \$1 million for the delivery of the Natural Heritage Trust program in Cape York in conjunction with the Commonwealth government.

In the Primary Industries and Fisheries budget for 2006-07 there is an increase of 8.6 per cent to \$255.99 million. This allocation includes a reduction in anticipated natural resource management expenditure of \$15.6 million due to the progress made in ongoing citrus canker and fire ant eradication programs; implementation of the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries workforce strategy; continuing investment in research and development; and the implementation of the Food and Agribusiness Export Strategy. I commend the report to the House.