



Speech by

Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Hansard Thursday, 5 August 2010

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: ESTIMATES COMMITTEE D

Mr RYAN (Morayfield—ALP) (11.50 am): It was a great honour to be a member of Estimates Committee D and to contribute to the questioning of the Minister for Main Roads and the Minister for Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the member for Brisbane Central on her outstanding contribution as the chair of Estimates Committee D. I am sure that other members of the committee will join with me in acknowledging her hard work in ensuring that the estimates hearings ran smoothly and that a thorough and impressive report to the Legislative Assembly was presented to the House. I would also like to acknowledge the assistance provided by the secretariat to Estimates Committee D. I thank them for their willingness to assist members of the committee and for their interest in the work of the committee.

I am pleased to note that the report before the House highlights some of the outstanding initiatives proposed in the respective ministerial portfolios in this year's budget. Regarding the Main Roads portfolio, I note this report evidences the significant investment being made by this state Labor government in road infrastructure for Queensland—road infrastructure which is delivering for the Queensland of today and the Queensland of tomorrow, road infrastructure which is supporting Queensland jobs.

As the minister said in his opening statement during the estimates hearing, we have 12,000 men and women hard at work on our vast road network in regional Queensland. Our \$3.3 billion roads budget is about building a better, brighter future for all Queenslanders, no matter where they live. It is three times more than what was spent on roads under the coalition. Perhaps opposition members who want to whinge and squawk about the size of this year's Main Roads budget should fairly consider the measly amount spent by them and their federal counterparts when they last occupied the treasury benches. In fact, those complaints are an insult to all the workers who are working on major roads projects around Queensland. Some of those projects include the \$198 million six-lane upgrade of the Gateway Motorway from Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road to Miles Platting Road, the \$95.9 million continued construction of the Airport Drive roundabout, the \$88 million two-lane extension of the Port of Brisbane Motorway, and the \$8.5 million duplication of a key section of Steve Irwin Way. These are good and important projects for Queensland road users.

After intense questioning from me, I note that the Minister for Main Roads confirmed that the people of the Morayfield state electorate would also be big winners in this year's state budget. Most importantly, the minister confirmed that construction on the four-lane upgrade of Morayfield Road would start in this financial year. This is very good news for local people, and I thank the minister.

Regarding the disabilities portfolio, I am pleased to see that the committee's report emphasises the record funding allocated in this year's budget. This year's budget allocates over \$1.05 billion for specialist disability services for Queenslanders and over \$528 million for home and community care services. This is a tremendous budget for Queenslanders who need a little extra help. I am passionate about the concept of a safety net for vulnerable, marginalised and disadvantaged people. I am so pleased that this report highlights the very real support being provided by this state Labor government.

With regard to the multicultural affairs portfolio, this House will be pleased to know that this state Labor government is supporting many key policies which celebrate our state and the people who call Queensland home. I was particularly interested in hearing the minister answer questions about interpreter services, water and surf safety training, and English language training. Queensland is a great state, and it was great to hear about the good work that this government is doing to help us celebrate our diversity.

I truly believe that the estimates process is an important process for our parliament and our democracy. It is a travesty that some members wish to denigrate that process. To be fair, those who denigrate the process should look more to themselves and the extent of their contribution to the estimates process. Perhaps those people need to consider the following statement from Shakespeare's play *Julius Caesar*: 'The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars but in ourselves.'

I am pleased that both ministers positively participated in the estimates process, and I take this opportunity to thank them for their insights, dedication to the people of Queensland and cooperation with the committee. I have no hesitation in supporting the recommendation of Estimates Committee D that the proposed expenditure of the portfolios of Main Roads and Disability Services and Multicultural Affairs be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

(Time expired)