



Speech by
Carl Judge

MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY

Hansard Wednesday, 31 October 2012

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL:
LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Mr JUDGE (Yeerongpilly—LNP) (6.06 pm): I rise to speak as a member of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. In doing so, I acknowledge the positive and constructive relationships that have been quickly established among all members of the committee. No doubt this has been influenced by the guidance of the very competent committee chair, Ray Hopper, the member for Condamine. I also acknowledge the professional and dedicated parliamentary staff members who consistently and reliably support the committee.

I highlight that the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Community was effectively established by the Queensland Legislative Assembly on 18 May 2012 with responsibility for the following areas: Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland Police and Department of Community Safety. I also highlight that one of the main tasks of each of the parliament's committees is to conduct a thorough budget estimate inquiry and scrutinise the proposed expenditure. The Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee recently undertook this process with the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Both were questioned extensively regarding the proposed expenditure and services to be delivered by their relevant portfolio areas. In my view, they each responded comprehensively and openly to the committee.

Despite the need to find significant savings due to the unprecedented state debt inherited from the former government, both the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police and Community Safety demonstrated commitment to making the tough decisions required to pay down debt while also working to strengthen front-line service delivery by their departments. Some of the highlights for my electorate of Yeerongpilly include, under the Justice and Attorney-General portfolio, the LNP government's commitment to providing an additional \$750,000 to the Women's Legal Service so that they can continue to support vulnerable Queensland women. The Annerley based Women's Legal Service assists around 5,000 women each year. Staff and volunteers provide free legal information and advice to women not only in my electorate but also throughout Queensland on areas of law, including domestic violence, protection orders, rape and incest.

Under the police portfolio, additional police with a firm focus on front-line policing and combating crime in our community have been provided. The LNP government has committed to recruit an additional 1,100 new police over the next four years over and above the attrition rate and will provide \$275 million for this surge in police numbers. The budget allocated funds for 300 police to be recruited in the first year of the LNP government. The LNP government will also move out up to 200 existing police from behind desks back into front-line services, resulting in a total of 1,300 new front-line police officers working to keep communities safe throughout Queensland.

Turning to the community safety portfolio, my electorate of Yeerongpilly was heavily impacted by the 2011 floods, so I would especially like to highlight the LNP government's commitment to provide

\$22 million towards the cost of operating EMQ Helicopter Rescue in 2012-13. EMQ Helicopter Rescue service personnel and pilots played a critical role in saving lives during the floods and they continue to do so today, operating 24 hours a day, seven days a week from three bases—Brisbane, Townsville and Cairns. I recently had the pleasure of attending the opening of the new Archerfield helicopter hangar near my electorate in Brisbane with the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Among those at the opening was the chief pilot, Mr Trevor Wilson. He is a very highly regarded rescue pilot and we are very fortunate to have his services to hand in Yeerongpilly and elsewhere throughout Queensland.

In closing, I commend the Attorney-General and the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Having been a police officer myself for 20 years before entering parliament, I feel it is appropriate for me to also recognise and commend the retiring Police Commissioner, Mr Bob Atkinson APM. It was an honour to serve under his leadership, and today I thank him on behalf of the people of the Yeerongpilly electorate for keeping our community safe under his watch.