



Speech by

Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

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APPROPRIATION BILLS: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE G

Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (3.02 pm): It was a great honour to be a member of Estimates Committee G and to contribute to the questioning of the Minister for Education and Training and the Minister for Child Safety and Minister for Sport.

I take this opportunity to commend the member for Barron River on his outstanding contribution as chair of Estimates Committee G. I am sure other members of the committee would join with me in acknowledging his hard work in ensuring that the estimates hearing ran smoothly and that a thorough and impressive report to the Legislative Assembly was presented to the House today. Also, I would like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the secretariat to the estimates committee. I would like to thank them for their willingness to assist members of the committee and their interest in the work of the committee.

I am pleased to note that the report highlights to the House some of the outstanding initiatives proposed in the respective ministerial portfolios. The report emphasises the work being undertaken in the Education and Training portfolio, with its record budget. The significant funding for infrastructure, building and maintenance, including \$301 million for the State Schools of Tomorrow program and innovative new programs like the literacy and numeracy plan and the Science Spark program, is commendable and is deservedly highlighted in the report. I also note that \$4.5 million will be provided to fund an additional 5,000 teacher aide hours per week and \$1.2 million will be provided for the Edmund Rice Bridge Program.

I must say that I was very pleased that Estimates Committee G made a special effort to query the expenditure for the new Office for Early Childhood Education and Care. This new office represents a key reform of the state government and it has a proposed budget of over \$100 million. The new office reports directly to the minister and not through the director-general of the department. Therefore, it was highly appropriate for the committee to devote some time to particularly investigate the proposed spending for it as set out in the budget papers.

The report also emphasises the work being undertaken in the Child Safety and Sport portfolios. I am pleased to note that the report sets out some of the key initiatives in these portfolios. In particular, I welcome the additional support for Indigenous young people and family intervention services, which is highlighted in the report. Further, the report points out that \$53 million will be provided to improve sport and recreational facilities across Queensland and that \$11.8 million will be provided for the Sport and Recreation Development Program. This funding will be warmly welcomed by sport and recreation lovers from all around Queensland.

Regarding the report itself, it is somewhat disappointing that the member for Moggill and the member for Bundaberg have used their respective statements of reservation to not only criticise the estimates process but also pursue a political agenda of self-promotion for their political party and of personal chastisement of the ministers. In addition, I note that both statements of reservation share a similar particular disparaging tone about the estimates process, despite those members being afforded significant opportunity and time to critically analyse and question the budget expenditure statements.

Unfortunately, that approach devalues what is a very important role of this parliament, that is, the proper and real analysis of the expenditure detailed in the Queensland budget papers.

On the other hand, I am pleased that both ministers positively participated in the estimates process. I take this opportunity to thank them for their insight, their dedication to the people of Queensland and their cooperation with the committee. I would have no hesitation in supporting the recommendation of Estimates Committee G that the proposed expenditure of the portfolio of Education and Training and the portfolios of Child Safety and Sport be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment. I commend the report and the expenditure to the House.