



Speech by


Hon. Campbell Newman

MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE

Hansard Tuesday, 11 September 2012

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Budget 2012

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (10.17 am): This afternoon the Treasurer will deliver the most important Queensland budget in a generation. It is a budget that lays out a new and positive pathway to a better deal for Queenslanders. It represents a U-turn from the direction the previous government had been taking, a direction characterised by waste and the mismanagement of this state's finances. We are going to turn away from the inefficiency, the debt, the deficit and the decline that Labor has left us.

The budget will lay out the road to better and more efficient services, real financial responsibility and security, and new opportunities for businesses and jobs in this state. It will lead us back towards our AAA credit rating, which will importantly save Queensland taxpayers money and give us more capacity to improve services and grow the Queensland economy. The budget that the Treasurer hands down will set Queensland's finances on the road to recovery so that we can deliver on improving infrastructure, cost-of-living savings and support for better front-line services, just as we promised Queenslanders at the recent election.

The bottom line is that if Queensland does not have a budget that is in the black, we cannot invest money in things like a National Disability Insurance Scheme, we cannot increase funding for schools to teach our kids or for police to keep our streets safe. It is time to start paying back the money we owe and getting back on a solid footing, so that Queenslanders can get the things they want and, most importantly, need.

That does not mean to say that throwing money at issues will be a solution in itself. For years Labor threw good money after bad into areas like health, but forgot all about proper management to deliver the best and most effective services possible at a cost that represents value for money. This budget will target spending to ensure the right services are able to be delivered at the right time and in the right place to the people who need them, not just in health but right across-the-board.

This budget will lay out clearly the hard decisions that have been taken to get Queensland back on track. Those hard decisions include spending cuts in many areas of government, but we have worked hard to do this without compromising service delivery at the front line. We have done the hard yards and found the efficiencies to save as many jobs as possible in the Queensland Public Service. The budget will set a baseline for us to begin to properly manage growth in the Public Service into the future, with an improved focus on delivering front-line services and value for money.

This will be a budget to begin the work needed, as outlined in the Commission of Audit interim report, to stabilise the growth in debt and balance Queensland's budget. If we get this right now, we will have more money to spend on delivering the services that Queenslanders deserve: the schools, the roads, the hospitals and the police, teachers and nurses. This budget will set Queensland's finances on the road to recovery. It will stabilise the growth in debt and return the budget to a fiscal balance by 2014-15. It will lay the foundation to restore our AAA credit rating. This budget will ensure that Queensland's economy is strong and it will ensure that Queenslanders' cost of living is kept low. We have a once in a generation opportunity to get the Queensland budget back in the black, and we will be taking that opportunity this afternoon in this chamber.