



Speech by

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MEMBER FOR INALA

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APPROPRIATION BILLS; REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Ms PALASZCZUK (Inala—ALP) (8.47 pm): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill 2008. This year's budget is a budget for all Queenslanders. It is also a good budget for the residents of the Inala electorate. As Queensland is the growth state, so too is the electorate of Inala as it is the major gateway to the outer western suburbs of Springfield and Ripley Valley. As the Treasurer stated in his second reading speech on the Appropriation Bill, 'This is a budget that looks beyond tomorrow and out to the horizon. It describes our priorities and reflects our commitments. To delivering front line services. To building infrastructure.'

The Inala electorate is showing many signs that the infrastructure that we are building today will benefit not only families now but generations to come. More and more families are moving to the south-west corridor, and the Bligh government is committed to providing the necessary housing and associated infrastructure that comes with this ever-increasing growth in our corridor. As more and more people are moving to the south-west, the Bligh government is committed to easing traffic congestion through major Main Roads projects, and anyone driving on the Ipswich, Centenary or Logan motorways will see the construction of two significant road interchanges.

The first Main Roads project is located at Gailes, the Logan-Ipswich interchange. This \$225 million project is part of the federal and state government's commitment for a growing community and improving the safety and traffic flow along the Ipswich Motorway. This work also includes the Ipswich to Logan interchange and a two-kilometre stretch of the Ipswich Motorway between Goodna and Gailes. Residents of Camira and Gailes will benefit once this interchange is completed, ensuring the smooth passage of traffic from Ipswich to Logan and from Ipswich to Brisbane. There is \$100 million provided in this budget to complete construction of this major interchange.

The second major Main Roads project is located at Darra, the Centenary-Ipswich interchange. The Ipswich Motorway will be widened from four to six lanes with the provision for eight lanes into the future. There is \$200 million in this budget allocated to widening the Ipswich Motorway between Jervis Street, Wacol, and Sandy Creek, Darra. Both of these projects are clearly aimed at easing traffic congestion.

The Bligh government is committed to building the Darra to Springfield railway. Already land is being cleared around the site at the new Richlands train station, with the sod turning expected for July or August this year. Residents driving around this site can clearly see that the Richlands Railway Station—for so long just a dream—is now becoming a reality. This is good news for the residents of Inala, Richlands, Carole Park, Camira, Forest Lake and Springfield. This budget allocates \$130 million for the construction of this new railway line. The Richlands Railway Station is due to be built by 2011.

In addition, \$168 million is allocated under the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and Program to continue the duplication of the Centenary Highway from two to four lanes between Springfield and Darra. As we plan for the future, the remaining part of the Ipswich Motorway needs to be addressed. There is \$1 million allocated to commence a planning study between Darra and Rocklea. I also hope that as part of this plan the Oxley roundabout at the Blunder Road and Oxley Road intersections will be

examined in conjunction with the Brisbane City Council as more and more families are moving out to Heathwood, Forest Lake and the planned development at Oxley Wedge.

In addition, \$78 million is in this budget to construct a third track between Corinda and Darra. Money has also been earmarked for the construction of the new Darra and Oxley stations. Both stations will provide much needed additional car parking stations and disability access. Once again, we are easing congestion on our roads.

In 2008-09 we will see the completion of the \$2.5 billion western corridor recycled water project, Australia's largest recycled water project and one of the world's largest advanced water treatment projects. It is expected to be completed in December this year. From Oxley through Wacol and out through Camira, the western corridor recycled pipeline is weaving its way through the western suburbs. The pipes for this construction are produced locally by Tyco at Carole Park.

This budget provides \$516.9 million for capital funding for housing. Housing is one of the biggest issues facing residents in my electorate as rents continue to escalate at an alarming rate. In some cases, I am now seeing situations where two families are living under the one roof and people on disability pensions are being told by real estate agents, 'You can no longer afford to rent in Inala.' Therefore, the prospect of owning one's own home becomes a distant dream. However, this budget addresses a fundamental barrier to entry into the housing market with a significant tax reform. The budget highlights document states—

Under sweeping reforms aimed at helping Queenslanders into the housing market, a first home buyer will pay no duty on an average priced home purchase or a mortgage thanks to this year's State Budget tax cuts.

