



Speech by

Ronan Lee

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE G (REPORT NO. 1)

Mr LEE (Indooroopilly—ALP) (10.21 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, in rising to speak in support of the report of the Legislative Assembly portion of Estimates Committee G, I just wonder if you would give me a slight bit of latitude to thank the chairperson of the estimates committee that I was a member of. I want to thank the member for Mudgeeraba, who chaired Estimates Committee F, and also put on record my thanks to the other members of that committee—the member for Murrumba, the member for Woodridge and opposition members and I also want to thank the secretariat of that committee for the great work that they did.

I want to rise in the House tonight and support the report of Estimates Committee G as it relates to the Legislative Assembly for one simple reason. I want to place on record my strong support for the wonderful community engagement initiatives that have been undertaken by Speaker Reynolds, particularly in the area of Indigenous relations. I think there have been some exceptional initiatives undertaken in the last 12 months by the Speaker's office and by the parliament of Queensland. This should be the parliament for every citizen of Queensland, and I think historically there have been some issues that need to be addressed in that regard. I endorse the comments of the member for Algester, who suggested that it is in fact a scandal in Queensland that we have only ever had one Indigenous member of this Assembly. We need to see many more Indigenous members of this Legislative Assembly. I place on record my sincere thanks and gratitude to the Speaker for the work that he is doing with his staff in that regard.

I also want to thank the Speaker for the brand-new bike racks that are outside the front of the Parliamentary Annexe. One of the bugbears that I have had in this place is that it has not historically been the most bicycle friendly place in the world. In fact, it was someone who came here as a visitor who mentioned to me a little time ago that a concern that they had was that symbolically there were not any bicycle racks out the front. We talk in this place about decreasing our carbon footprints and we talk about being kind to the environment and we talk about being healthy. I note that at a recent Heart Foundation breakfast there was some very positive comment made about the Speaker's initiative in making sure there is a bike rack out the front to say to any folk who wish to come to this parliament by bicycle that they are well and truly welcome.

I also want to speak fondly of the work that the education section of this parliament does. I think Graeme Kinnear and Roylene Mills do wonderful work. I am a big supporter of the parliamentary internship program that runs through Griffith University, QUT and UQ. I think that Graeme in particular has been very helpful in matching members of parliament who wish to participate in that program with prospective interns and it has been, I think, a genuinely useful program. I want to also put on record my strong support for the way that we are providing online video recordings of the proceedings of this place. We are streaming live pictures of the parliament on the web. It is a great initiative. It gives people a great opportunity to actually see what their member of parliament looks like. Sometimes that might be a scary prospect for some constituents, but I know that there are many people who actually do want to know what is going on, in particular when there is a bill that relates to an area that they have a strong interest in.

In conclusion, I again want to pass on my thanks to the security personnel who work in this building. I think that they are often forgotten when we give speeches in here. We always thank the Hansard staff, and they need to be thanked for the great work that they do. But certainly from my perspective, the security personnel have always been immensely helpful in, as the member for Gladstone said earlier, sometimes somewhat difficult circumstances. They have certainly been wonderful to me when I have hosted barbecues, dinners and often had large delegations visiting this place. They have been very accommodating, very helpful and make everyone feel safe and secure. I am very pleased to support the report of Estimates Committee G.