




Speech by

Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL AND APPROPRIATION BILL: EDUCATION AND INNOVATION COMMITTEE

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (9.20 pm): I wish to thank both ministers and the departments for their informative responses to the committee's questions on Tuesday 16 October. I also wish to thank my fellow committee members, the committee chair, Rosemary Menkens, and the research staff, Bernice, Emily and Carolyn, for their help and assistance. It is truly an honour to be a member of the Education and Innovation Committee and participate in designing the future learning outcomes of young minds. Education is the sum of all minds, past and present, to create prosperity for those willing to learn.

The electorate of Albert is positioned in the heart of the northern Gold Coast growth corridor and southern Logan City. Recently, I was privy to the forecast expected growth of this region by the Gold Coast City Council. Those figures suggest that the population is expected to triple between now and 2030. To cater for this growth, we need to start preparing now. The Minister for Education has highlighted the importance of building our future and this government has shown its commitment through the Building Our Future Schools Fund. This fund will allocate \$115 million over the next four years, with \$328 million being allocated for school infrastructure in 2012-13. This commitment is verifiable through the future construction of additional permanent classrooms at the Norfolk Village State School, which is located in the seat of Albert.

I draw the attention of the parliament to the minister's comments in regard to the establishment of the Schools Planning Commission and how it will work. At the hearing, the minister said—

The first is an analysis of future population trends and school capacity and their potential impact on capital funding needs of the school sectors to produce a Queensland schools infrastructure demand map—something that has not been done before.

Finally, we have a government that is planning for the future.

Vocational education and training is making a real difference for our youth. Building education pathways to meet demand is crucial for potential employment. Every parent wants the best for their children and the knowledge that our children are obtaining certifications in viable career paths gives us a lot of comfort. As I said, we all want the best for our kids. Vocational education and training in schools is about getting the right apprenticeship, traineeship or course of study that will lead to further education at TAFE or university. I am very pleased to hear that this issue is being actively pursued by the minister and the director-general for better outcomes for Queensland students. This is making a real difference for schools such as Upper Coomera State College, which is creating real pathways to university.

Building strong foundations for education is crucial. However, ensuring business has the ability to provide opportunities for our future leaders is also important. To this end, I am pleased to hear our government is addressing the need to reduce red tape for businesses in Queensland. Our commitment is evident in the increase in the payroll tax threshold. This threshold will increase from \$1 million to \$1.6 million over six years, which has the potential to help 20,000 businesses and support thousands of new jobs. As Albert is the home of the tradie, an initiative such as this has the potential to help builders,

carpenters, plumbers, electricians and other small to medium operators, once again showing the Newman government's commitment to Albert families.

Another issue of concern expressed to me by residents of Albert is the future of our agricultural production. The question I hear most is, where will our future food come from? The Minister for Science and Information Technology recognises this resource and has highlighted the government's commitment through the agricultural land audit, which will identify land important to current and future agricultural production needs. This audit will be presented in state-wide and regional formats by March 2013. Agriculture was a key election platform promise at the last election and I am pleased that the Newman government continues to plan for the future of our four-pillar economy. Again I thank the minister and my fellow committee members for a very informative day.