




Speech by

Michael Latter

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

Hansard Friday, 14 September 2012

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

 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (12.13 pm): Today I rise in the House to speak in support of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2012, the Appropriation Bill 2012 and the Fiscal Repair Amendment Bill 2012. In the lead-up to the last state election Queensland was told that an LNP government was committed to lowering the cost of living and building a four-pillar economy. This budget delivers on that commitment. That this budget is the most important budget in a generation is no catchphrase. That this budget builds a brighter future for Queensland is no off-the-cuff remark. This budget gives a clear direction towards prosperity by making the tough but necessary choices required for sound fiscal management. The government is investing significantly in Queensland's future by building our four-pillar economy, by building agriculture, construction, the resources industry and, of course, tourism.

To highlight some of the investment that we are talking about in those four pillars I would point out that in agriculture there is \$11 million for land, weed and pest management, sustainable agriculture and water quality initiatives; \$4.8 million for research to develop Queensland as the food bowl of Asia; and \$4.6 million in additional funding for the Bureau of Sugar Experiment Stations to increase the productivity of Queensland's sugarcane industry. Being somebody who grew up in cane country down there at Alberton, an industry that significantly contributed to the region of Beenleigh that falls within Waterford, I am very pleased with that level of investment.

In construction there is \$1 billion over 10 years to upgrade the Bruce Highway focusing on improving safety and flood immunity; \$278.8 million of Queensland, Australian and local government and external developer funding towards a \$1.3 billion rapid transit light rail project from Southport to Broadbeach; increasing the first home owner grant on new homes from \$7,000 to \$15,000 supporting housing construction; and no duty payable on a new home purchase. In the resources sector \$495 million over four years will go to the Royalties for the Regions program to fund regional community infrastructure including: \$285 million for the Roads to Resources Program; \$85.5 million towards the RG Tanner Coal Terminal upgrade; \$39.6 million towards the Port of Townsville berth; and \$2.5 million to establish and operate the GasFields Commission to facilitate and monitor Queensland's burgeoning LNG industry. In the tourism sector there will be \$20.5 million to progress planning for the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast; \$20 million to implement a tourism investment strategy focusing on destination marketing and inward tourism attraction; and \$8.3 million to fund the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority's field management program.

These are, of course, the highlights of the budget. What is the importance to Waterford? That investment in our four-pillar economy is going to grow Queensland, it is going to grow this state, and that will benefit my electorate of Waterford and, indeed, the rest of the state. It pleases me that my constituents, the residents of Waterford, will be able to benefit from the reduction in cost-of-living measures committed to by this government under this budget. My residents can expect a freeze on car registration fees on family vehicles. The government has reinstated the principal place of residence concessional rate for duty representing a saving of up to \$7,175 when buying the family home and put a freeze on tariff 11, saving an average of \$120 on the annual electricity bill. My residents can expect a rebate of \$80 per domestic water

connection. These are just some of the cost-of-living measures that my residents can benefit from, but that is by no means the only benefit that Waterford can expect out of this budget.

I am very pleased to advise that this government remains committed to delivering on the long-awaited upgrades at the Logan Hospital. This government is taking very seriously the need to reform Health. I commend the honourable Minister for Health, Mr Lawrence Springborg, for the work he is doing in this area. In addition to the Advancing Our Schools Maintenance Fund, which I must say represents a significant benefit to schools in the form of grant funding of up to \$160,000 for every state school P&C to meet the appalling backlog of outstanding maintenance requirements, this government remains committed to funding the Child and Family Centre at Waterford West State School. This is a project worth over \$2 million and represents a significant investment by the government in the Waterford community. I am also well pleased to mention the excitement and pride that was expressed to me by Waterford State School in anticipation of their new multistorey accommodation block to meet the growing demands of that school. I thank the government and the honourable Minister for Education, Minister Langbroek, for remaining committed to delivering this much needed infrastructure for Waterford.

While schools in my region are seeing significant investment by this government, this budget clearly demonstrates our commitment to community sport by funding through the capital grants programs projects such as the upgrade of netball courts at Hammel Park. That particular project is near and dear to me, as many years ago my grandmother, my mother, my aunts and many other locals were involved in the creation of those netball courts and the netball foundation. Therefore, the courts upgrade is really special for me and I thank the government for it. However, that is not all. The budget provides for the construction of a new amenities block at the Waterford Demons football club, the development of a grass field to support rugby league at Waterford West and grants for the procurement of football equipment at Beenleigh. I thank the honourable Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, Minister Dickson, for remaining committed to sport in Waterford.

This budget lays the foundations of the government's commitment to stabilising debt levels, returning the budget to a fiscal surplus by 2014-15 and regaining the state's AAA credit rating. As I mentioned previously, this budget delivers on the Newman government's commitment to build a four-pillar economy and set Queensland firmly on the path to prosperity. I congratulate the Treasurer, Minister Nicholls, and I commend the bills to the House.