



Speech by

Hon. Warren Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

Hansard Thursday, 8 June 2006

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Hon. FW PITT (Mulgrave—ALP) (Minister for Communities, Disability Services and Seniors) (10.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2006-07 budget. I wish to congratulate Treasurer Anna Bligh on delivering a budget that gets the fundamentals right. It balances strong economic development and infrastructure investment with the delivery of a range of important human services. This is made possible by the excellent financial stewardship of the Beattie government. The far north was hit hard recently by Cyclone Larry, and the initiatives included in the budget are additional to the \$100 million plus which has been contributed towards the clean-up and reconstruction following the cyclone. I am happy to support this budget and know that the constituents of Mulgrave appreciate the commitment of this government to governing for the whole state. My constituents also appreciate that the Beattie government is getting on with the job of fulfilling the current requirements of Queenslanders and planning to meet future expectations. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The Mulgrave electorate has received more than \$30 million in a health funding package and in excess of \$13 million for schools in the Beattie Government's 2006-07 State Budget.

The budget, which delivers more than \$60 million in infrastructure and services for the Mulgrave electorate, is good for families, communities and business, with a balance of social, environmental and economic initiatives.

This budget windfall is on top of Cairns-based regional infrastructure and services which Mulgrave citizens utilise, and also the many millions of dollars applied to the recovery process in the aftermath of Cyclone Larry.

Justifiably, health and education are at the forefront of this budget because they are important to maintaining the high quality of life we enjoy in far north Queensland, and maximising opportunities for our children.

The massive health funding injection was in addition to many millions more which will be shared by the region.

The Budget makes good on the State Government's commitment to improve health services in the Mulgrave electorate and across the entire state.

The Budget also injects major funding into Mulgrave area schools and skills and training programs as well as the region's sporting and recreational organisations.

The schools funding includes \$11.59 million to Edmonton West State School for continued construction of the new school opening in 2007 with a total cost of \$14.79 million.

The education of our kids is a Beattie Government priority, and this Budget reflects that with a huge funding package to school facilities.

The major health funding initiatives for Mulgrave include:

- \$19.56 million to continue redevelopment at the Innisfail Hospital with a total cost of \$41.79 million;
- \$7 million to continue construction of the new primary health care centre at Yarrabah which will incorporate services currently offered through Yarrabah Hospital, community health services and the Queensland Ambulance Service at a total cost of \$15.77 million;
- \$231,000 to support community mental health services through the employment of additional specialist mental health staff in the Innisfail Health Service District;
- \$147,000 in additional funding for Indigenous health programs in the Innisfail Health Service District including mobile women's health nurses; and

- \$87,000 for Transcultural Mental Health Services in the Innisfail Health Service District.

The Mulgrave electorate will also share in additional health funding detailed in the Budget for a range of specialist and community health services, including enhanced cardiac, cancer, mental health, rehabilitation and Indigenous health services.

Mulgrave area schools have also been earmarked for major funding initiatives including:

- \$11.59 million to Edmonton West State School for continued construction of the new school opening in 2007 with a total cost of \$14.79 million;
- \$709,000 to Daradgee Environmental Education Centre to continue works on additional amenities with a total cost of \$766,000;
- \$641,000 to Innisfail East State School to continue stabilisation of the river bank with a total cost of \$766,000;
- \$272,000 to Gordonvale State High School to continue a major classroom upgrade to support multi-media initiatives with a total cost of \$606,000;
- \$70,000 to Hambledon State School to continue to hire buildings for additional learning spaces at a total cost of \$142,000;
- \$60,000 to Gordonvale State High School to continue works on additional amenities with a total cost of \$368,000;
- \$60,000 to Babinda State School to continue an electrical upgrade with a total cost of \$215,000;
- \$147,000 to White Rock State School to continue upgrading the library with a total cost of \$424,000;
- \$9,000 to Gordonvale State High School towards continuing to air condition classrooms under the Cooler Schools program with a total cost of \$16,000;
- \$60,000 through the Triple R Maintenance Program for repainting at Gordonvale State School and roofing at Goondi State School; and
- \$40,000 for high priority maintenance to a classroom at Hambledon State School and flooring at Gordonvale State High School.

