



Speech by

## Peter Wellington

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard Thursday, 8 June 2006

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### APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

**Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (5.27 pm): As the Independent member for Nicklin, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise to participate in the debate on this year's budget. It is great to see the Treasurer in the chamber to listen to my contribution. I congratulate the Treasurer. Well done! In the short time that I have available to me I hope to be able to thank the Treasurer for many of the projects in my electorate that have received funding. But there are still other projects for which I will make requests for funding.

In relation to health, we need to ensure that the state government values our nurses, doctors and related health professionals. It is great to see that in this budget there has been an allocation of new money to health services in Queensland. I have heard other speakers criticise the budget. Never mind, I will try to bring balance to this budget debate.

The best way to do this is to acknowledge the great work that our nurses, doctors and health professionals do. We need to pay them accordingly. It is good to see that Queensland is showing that it recognises, values and appreciates the great work that our medical and allied health staff do by paying them appropriately. I hope that governments in the future will continue to ensure that the level of remuneration that is given to our medical and related health staff is appropriate—if not leading the pay scales in Australia.

The second part of the Health budget relates to the ability to provide the services that are required and expected by Queenslanders and visitors to Queensland. I know that many of our hospitals are currently working at maximum capacity all the time. Recently I wrote to the Minister for Health about one of my constituents who was admitted to the Nanango Hospital. I understand that tomorrow my constituent will attend at the Nambour Hospital and hopefully he will receive the treatment he deserves. I certainly do not envy the challenge that the Minister for Health has of trying to solve many of the problems and respond to the great expectations we have in Queensland. But it is a good to see that there has been significant new dollars allocated to the Health budget.

I am also pleased to see that \$15 million has been allocated to acquire land on the Sunshine Coast to construct a \$5.4 million integrated primary healthcare and community centre. I support the construction of this new facility. I know that our Nambour Hospital simply cannot cope, and it is unreasonable to expect the Nambour Hospital to continue to cope with the significant growth of population on the Sunshine Coast.

The continuation of funding to allow the redevelopment of Hibiscus House at Nambour Hospital is very much appreciated. I look forward to the redevelopment happening in the near future so that we can ensure that we provide the level of care and service that is needed by the elderly in our region.

I note that in the budget papers there is reference to \$3.73 million for a new cancer service on the Sunshine Coast from a statewide commitment of \$63.8 million for treatment and care of cancer patients across Queensland. There is also mention of \$3.69 million to community organisations under the Home and Community Care program, which provides support and maintenance services for eligible people at home to prevent early admissions to residential care. The amount of \$1.45 million has been allocated from a statewide commitment of \$39 million for enhanced cardiac services in the Sunshine Coast Health

Service District, including establishing a chest pain assessment unit and employing a cardiologist and a nurse specialising in heart failure. This also includes multiple electorates in the region.

Almost \$1 million has been allocated to support community mental health services in the Sunshine Coast Health Service District through the employment of additional mental health staffing. There certainly has been a great need for that. When I speak to parents of a loved one who needs the services of the mental health unit, they often say that the staff are under enormous pressures. So it is very timely that these funds are being allocated now.

I note that \$145,000 has been allocated in additional funding for Indigenous health programs on the Sunshine Coast—we certainly need those—with a further \$96,000 for the mental health intervention team in the Sunshine Coast region to work with police and ambulance officers to de-escalate situations involving people with mental illness and avert the development of crisis situations.

The north coast region will also receive about \$8.5 million to create an estimated 1,500 jobs through the government's Breaking the Unemployment Cycle during the next financial year. I think that Breaking the Unemployment Cycle is a wonderful program. I can remember former ministers who have been involved in this program. It is great to see this funding continued. There is also approximately \$79.3 million invested in over 5.6 million hours of training in the region during the next financial year, with a further \$974,000 being allocated for the north coast region under the Queensland Skills Plan to increase the number of certificate IV and above training places to meet shortages in higher level occupations.

The amount of \$871,000 has been allocated to the region under the Queensland Skills Plan to meet increased demand for trade apprenticeships by increasing the number of training places. There is a great need for these training places on the Sunshine Coast. I note that 1,600 additional places will also be created in the region by 2010, depending on demand at a cost of \$5.62 million. These are certainly large amounts of money.

I note that \$616,000 has been allocated for the redevelopment of the trades facility at the Nambour and Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE, with a total cost of almost \$12.31 million. When I was first elected to parliament, Paul Braddy, the then minister for training, announced that we were successful in getting \$4.3 million allocated to the expansion of the Nambour TAFE. It is great to see that this government is continuing to focus on the upgrade and redevelopment of this very important training facility on the Sunshine Coast and in the heart of the electorate of Nicklin, which I am very proud of.