As the Treasurer stated, this significant tax reform—

... will give a generation of Queenslanders the opportunity to break into the housing market at a time when the great Australian dream appears to be moving beyond their reach.

He continued—

Whether you are looking to take out a mortgage and buy a house in the growth corridors of Ipswich or Logan, the expanding suburbs of the Gold Coast, in outer Cairns, in suburban Brisbane ... you will now be able to do so under the lowest tax regime in the country.

From 1 September 2008, the changes to the tax system will result in savings of up to \$9,500 for first-home buyers on properties up to the value of \$500,000. This means that young couples and families will find it much easier to purchase their first home. I also welcome the Premier's announcement that further land release will be a priority for this government, with the aim of adding an additional 350,000 housing dwellings in south-east Queensland.

The Bligh government is committed to looking after the seniors in our community. The budget increases the Electricity Rebate Scheme for pensioners and seniors by \$20 to \$165 a year. In addition, the budget also provides funds for the new south-east Queensland pensioner water subsidy scheme to assist with rising prices in the south-east corner. It is due to commence on 1 July 2008 with a rebate of \$40 rising to \$70 and \$100 in subsequent years.

I welcome the proposal for the new Westgate Police Academy to move from its current home at Oxley to my electorate in Wacol. Last week the member for Mount Ommaney, Julie Attwood, the new councillor for the Richlands ward, Milton Dick, and I attended a community information evening at the Wolston Park Golf Club to explain to residents what the new academy would offer. Representatives from environmental groups and the South West Progress Association joined with local residents to hear firsthand the benefits that this development will have not just for the region but for the thousands of police recruits who will train through this state-of-the-art police academy. As it states in the police ministerial portfolio statement—

... this \$450 million project will deliver a state of the art Police Academy at Wacol by 2012. This will help position us to meet the challenges of modern day policing. The Academy will be built on a 106 hectare site and will have an education and an operational precinct to support training in the latest investigative techniques and technologies.

This budget marks the start of the construction of the new Westgate Police Academy with the allocation of \$5 million over the 2008-09 financial year.

This year the Bligh government has announced a record budget for people with disabilities. This year's budget is a 14 per cent increase on last year's and now reaches \$1.2 billion. The core to a Labor government is how we treat those less fortunate in our society, and I pay my respect to the thousands of carers out there who day in, day out go about their lives looking after their loved ones with a disability. Over the past 18 months, one thing that has alarmed me in my electorate is the number of families with children with a disability who are just simply unaware that there are funding rounds which they can apply for for assistance. These families just simply get on with the job. I want to make special mention of the departmental officers who accompany me on home visits to talk with the families about their situation and their needs.

Last budget I spoke at length about the Carter initiative aimed at creating a positive model of care for people with an intellectual disability who exhibit challenging behaviour. This year \$5.41 million has been allocated to upgrade 12 villas under this initiative at Wacol.

Domestic violence is a very serious issue in our society. After 18 months of lobbying, I am pleased to inform the House that the official opening of the Inala-Carole Park domestic violence service is on track to happen next month. I am pleased that this year's budget delivers the funding for the commencement of this service. There is \$93,000 allocated to provide support in response to domestic violence in our local area. This will be a valuable service for women and their children who are escaping domestic violence.

The community groups in my electorate are outstanding. This year the Treasurer is also providing a focus on prevention and early intervention for children. I applaud him for this initiative, especially in relation to the \$70 million incentive pool that the Treasurer discussed this morning at the QCOS breakfast. Over \$1 million has been allocated to Inala Community House to provide specialist support.

Just before closing, I want to make brief mention of the ClimateSmart Home Service. The first major initiative of the Queensland Climate Change Fund will be the \$20 million ClimateSmart Home Service which will provide Queenslanders with tools to monitor and reduce their energy use, delivering savings in household electricity costs and greenhouse gas reductions. I would urge residents in the Inala electorate to take up this opportunity and register with the ClimateSmart Home Service as soon as possible. Their web site is www.climatesmart.qld.gov.au, or residents can phone 1800199794. This service will commence on 1 January 2009.

In conclusion, the residents of the Inala electorate will indeed benefit from this year's budget. It provides the necessary capital expenditure to build the infrastructure for our ever-growing, ever-expanding region. I congratulate the Treasurer on an outstanding budget that delivers not just economic infrastructure but the necessary social infrastructure as well. I commend the bill to the House.