The Budget also places the Mulgrave area in a fresh position to be able to challenge the current shortages we and the whole of Queensland are experiencing with skilled workers.

Mulgrave will benefit from the new Skilling Solutions Queensland customer service centre to be established in Cairns that the Government has committed to establishing in 2006-07 under the recently launched *Queensland Skills Plan*.

Under the Government's *Queensland Skills Plan*, Mulgrave will share in more than \$1.48 million allocated to Far North Queensland in 2006/07 to increase the number of trades apprenticeship training places and the number of Certificate IV and above training places.

The total Government Contribution to this initiative for Far North Queensland is \$10.81 million over four years.

Mulgrave will also share in:

- \$7.4 million in recurrent funding to create an estimated 1,052 jobs in Far North Queensland through the Government's *Breaking the Unemployment Cycle* initiative throughout 06/07; and
- \$63.9 million in 06/07 for more than 3 million hours of vocational education and training in Far North Queensland.

Additionally, the Budget contains money for Mulgrave's police and emergency services, community organisations and transport and roads networks.

\$880,000 would continue the replacement of the Babinda Ambulance Station and \$836,000 would continue replacement of the Yarrabah Ambulance Station.

Mulgrave will share in six new paramedics for the Far North Queensland 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.

Mr Speaker, this is a broad-based budget, meeting the needs and aspirations of individuals and communities right across Far North Queensland.

For example, in the area of economic development, budget initiatives include:

- \$5.15 million for acquisition of approximately 85 hectares of land for future industrial purposes with a total cost of \$5.65 million; and
- \$3.8 million towards continuing development of the MaMu canopy walkway in the Palmerston Section of Wooroonooran National Park with a total State Government contribution of \$8 million.

The provision of public housing is also well catered for with:

- \$1.54 million to upgrade 15 rental units in Yarrabah under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program;
- \$859,000 to replace three rental units in Yarrabah under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program;
- \$451,000 to Innisfail Jubilee Community Housing to continue construction of 2x2 bedroom adaptable dwellings for older South Sea Islander people with a total cost of \$564,000;
- \$394,000 to Johnstone Shire Council to continue construction of 2x2 bedroom adaptable dwellings for older people with a total cost of \$525,000;
- \$2.32 million to upgrade Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing dwellings, such as upgrading kitchens and bathrooms or making disability modifications, in the Far North Queensland region;
- \$1.19 million for ongoing maintenance of rental units in Yarrabah under the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Program; and
- \$300,000 to commence construction of 14 medium density units with a total cost of \$4.05 million.

An effective transport and roads system is important for economic development and for people to be able to enjoy a high quality of life.

This budget includes:

- \$162,000 to commence a planning study between Cairns and Gordonvale, on the Bruce Highway (Innisfail—Cairns), at a total cost of \$330,000;

- \$92,500 to widen and seal Hussey Road in Cairns;
- \$90,000 towards profile correction and asphalt surfacing Mourilyan Road, Innisfail loop road in Johnstone Shire, with a total State Government contribution of \$255,000;
- \$84,000 for profile correction and asphalt surfacing on Mourilyan Road, between Innisfail loop road and Grace Street in Johnstone Shire;
- \$84,000 for road drainage and gravel replacement along various Misty Mountains roads in the Palmerston Forest Reserve;
- \$82,500 to widen and reconstruct Mt Peter Road in Cairns;
- \$70,000 to complete widening and sealing Flying Fish Point Road (Reynolds—Bay Roads) in Johnstone Shire, with a total State Government contribution of \$150,000;
- \$52,500 to commence construction of a footpath on River Avenue in Johnstone Shire, with a total State Government contribution of \$200,000;
- \$50,000 to construct a roundabout at Mourilyan Road, Innisfail loop road in Johnstone Shire;
- \$45,000 to commence construction of a pick-up and set-down area at Goondi State School in Johnstone Shire, with a total State Government contribution of \$95,000;
- \$39,688 to complete construction of a car park at Deeral boat ramp in Cairns, with a total State Government contribution of \$85,000;
- \$40,000 for traffic safety improvements at Mt Peter Road and Hussey Road intersection in Cairns;
- \$30,000 to complete repairs, strengthening and sealing Maitland Road in Cairns, with a total State Government contribution of \$50,000;
- \$25,000 for traffic safety improvements at Maitland Road and Mt Peter Road intersection in Cairns;
- \$18,099 towards upgrading Yarrabah access road, at a total cost of \$1.34 million;
- \$10,000 to complete construction of a \$20,000 set-down and pick-up area at St Michael's Catholic School, Gordonvale;
- \$6,900 to complete traffic improvements at various school set-down areas, with a total State Government contribution of \$11,900;
- \$4,750 to construct a footpath at Hambleton State School, Mill Road, Edmonton;
- \$5,000 to complete construction of a car park at White Rock State School; and
- \$2,500 to complete construction of a footpath at White Rock State School, with a total State Government contribution of \$12,500.

