




Speech by

Michael Latter

MEMBER FOR WATERFORD

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

 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (9.25 pm): I start by thanking the Minister for Education, Training and Employment, Minister Langbroek, the Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts, Minister Bates, their respective directors-general and, indeed, all parties who made themselves available to the estimates committee process. I also thank and acknowledge the other members of the Education and Innovation Committee, the honourable members for Albert, Burdekin, Burnett, Inala, Logan, Lytton and Mackay. Of course, it would be remiss of me not to commend our support team, Bernice Watson, Emily Booth and Carolyn Heffernan, for their contributions and ongoing support.

It is with absolute pleasure—and I consider it a tremendous honour—that I sit on this particular committee. I do not take lightly the responsibilities of the committee. This system of governance allows us, as members of parliament and representatives of the community at large, to hold to account the fiscal allocation and policy direction of the portfolios by the cabinet and that should never be taken lightly. The availability of funding is a significant concern and fiscal management is a priority of this government. However, despite that, I am delighted to say that each of the ministers was able to and no doubt will continue to demonstrate a clear direction in terms of delivering efficiencies in their respective portfolios to maintain service provision and meet public expectation.

I make no secret of the fact that I am fairly passionate about my schools and education in general. It was a particular delight to hear that this government will be investing in the provision of technology for special needs education. This consideration will be welcomed by schools like Marsden State High School and Waterford Primary, which invest a great deal of time and money to provide education outcomes for special needs children, among other great programs that they deliver in their curriculum. In terms of the utilisation of technology in the advancement of education, I look forward to the rollout of e-kindy. It is my great hope that the provision of online services will help those disadvantaged by distance to enjoy the benefits afforded to children through pre-prep learning opportunities. Indeed, the government's provision of \$200 million in order to address the inherent maintenance issues across Queensland schools is a very welcome addition to the government's plan for driving progress across this great state.

This is the time of year when schools celebrate the successes of their students. Recently I have been privileged to attend awards nights for some of my schools, including Trinity College and Marsden State High School. I have been able to attend showcase awards evenings and art fairs, such as that held by St Joseph's Tobruk. I also note that the Beenleigh and Loganlea high schools run award-winning agricultural programs. What a pleasure it was to see the students of Loganlea State High School and their prized livestock at the Holmview Central Shopping Centre a couple of weeks ago—although not as burgers, I might add.

I wish to stress how impressed I am with the calibre of the art, the calibre of students and the calibre of programs being run by the schools in my electorate and, no doubt, in schools across Queensland. I have engaged with teachers, administrators, union reps from the Queensland Teachers Union, members

of my local parents and citizens and parents and friends committees, and even regional officers of the Department of Education, Training and Employment, all of whom have demonstrated a passion for this field and a desire to continue to be innovative in the pursuit of excellence.

While it goes without saying that our schools play a huge part in the future of our youth, I will say that it is often the case that our schools play a central and pivotal role in our communities. It is for all the aforementioned that I particularly enjoy my participation on this committee and take very seriously the responsibilities of that role. It is for the very clear and committed direction that Minister Langbroek and Director-General Ms Julie Grantham bring to their portfolio and/or department that I commend them. I thank the government for remaining committed to education.