




Speech by

Steve Davies

MEMBER FOR CAPALABA

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

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (5.49 pm): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill 2012—the budget. Firstly, I would like to start by commending the Treasurer, the Premier and the government ministers for their effort and courage in putting together such a fantastic document. It is hard work. I know: I have done budgets many a time for a small not-for-profit organisation and they caused red eyes and heartache. But putting together a budget for a billion dollar organisation such as the government must be an epic task.

As has been said many times, this is a once-in-a-generation budget. I would say that it is not only a budget for this generation but also a budget for the next generation. This budget sets the tone for many years to come. I do not think that it is just our children but our children's children who will potentially benefit from the work that has been done on this budget to set a good foundation.

Mr Costigan: It will leave a legacy.

Mr DAVIES: It will leave a legacy. That is fantastic. Yesterday, I had the privilege to spend a little bit of time with my aunt. I thank the member for Gregory for giving me a couple of hours off. My aunty turned up from Melbourne. We are going to a wedding tomorrow. Aunty Helena is my favourite aunty. About a year ago—

A government member interjected.

Mr DAVIES: She gives me plenty of Christmas presents. A year ago Aunty Helena was diagnosed with a very aggressive form of leukaemia. Her treatment was quite terrible. She had to have stem cells removed. She underwent very aggressive chemotherapy treatment and radiation therapy. That basically destroyed her immune system. They had to put her in a little bubble and for nearly eight months she was in a terrible state. But over the past two or three months she has gone into remission. Yesterday, she was talking to me about the cancer treatment. She said that her treatment was worse than the disease. She went through some really tough times.

When my aunt was talking to me yesterday about her treatment I was reminded of the Treasurer coming to my electorate before the election and holding a forum on the parlous financial state that Queensland was in. The Treasurer drew the analogy of a sick patient—that, under Labor, Queensland was like a very sick patient and that, like a doctor would, we needed to treat the patient. Under Labor, Queensland was a very sick patient. Under Labor, Queensland was haemorrhaging from debt and waste. Under Labor, Queensland was bandaged and restricted by red tape and incompetence. In fact, the specialist prognosis by many people was that Queensland was going to get sicker and sicker. Agencies such as Moody's and Fitch were all talking about the potential for Queensland to lose its AA plus credit rating, thus costing us far more in interest every day.

Labor was entrusted with the care of this patient. What was Labor's response to the parlous state of the Queensland economy? Basically, it was to let it die or, worse, poison it more.

Mr Pucci: Let it suffer.

Mr DAVIES: Let it suffer. When we think about the relationship between a patient and a doctor, we often think about good doctors. We have the Victor Changs of this world—great doctors who help people. There are members of this House who are doctors. There are doctors who make a difference to people's lives. But there was also another doctor who was quite famous and he was called Dr Kevorkian—or 'Dr Death'. I would equate the Labor Party in Queensland more with doctors like 'Dr Death' than a healing doctor.

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr DAVIES: No, it is exactly the same. Labor was not a healing doctor. It did not help the patient. In fact, it supplied and administered the poison that infected the patient.

Mr Hart: What was the poison? Was that debt?

Mr DAVIES: Debt, incompetence and waste. It just goes on and on. What did the patient ask for on 24 March? What did they cry out for from their sickbed? I would say that they cried out for a second opinion. They cried out for better treatment and they got that with the LNP government. We have been entrusted by the people of Queensland to give a second opinion and to provide better treatment—not just to let the patient suffer on their sickbed but to provide an answer. Sometimes the cure for a sickness might seem worse than the actual sickness itself—as was the case with my aunt—but it is vital. My Aunty Helena recounted that to me today. She is so happy to be around. She was enjoying her time here but, during her treatment, it was a very difficult time for her.

We have had to give strong medicine. Like many others here, I regret having to do the things that we have had to do with the Public Service. But it has been necessary and it is strong medicine. Like the doctors who treated my aunty, we take no pleasure in doing this. I cannot see any doctor giving my aunty the treatment that she received rejoicing in the fact that that chemotherapy was making her sick, rejoicing in the fact that the radiation therapy made her lose her hair. The doctors were not rejoicing in that. Those on the other side feign indignation at the treatment that we have had to offer. But we have had to do it because of the poison that the former Labor government inflicted on the people of Queensland.

This budget lays the foundation and gets Queensland back on track. My electorate is already seeing the benefits. My electorate is seeing more funding for disabilities. In fact, it has received \$12.66 million as part of the \$959 million in record funding for disability services in Queensland. The Capalaba electorate is receiving \$12.66 million in grants. We have seen the launch of the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial, with funding of \$15 million. This is an absolute cracker of a program. One lady in my electorate is 65 years old. She is very frail herself and she has a 28-year-old son. One of her biggest worries is that, when she happens to pass on, her son would not be looked after. For this lady, this funding will give her just wonderful peace of mind.

Not only that, there is the \$15,000 first home owners construction grant. This is just a fantastic boost for the people of Capalaba—for not only those young families who need to buy their first home but also for tradies. Capalaba is tradies city. If you stand on a corner on a Monday morning in Capalaba, you would see hundreds and thousands of utes going in and out of Capalaba.

Mr Symes interjected.

Mr DAVIES: The same as occurs at Wynnum. They are all over the place—

A government member: It's God's own country.

Mr DAVIES: It is God's own country. This \$15,000 grant is an absolute godsend. I commend the government for this initiative.

The final initiative that I think is just wonderful is the school maintenance program of \$200 million, with \$160,000 per school. There are eight schools in the Capalaba electorate. During the election campaign Channel 9 did an expose of one of the schools in my electorate. It was an absolute shame. They showed pictures of that school with gutters falling down, trip hazards, paint peeling off the walls and cracked, smashed windows.

Mr Costigan: Labor's legacy.

Mr DAVIES: Labor's legacy. This program is going to be just an absolute, amazing blessing for the people of Capalaba. One of the first things I did was send out a press release to the P&Cs of the schools in my electorate. The response has just been overwhelming. They are totally looking forward to receiving this funding. The members of these P&Cs are the most self-sacrificing people I have had the opportunity to meet. I have gone to many P&C meetings. Every Monday or Tuesday night in my electorate the P&C committees get together. People give up their time to go to these meetings straight after work. Mums, dads and teachers get along to these P&C meetings and plan the barbeque at Bunnings, the school disco and the trivia night to help fund the school excursion or to fund a playground for the new prep school.

These guys are self-sacrificing. They go out there and they do this. It was a vile comment by Kevin Bates of the Queensland Teachers Union that somehow by giving \$160,000 to a P&C they will go off and squander it. They already have budgets of hundreds of thousands of dollars. They have checks and balances. I think it is a disgrace. I think it would be better if the QTU looked in its own backyard. It should

have a look at the HSU or maybe the AWU with a lazy \$100,000 here or \$200,000 there getting slipped into their mates' pockets; or maybe look at the standover bullyboy tactics of the CFMEU and what it is doing at the moment. I can imagine the Queensland Teachers Union wanting to call a royal commission because one of these P&C parents is down at the Bunnings barbecue and might be pocketing an extra few dollars. It is just a disgrace.

This is a once-in-a-generation budget; a budget for this generation and a budget for the next generation. It is a foundational budget and it is a vital budget. I began by commending the Treasurer, Premier and ministers for their effort and courage. The great president of the US, JFK, once said, 'Effort and courage are not enough without purpose and direction.' This budget is a courageous budget, it is a budget that has taken great effort, but it is a budget that gives the Queensland people purpose and direction. It gives the people of Queensland a road map for the future, a way forward and a sense of hope and dignity. I commend this budget to the House.