The needs of people with a disability are also catered for, with:

- \$2.02 million to upgrade public housing dwellings in the Far North Queensland region, for example upgrading kitchens and bathrooms as well as disability modifications; and
- \$1.5 million to support people with disabilities and their families, including \$676,000 to provide respite services, \$492,000 in general funding to non-government organisations for various services and \$197,000 to support people finishing school with the transition to adult life.

In the important area of community services and infrastructure, new initiatives for Mulgrave in this budget include:

- \$1.2 million to continue construction of the Innisfail Community Centre with a total cost of \$1.45 million;
- \$1.2 million to deliver therapeutic residential care services for young people aged between 12 and 17 years who are in need of protection and have complex to extreme support needs;
- \$919,000 to continue the fit-out of the Edmonton Child Safety Service Centre;
- \$370,000 in ongoing funding to the following organisations for family support services: Innisfail Community Support Centre, South Cairns Specialist Counselling Service and Yarrabah Family Support Program;
- \$154,000 in ongoing funding to the following organisations for community support services: Community Support Centre—Innisfail and Edmonton Community Centre;
- \$105,000 in ongoing funding to Innisfail Youth and Family Care 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 \$479,000;
- \$35,000 in ongoing funding to the following organisations for child care services: Hambleton State School Outside School Hours Care, Innisfail PCYC Outside School Hours Care, Trinity Anglican School After School Care (White Rock Campus), White Rock State School Outside School Hours Care, Yarrabah Aboriginal Corporation for Women and Yarrabah Community Council;
- \$17,000 to the Yarrabah Aged Persons Activities to provide support services for older people, including enhancing safety and well-being, with a total cost of \$51,000; and
- \$7,000 to Johnstone Shire Council to upgrade the retractable shade cover to the 50 metre swimming pool at Innisfail under the Local Government Development Program 2006.

Tourism is a significant industry for Far North Queensland, and this Government is working closely with the private sector to maximise the economic benefits from the fantastic natural wonders of the region.

Initiatives in this budget include:

- \$301,000 to Tourism Tropical North Queensland 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;
- \$288,000 in base funding will be provided to Tourism Tropical North Queensland for various activities including employment of marketing managers and for the promotion of major convention activities; and
- \$101,000 to continue enhancing the safety of viewing sites and water access points in the Wet Tropics District at a total cost of \$209,000.

Protection of the environment is also a priority for the Beattie Government.

This budget includes:

- \$7.07 million to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority for day-to-day management of the reef;
- \$1.46 million to continue prevention of acid sulphate soil spread in Trinity Bay at a total cost of \$7.42 million;
- \$980,000 to continue remediation works on 1000 hectares of land at East Trinity, including weed control, feral animal management, vegetation mapping, infrastructure replacements/upgrades, drain clearing and sediment trap construction at a total cost of \$4.23 million. This land was purchased in 2000 to keep the area green and safeguard Cairns as a tourist destination; and
- \$500,000 in continued funding for the Crown of Thorns Starfish Mitigation Program, which aims to combat the biological threat posed to the Barrier Reef by starfish with a total cost of \$2.2 million.

The initiatives above are just part of the total story of how the Beattie Government is supporting and working with the Mulgrave community to deliver better lifestyles and greater opportunity.