In relation to public housing, \$20.87 million has been allocated for new public housing and upgrading of existing public housing in the region and to purchase further land for future construction. This is very much appreciated. This is to be spent in the north coast region including the electorate of Nicklin and surrounding areas. The constituents I speak to who are looking for housing say, 'Peter, we don't mind whether we live in the Nicklin electorate or the Caloundra electorate. All we really want is a house somewhere which we can call home to provide the security and stability to our respective families.' I say to the minister and to the Treasurer that I really appreciate this allocation of funding to public housing. I believe that it will certainly be appreciated by the recipients.

Recently I received a letter from the minister for public works and housing in which he informed me that the government had purchased a new nine-bedroom dwelling in Nambour. I am aware of the facility. I know that the families who have loved ones living in that residence will certainly appreciate that the government has been prepared to purchase the residence for the future security of those residents. I note that five three-bedroom units in Nambour have also been purchased. Again, this is very much appreciated. I am aware that the minister is trying to respond to the requests and needs we have in the Sunshine Coast area.

I take this opportunity to thank the Minister for Emergency Services, Pat Purcell, for entering into a contract with the Sunshine Coast Show Society to purchase land which will be the future home of the Nambour Fire Station. I know that this is the first stage. The contract has been signed—agreement has been reached, and significant money will change hands. But it is very important that we realise that the money that will change hands will remain in the community and will go to upgrading existing assets or purchasing new assets at the Nambour showgrounds. It is great that the government has been able to reach an agreement with the show society. But, more importantly, the contract ensures that a significant parcel of this land which is surplus to the needs of the new fire station will remain available to our community. That is a great outcome for our region. I take this opportunity to thank Mr Purcell for his support as Minister for Emergency Services for finding a future new home for the Nambour Fire Station.

Nambour police are very appreciative of the government's allocation of almost \$600,000 for the extension of the Nambour Police Station. I recently spoke about this, and I look forward to inviting the police minister to my electorate to see the new extensions to the Nambour Police Station. The extensions are great, and they are very much appreciated. While on the subject of emergency services, I note that nine new paramedics have been allocated to the north coast region as part of the government's fulfilment of its three-year commitment to recruit 240 extra paramedics across the state at a total cost of \$35.9 million.

Education is a very important issue in my electorate and in Queensland. Again, I note that significant dollars have been allocated to education in the budget. It is great to see that \$373,000 has been provided to Burnside State High School so that it can continue a major classroom upgrade to support the middle schooling initiatives which include some \$52,000 for a fit-out, with a total cost of \$1.24 million. The amount of \$338,000 has been allocated through the Triple R Maintenance Program to repainting at Burnside State School, the Nambour State High School, the Nambour State School, the Palmwoods State School and to reticulation at Nambour state schools and also at Palmwoods State School. Further roofing at Bli Bli State School, I am informed, will be undertaken. Further work will also be done at the Burnside State High School and the Nambour State High School.

Approximately \$283,000 has been allocated to the Kenilworth State Community College to continue upgrading its administration area. That is certainly very dear to my heart because I went to primary school at Kenilworth before moving on to Cooroy State High School. I note that the money for the Kenilworth State School includes an allocation of \$40,000 for a fit-out, with a total cost of \$545,000. There is \$68,000 allocated for high-priority maintenance relating to classrooms at Burnside State High School and also Nambour State High School, with \$45,000 for targeted maintenance of building structures at Nambour State School, hard external surfaces at Mapleton State School, Nambour State High School and Palmwoods State School.

The reason Nambour State School keeps cropping up is that it is one of the oldest schools in the region. It has a real tradition and I am very pleased that the government is trying to find the means to allocate more funds to make sure we can properly look after our schools. I note that \$5,000 has also been allocated to the Burnside State School so it can continue the work associated with a new external kiln house at a total cost of \$73,000.

There are many roads on the Sunshine Coast going through the electorate of Nicklin. It is great to see that \$3.4 million has been allocated towards the realignment of sections of the Yandina-Coolum Road between Valdora Road and Arcoona Road at a total cost of \$6.5 million. This also affects the electorate of my colleague, the member for Noosa.

