



Speech by


# Darren Grimwade

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Hansard Friday, 14 September 2012

---

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

 **Mr GRIMWADE** (Morayfield—LNP) (11.19 am): I rise to deliver my budget speech and outline to my electorate some fantastic initiatives that will benefit the people of Morayfield. This state budget is the most important budget in a generation. It is a budget that will chart a positive course for our state's finances to deliver a path to prosperity, hope and aspiration for all Queenslanders.

On 24 March 2012, the Newman government was elected with a mandate to lower the cost of living for families, revitalise front-line services, pay down the out-of-control state debt and regain the state's AAA credit rating. Since then we have had months of unions squawking, months of unions causing hysteria in the electorate, months of unions causing hysteria amongst departments and public servants. We have seen the unions protesting outside, we have seen the unions on TV. I wonder though whether the residents in my electorate understand that these union leaders are also the leaders of the Labor Party. The people who are organising these rallies are the same people who lead the Australian Labor Party. These are the same people who organised the smear campaigns against Campbell Newman and his family. If that had been highlighted throughout their protest, I wonder if that would have had a different effect on the way people perceive these unions.

These unions have been spreading fear campaigns through departments. I have had numerous people in the Public Service come to my office to express the fear that these union officials have been spreading in relation to job cuts throughout the departments. It is interesting to note that this morning this House was made aware of the fact that the Labor Party in this place had a secret plan to reduce and cut, to sack, 41,000 Public Service employees in Queensland.

**Mrs Scott** interjected.

**Mr GRIMWADE:** I will take the interjection because the interjection was that I will get pulled up for lying in the parliament, which is a word—

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr GRIMWADE:** It is the Labor way. I will repeat my statement again. What we have heard in this place this morning is that Labor had a plan to reduce the Public Service by 41,000 people, and this included 13,800 front-line employees. Anastacia Palaszczuk, who is the Leader of the Opposition in Queensland, was recently asked in a radio interview what her plans would be. She admitted recently in this House that Queensland does have a debt crisis and she admitted that there is a severe problem with the amount of debt and interest that this state is paying. When asked what the alternative plan would be to rectify the state's finances, her answer was, 'I don't know. We don't have a plan.' She was asked five times what Labor's plan in this place would be, and every single time she said, 'We don't have a plan.' Unfortunately, that is the case. Labor do not have a plan; they never had a plan. They are happy to stand on the sidelines as we go about fiscal repair to get this state back on track and while we make the tough discussions—without having a plan themselves.

I will go through and highlight some of the fear campaigns that this Labor Party has been running. I will note that with the Public Service it has been announced—and again we heard this in this place this morning—that not one permanent employee will be sacked from the Public Service as a result of this

budget process, contrary to what Labor and the unions have been saying on television. All affected public servants are being offered very generous redundancy payments, and it is up to those public servants whether they decide to take the redundancy package or be considered for redeployment in another Public Service role. The decision to take a redundancy package is theirs; it is voluntarily their decision to go ahead. We have allocated \$800 million for the purpose of undertaking this task to look after those people who have decided to take a voluntary redundancy under this budget.

After highlighting these things, there is no doubt that this Newman government inherited a financial mess here in Queensland. The previous government was spending more than we earned and in effect we were borrowing money year in and year out to keep the lights on, put fuel in the police cars and pay our hard-working public servants.

After receiving the Commission of Audit report that highlighted the dire situation of the state's finances, we as a government had to make some tough decisions. We could either increase taxes on the people of Queensland to the tune of \$1,000 for every man, woman and child—meaning that a mum and dad with two kids would be paying \$4,000 extra tax every year just so we could balance the books—or we could lower our expenses. We did not want to increase taxes, as the people of this state had given us a mandate to lower the cost of living; not increase it. So, sadly, this Newman government was forced to make the tough decision to lower expenditure and cut wasteful spending.

May I take some time to outline some fantastic initiatives and announcements in this year's budget that will benefit the people in my electorate. Health is a big issue in my electorate of Morayfield. I am absolutely delighted to see that this Newman government has actually handed down a budget with \$11.8 billion of funding allocated towards health. This is a 7.4 per cent increase from the previous year and is a record amount of funding allocated towards health and hospitals in Queensland.

Locally, the people in my electorate will benefit through the following funding: \$8.5 million to expand the Caboolture Hospital emergency department; \$2.7 million for the Caboolture Hospital education and skills centre that is being built; funding for five new overnight beds at the Caboolture Hospital; additional funding for extra doctors and nurses to work on weekends to clear the backlog when people need them the most; doubling of the subsidy for patients accessing the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme; funding to engage private hospitals to reduce long waiting lists for elective surgery; and new funding to provide up to an additional 40,000 specialist outpatient appointments to enable better access to specialist care, such as ENT specialists and surgical procedures. These announcements will go a long way towards unblocking and reducing waiting times in our emergency departments and at the Caboolture Hospital.

