



Speech by


**Ian Walker**

**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

Hansard Thursday, 13 September 2012

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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; FISCAL REPAIR AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (6.01 pm): I am pleased to rise to support the bills. I first want to acknowledge the historic nature of this budget—the first by the Liberal National Party. It will be a feather in the Treasurer's cap which no-one else can take away in that he has delivered such an historic announcement to this place, and I congratulate him personally for it. He described it as a once-in-a-generation budget. I think it is more a blue and grey budget: blue skies ahead leaving Labor's grey past behind. The Treasurer will understand the code. It is a budget which is rigorous in its response to both the unfortunate state of Queensland's finances and the clear commitments which we in the LNP made in our election policies. It starts the process of restoring the state's fiscal balance and returning the budget to a fiscal surplus by 2014 and, in particular, it saves \$1.3 billion in dead interest payments over the period from 2011-12 to 2015-16.

In doing all of that, it still supports in every way the four-pillars policy of this government. As the go-to property person, I want to concentrate on the construction pillar and the benefits that have been given to that pillar, and they need to be thought through carefully and looked at carefully. There is \$1 billion of course over 10 years to upgrade the Bruce Highway, focusing on improving safety and flood immunity subject to the cost-sharing agreement which the government seeks from the federal government. There is \$278 million of Queensland and Australian government, local government and external developer funding towards the \$1.3 billion Gold Coast Rapid Transit light rail project from Southport to Broadbeach. The increase in the first home owner grant on new homes from \$7,000 to \$15,000 will support housing construction, and of course that is on top of the benefit already given with no duty payable on a new house purchase. The benefits that these measures will deliver to the construction industry cannot be understated, and they are terribly important because the industry needs support. It is an industry that, with support given to it, can quickly turn around its own fortunes and in turn the state's fortunes. In fact, it is the most responsive of all of the industries that we can support in turning itself and its contribution to the state—already a very high contribution—around.

It is no coincidence that today we had the announcement of the planning legislation reform as well. It is important to note that this government has done a lot in the budget to help Queensland's finances, but a lot more can be done in other areas that do not involve dipping into Queensland taxpayers' pockets or having to look at the books, because simply streamlining and simplifying processes means that we can get Queensland back on track in so many ways. I am glad to see that the announcement today has been welcomed already by the Property Council, by the UDIA and by the Local Government Association of Queensland. We are moving towards so many reforms in that area, but it is not just in the planning area. The Deputy Premier has already been doing the same thing with major state projects in terms of moving them through quickly, getting them approved and getting things happening. The Minister for Housing and Public Works similarly has been simplifying and streamlining building requirements, and I know that the Attorney-General is looking at a range of property laws so that we can modernise and bring Queensland into a simpler and more streamlined future in that area. The budget, together with all of the other things

that we have been doing, are good for the property and construction industry, and that is important to me in my role as the go-to property person.

But of course as the member for Mansfield the most important thing for me is that my constituents are delivered some good news from the budget, and they certainly have been. In general terms, I believe that the Advancing Our Schools Maintenance Fund, which is applicable right throughout the state but will be particularly helpful to the many primary schools and the couple of secondary state schools in Mansfield, will be an extremely beneficial program. In writing to my parents and citizens groups, I have not only emphasised the benefit, the flexibility and the ability to move forward that this program gives; I have also emphasised to them the need, if they can, to consider spending the money locally as well, because it will only amplify the benefit of the scheme if we can support local struggling businesses, properly done of course with all of the necessary quotes and rigorous approach. If our local community can be assisted by being granted these contracts, that simply makes the good news travel further.

There is great news for our local Home Assist Secure program in that the program funding will be continued, and that is a valuable program provided by Lynn Rose and her team at the Mount Gravatt Community Centre. There is \$30,000 for drainage works on the Mount Gravatt showgrounds, and that will be music to the ears of CEO Winston Fraser, who is already sizing up the extent of the job that needs to be done there to keep that oval well drained and dust free for the many events that are held on it throughout the year. There is \$1.5 million to refurbish the kindergarten at the Mount Gravatt East State School, and that will be welcomed. Bruce Wilson and his team who are building an indoor sports complex for the Mount Gravatt Youth and Recreation Club at Weedon Street have their three-quarters of a million dollars funding confirmed in this budget. Again, they will be grateful for that because it will add to the hard work that they have been doing to make that dream a reality.

One of the most important funding arrangements that has been confirmed in this budget is \$3.3 million worth of funding associated with the co-location of the Mount Gravatt Special School to the Mount Petrie State School site. That is going to create an interesting and exciting combination of the special school and the state school operating in tandem from the one site. I know that Terry Foster from the special school and Shirley Rimon from the state school will be pleased to know that that funding is secure as they complete the tremendous job that they have done in creating an exciting and innovative campus, which we hope will be opened in early December. That just highlights for me some of the good news for the constituents of Mansfield. There is much more, but all I need to say tonight is that I am pleased and optimistic given the budget the Treasurer has delivered. It has delivered for the property and construction constituency and it has delivered for the Mansfield constituency, and it leaves me pleased and proud to support the government which delivered this budget.