There is \$900,000 allocated to complete realignment of two lanes between Eerwah Creek and Browns Creek Road on the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road at a total cost of \$6.7 million. I look forward to the announcement—hopefully in next year's budget—of the next stage of the upgrading of the Kenilworth-Eumundi Road where work will begin on the bridge section over the Belli Creek Crossing at No. 2. There is also an allocation of \$675,000 to construct a new bridge and approaches on what is known as the Dusty Rhodes Bridge on Petrie Creek Road, Diddillibah. That also affects the Maroochydore electorate and my colleague Fiona Simpson. There is \$400,000 allocated to complete planning for bridgeworks at Caboolture Creek on the Yandina-Bli Bli Road at a total cost of \$450,000. These are all big figures and I certainly appreciate the commitment to ensure that the roads in the Nicklin electorate are upgraded.

There is \$290,000 allocated to complete repairs to strengthen and widen below the Crawfords Lookout on the Woombye and Montville Road, at a total of \$300,000. Lez Gittons from the Montville Community Association needs to be acknowledged here because he has been on the community committee for sometime ensuring that there is a focus on the need to upgrade this road.

There has been \$269,000 allocated to commence construction on the Razorback to become two lanes of sealed road with a total state government contribution of \$750,000. That is significant dollars. A further \$240,000 is allocated for concept planning at Blackall Street and the adjacent intersection on the Nambour Connection Road. That road carries a lot of vehicles on a regular basis and it certainly needs some attention.

There is \$72,500 allocated to complete construction of a bus and car set-down area at the Kenilworth State School in the Maroochy shire, with a total state government contribution of \$135,000. A further \$12,500 is allocated to complete construction of shared bikeways and footways on the Yandina-Bli Bli Road between Willis Road and School Road, with a total state government contribution of just over \$71,500. There is a further \$80,000 in federal black spot funding to modify signs and provide turning lanes in Arundell Avenue, Elizabeth Street and Daniel Street in Nambour.

I note that \$2 million has been allocated over two years for upgrading to improve right-hand turning lanes at various intersections on the Nambour Connection Road between the Kiel Mountain Road Overpass and Erbacher Road. A further \$70,000 has been allocated over two years for resurfacing to improve skid resistance on the Palmwoods-Mooloolah Road.

I thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. That money is certainly very much appreciated. I am looking forward to working with the government to see how we can improve the rail service and the railway line on the north coast, because that needs to be duplicated and upgraded as soon as possible.

The government is continuing to implement significant reforms to improve child protection in Queensland, and there have been significant dollars allocated in this year's budget. We look forward to receiving our fair share on the Sunshine Coast.

I note that \$240,000 has been allocated to Nambour youth services to provide services for young people to develop social and personal skills for independent and successful community living, with a total cost of \$722,000. We need to put dollars in to try to help some of these young people, because they can get into a lot of mischief and cause a lot of harm in our community if we do not provide services for them and get them on the right road early in the piece. A further \$192,000 has been allocated in ongoing funding to the Sunshine Coast Regional Housing Council 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 \$1.19 million.

I have more facts and figures here, but I only have three minutes to go; I am going to have to be quicker. When it comes to sports and recreation, I need to recognise the government's allocation of over \$100,000 to the Nambour Police and Citizens Youth Club for the upgrading of the existing synthetic surface to create a spectator area and equipment storage area and for the upgrading of the hall lighting for multiple sports in Nambour under the Minor Facilities Program. Our Nambour Police and Citizens Youth Club is a great facility. I am very proud of my association with it and the members on that committee who volunteer their time. They do a wonderful job. I know this allocation of over \$100,000 will be very much appreciated, and I thank the government for its support for the PCYC.

A further \$80,300 has been allocated to the Nambour and Hinterland Junior Australian Football Club to install field lighting for Australian football and cricket at Nambour under the Minor Facilities Program. That will also be appreciated, and it is great to see we are allocating funding for sports on the Sunshine Coast.

I am also very pleased to see that there has been an allocation of significant money to try to respond to domestic violence in our area, with \$1.25 million being allocated to try to deal with family violence prevention. With Maroochydore being the site for the region's court centre, I am also very pleased that there has been an allocation of \$750,000 in this year's budget to establish a Youth Justice Service at Maroochydore for early intervention and family support services. While on the topic of justice and the courts, I want to use this opportunity to continue to urge the Attorney-General to provide additional financial resources to our Nambour Court House so it can grow and provide more services to the people in the Sunshine Coast hinterland.

The budget has allocated \$4.92 million for the further development of the Yandina Industrial Estate. I wish to use this opportunity to put on the record that I certainly will not support the identification and the transfer of land in the Bridges area between Yandina and North Arm to become a future industrial area. I certainly do not believe that is appropriate. I believe there are better sites on the Sunshine Coast and I will continue to lobby the government to ensure that a more appropriate site is identified for the extension of the industrial needs in the region. I note that significant money has been allocated in the budget for land acquisition for new dam infrastructure.

Time expired.