When I go out in my community and speak to people, I find that the biggest issue for them over the last few years has been the cost of living. I fought hard throughout my recent election campaign to deliver cost-of-living relief to local families. I welcome the news in this budget that we will be offering one-off payments of \$80 to help combat rising water bills. This budget delivers rebates of \$80 per domestic water connection to households. This announcement forms part of the overall cost-of-living announcements that we are delivering, including: freezing motor vehicle registrations on family vehicles; freezing electricity price increases through the freezing of tariff 11, saving an average household \$120 a year; and reinstating the principal place of residence concessional rate of stamp duty, saving up to \$7,000 when buying a home. These cost-of-living announcements will be welcome news for the people in my electorate who will benefit greatly from not having bills piling up at home.

I attend every local school P&C meeting where I can. One of the greatest concerns raised in these P&C meetings is the funding being provided to schools for maintenance—maintenance funding to fix things like paint flaking off walls, gutters falling down, uneven cement paths and gates that do not open and close. Many principals have highlighted that some schools have as little as \$10,000 of funding for their annual maintenance budget. To give you an idea of how much maintenance backlog schools in my electorate have, I will give you some examples: Narangba Valley State School has on its maintenance register a backlog of \$92,178; Narangba Valley State High School has a backlog of \$401,217; Burpengary Meadows State School has a backlog of \$133,460; and Morayfield State School has a backlog of \$346,859. This budget will rectify this problem. This budget will deliver grants of up to \$160,000 for every single state school P&C in my area to deal with the backlog of maintenance issues and make our schools a safe place for our kids to learn. This is fantastic news for local schools and I know from discussions I have already had with P&C presidents and principals that this funding will be well received.

My electorate has a large number of people who live with disabilities. This budget delivers on the needs of these people. This year the Newman government will commit \$959 million on disabilities. This is a record amount of funding in Queensland and in fact is around four times what the federal government contributes here in Queensland.

I also welcome the funding in this budget for 20 e-tablet computers for the Caboolture Special School. The Caboolture Special School is the largest special school in Queensland. I have had the pleasure of visiting this school many times over the last few months and I understand that these computers will be well received and well used. The Caboolture Special School will also be one of the state schools that will be able to access the \$160,000 through their school P&C for urgent maintenance issues.

Locals in my electorate would well understand that Morayfield Road is currently being upgraded. I am pleased to announce that this year's budget contains a further \$31.6 million of funding to progress this project to widen Morayfield Road from two lanes to four lanes from Gaffield Street to Gympie Creek. Public transport is another area that will benefit from this budget. Under this budget TransLink will receive record funding—more funding than we have ever seen in Queensland. In fact, \$1.6 billion will be allocated to TransLink in this budget.

I am pleased to announce that in this budget commuters will have relief from the huge fare increases that would have occurred under the previous Labor government. This budget halves the public transport fare increases that were due to take place in 2013 and 2014 and also rewards regular public transport commuters with savings of up to \$400 a year. This public transport fare relief is welcomed by my electorate and addresses the many concerns raised with me about the affordability of public transport as well as adding further cost-of-living relief for the mums and dads and people in my electorate. This budget also includes \$17.8 million to finish off the Narangba train station upgrade.

The Morayfield electorate is one of the fastest growing regions in Queensland. Local tradies have indicated to me that the work in the construction field had dried up under the previous government. One of the Newman government's four pillars to grow our economy and create jobs is in construction. That is why in this budget we have announced an increase to the first home owners grant. In this budget first home owners will be eligible for grants of up to \$15,000 to purchase a newly constructed home. This is fantastic news for first home owners looking to enter the housing market locally. Not only will this funding make house affordability for first home buyers a reality, it will also stimulate our local economy as new homes start to be constructed around the area. Lots of mums and dads as well as local tradies, such as plumbers, roofers, electricians, plasterers, brickies et cetera, will benefit from the activity being created through this plan. These local tradies will also benefit from the minor works programs that P&Cs will be tendering out with their \$160,000 maintenance grants.

Finally I turn to the local grassroots sports clubs where many of the young kids in my area play sports on weekends. Those who know me will understand that I am a big advocate of kids playing sport and getting actively involved in our community. This budget provides funding to the Get in the Game initiative. This budget announcement is fantastic news. As a life member at a local junior sports club in my electorate, I know that one of the struggles for the mums and dads has always been the cost of registering their kids in sports and having to buy things like shorts, shirts, footies and equipment. This budget outlines a plan to offer one-off grants to eligible parents of \$150 to help towards registering their kids in a local sports club. This is fantastic news for parents who are doing it tough financially or who have large families who want to participate in a sport.

Other budget funding for the electorate also includes \$721,000 towards fields, lighting and irrigation for football in Narangba; \$72,000 for the construction of player and official amenities to support rugby league at Burpengary; and a \$1 million commitment to employ local coordinators in the Moreton Bay regional area to assist club volunteers under the Sport and Recreation Job Plan program. Whilst understanding that this Newman government has had to make some very tough decisions that are necessary to get the state's finances back under control, I am committed to fulfilling my election commitments of providing cost-of-living relief for local families and revitalising important front-line services. I say to the people of the Morayfield electorate that I look forward to continuing to represent them and fighting to ensure our region receives our fair share of funding towards services and infrastructure as our region grows. I commend these bills to the House.