




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL**

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.29 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to respond to the Treasurer's budget delivered a couple of days ago in this House. I thank the member for Barron River and the member for Pine Rivers for bringing us back on track with a bit of sensible debate on this subject.

It is funny to see the difference that two days makes. On Tuesday we heard our Treasurer in this place outline his plan to put the state back in the black, to get us back where we need to be after the terrible legacy left by the previous failed Labor government. What have we seen in the two days since then? I sat in this place this morning and I listened to the Leader of the Opposition give her budget reply. I must say I was biting my lip through most of her speech. I really struggled to keep quiet when I heard the rubbish coming from the Leader of the Opposition. I waited for a plan; I waited and I waited. But there was no plan. There never is a plan. We heard from the Leader of the Opposition that there was a lot of things that the Labor Party would not do, but we did not hear what it was that they would do. They have no plan. They are fiscal deniers. They are budget deniers and they have absolutely no plan.

We then moved on to the two opposition speakers who spoke before me: the member for Dalrymple representing the north-west branch of the ALP, the ETU funded Katter party—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr HART: That was quite a rant. I was quite pleased to hear the member for Dalrymple actually speak about his electorate for a couple minutes before going off on some ineffectual rant. It was interesting to hear him say that the budget was not about getting rid of debt. I have news for him; the budget is about getting rid of debt. At the end of the day we have quite a large debt in this state and we have to start paying it back. That is exactly what our Treasurer has put forward a plan to do.

We also heard from the 'Premier-in-waiting', from the PUP or whatever it is they are calling themselves nowadays. He stood here and he gave us 'Clive-nomics'. What is 'Clive-nomics'? 'Clive-nomics' is about putting a whole bunch of employees into government and turning this state into one giant mine. We would all hate to see that. We did not see much in the way of policy from the leader of the PUP party either. We have heard in this place before some interesting theories espoused from him, and I will read from his website one particular interesting article that he put forward in a previous speech in this House. The article states—

Dr Douglas said a United Australia Party government would resume any assets sold by the Newman government, without any compensation to the purchaser.

Members can rest assured that is not going to give the people of this state a great deal of confidence in electing Mr Palmer as the Prime Minister of this country! If that is the sort of attitude that

the leader of his state party is putting forward, that is certainly not going to help our economy one iota. I table that article for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Statement from website www.alex4gaven.com.au titled 'Alex Douglas MP will protect state assets' [2861].

I would like to speak about the overall financial situation of this state for a few minutes before I move on to my electorate of Burleigh. The budget forecast growth in this state of three per cent. The member for Dalrymple said we were moving into recession. I do not think that growth of three per cent indicates a recession, but maybe he knows something I do not.

It is important to point out that revenue forecasts have fallen by a massive \$5.3 billion since this government was elected last year and, of course, that has a dramatic effect on our budget. This budget includes a write-down in general taxation royalties of \$1.9 billion and a decrease of more than \$695 million in GST payments over the forward estimates. For the 2013-14 year the government will record a fiscal deficit of \$7.7 billion and, as we all know, the Labor Party has to take a large portion of the blame—in fact, all the blame—for that. The Newman government is focused on economic growth, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. By working together we are ensuring Queensland remains a great state with a great opportunity.

I would like to speak about some of the benefits in the budget for Burleigh. We all know that we have a massive white elephant in the Tugun desalination plant, a plant that cost \$1.2 billion to build. According to a 2011 Productivity Commission inquiry into the Gold Coast desalination plant, the operating and maintenance costs of that plant in 2011-12 were \$4,403 per megalitre. It is a white elephant, but we have it. We have to make it effective and we have to use it. It is a good emergency water supply. This government is moving towards minimising the cost of running that desalination plant by putting it into 'hot standby' mode with its use limited to the mitigation of critical supply emergencies. This will result in an annual saving of \$9 million.

There is also \$964 million in the budget for the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service. As we all know, the Gold Coast is a thriving community. We have to build on our health services. We have a fantastic new hospital underway and this amount of money will fast-track that hospital's development.

There is \$5.454 million for new accommodation at Miami State High School, which is 100 yards from my office. It has a backlog of \$4 million worth of maintenance.

A government member: \$4 million?

Mr HART: Yes, \$4 million. That is the most of any school in this state. Something has to be done about that in the future.

Burleigh is doing its bit for public housing. We have been allocated \$2.152 million for the construction of another 10 dwellings of public housing in Burleigh. There are 23,226 people currently waiting for public housing. Isn't that amazing? We are building 10 houses in Burleigh to go towards meeting that need. We are also putting \$26 million of initial funding towards the Commonwealth Games which are to be held in 2018. We have \$10.4 million of operating grants for child safety, disability services and social inclusion programs.

Mr Cox interjected.

Mr HART: I am happy that the member is glad we are to receive that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as you would know, we have a police helicopter on the Gold Coast and this budget allocates another \$3 million towards continuing that service. Last Friday I went to the Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter Rescue Service. I had a flight in a rescue helicopter and I also had a look at the police helicopter while I was there. This is a boon for our state. We should have had a police helicopter years and years ago, but the last government absolutely refused to commence that service. I heard firsthand from the officers how good this police helicopter is. They can sit four or five kilometres away from an event that is occurring. They can then turn their camera onto something and, using thermal imaging, they can see somebody hiding under a boat or behind a door. They can even see if the person has a gun. They can then direct police officers to exactly where that person is located. They can say, 'Turn left, go down that alley. He is standing behind that door and he has a gun. So be careful.' This is absolutely fantastic for the Gold Coast and for Queensland in general. I really hope the police minister moves towards establishing more of these police helicopters. I note the Westpac service is currently importing another helicopter, which will be painted in police colours—white and blue. That is going to be fantastic to see on the Gold Coast.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in conclusion, I am sure you are fully aware that the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, our local newspaper on the Gold Coast, marks us particularly hard. So if we see something from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* praising our budget we know that we are on track. I will quote from yesterday's *Gold Coast Bulletin* editorial. It states—

Budget not pretty but necessary

Premier Campbell Newman and his Treasurer Tim Nicholls have handed down a difficult and challenging Budget but it is a responsible document at a time when governments are simply never going to win a popularity contest.

Australians need to understand that the days of everybody winning a prize in state and federal budgets are long gone. Austerity is the new black for governments and with Europe continuing to do it tough, and the United States economy far from being resurgent, this trend will continue for some time.

Paying off the state's debt is Mr Newman's priority.

I hope the member for Dalrymple is listening to that. It continues—

Paying off the state's debt is Mr Newman's priority. And so it should be. Queensland's economy needs back its triple A rating and the projection is we will be back in surplus by 2016.

With those few words, I commend the Treasurer for this second fantastic budget, for getting this state back into the black, and I commend the bill to the House. I will table this for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Gold Coast Bulletin online article, dated 5 June 2013, titled 'Budget not pretty but necessary' [[2862](#)].