




Speech By
Steve Minnikin

MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.28 pm): It is my absolute privilege to rise today to speak on the Appropriation Bill introduced by the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls. Politics is all about getting the mix right between a reformist program and not trying to do too much overnight, as you need to take the people with you. This second Newman government budget does just that and consolidates the fiscal repair task undertaken last year. As the member for Chatsworth and the Assistant Minister for Public Transport, I am deeply honoured to be a part of the reformist Newman government—a government that is still cleaning up the mess after 20 years of financial mismanagement under the helms of captains Beattie, Bligh and their fellow comrade Andrew Fraser.

Rome was not built in a day. Hence, after years of fiscal neglect and financial irresponsibility under the Labor Party, it was always going to be a long, hard road to get our state's finances back on track. Along with most fair-minded people, I truly believe that some short-term pain is indeed worth it for the long-term gain. The measures that we undertake in this budget will deliver for not only us but also our future generations. As I have mentioned previously in this House, I am the proud father of two boys who should not shoulder the burden of irresponsible current debt for future generations. It is manifestly unfair that the economic incompetence of the past state Labor government should be paid for by our most precious asset, our children.

However, not only do we need to get the budget back in the black, there is a burning need to make our great state resilient. As we are all too aware, Mother Nature has hit this great state extremely hard, with the financial cost of the natural disasters in January 2013 expected to reach \$2.5 billion, not to mention the emotional cost that those natural disasters have had on many fine Queenslanders. Although the Chatsworth electorate suffered minor damage from the natural disasters in comparison to other affected parts of the state, the financial burden is truly felt by all, as we work together rebuilding essential infrastructure and communities.

As I mentioned earlier, I am honoured to be part of a reformist government that is committed to growing our economy, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient in the future. As a former businessman, I agree wholeheartedly that the Queensland government should be pro growth. In fact, I am glad that the Treasurer has mentioned that we are unashamedly pro growth. Small business is the undeniable engine room of our economy in concert with our large companies in the mining, agricultural, tourism and construction industries. Business and economic growth are the vital strands of the LNP's DNA. Unlike those Fabian socialists opposite, we get it. Without sensible economic growth and management, pragmatic service delivery, which is the cornerstone function of state governments, cannot be fulfilled. I can only imagine that the term 'pro growth' is making the members of the ALP opposite shudder—or maybe I should explain the term, because it is evident from their term in office that they did not quite get the concept.

Rather than pointing out the failings of the previous failed Labor government, now reduced to a paltry seven members, let us get down to business and see how the residents of my Chatsworth

electorate will benefit from the LNP's second budget. In the state budget of 2013-14, we have seen a 4.5 per cent increase in the Health budget to \$12.3 billion. This is an extra \$532.7 million to ensure that we are delivering the best possible front-line services as part of our healthcare system. As part of our commitment to improving health services, this budget includes a \$1.7 billion investment in health infrastructure. The Newman government has also allocated \$327 million to the health maintenance backlog program. I am pleased to say that the Hospital in the Home program will receive \$28.3 million, making it possible for residents of the Chatsworth electorate to access this important service if required. This budget will also deliver an expansion of the fantastic Mums and Bubs initiative, which was an LNP election commitment.

Having a functional health system, along with a world-class education system, is essential to my electorate. The Newman government understands the importance of a good education for our children; therefore, we have increased the education budget by 6.6 per cent to \$11.4 billion. This \$707.4 increase will have real benefits for school students throughout the Chatsworth electorate. As part of the education budget, \$537 million has been allocated to the Great Teachers = Great Results program, which will see 724 new teachers and support staff. This government has also put aside \$100 million for the Fixing Our Schools Fund, because we know that an investment in education is indeed an investment in all of our collective futures. Over the past year, schools in the Chatsworth electorate benefited from up to \$160,000 to ensure that essential maintenance was attended to. As I mentioned in my previous budget reply speech, this government has allowed schools to become empowered to look after their own needs and wants. It is all about choice and freedom—great liberal values that I hold dear. The Chatsworth electorate is a growth area; therefore, I am pleased to announce that this budget has delivered \$910,000 for stage 1 of the master plan for Gumdale State School. This master plan will be an important milestone for this expanding school, ensuring that extra classrooms are built for the school's growing student population.

The LNP takes law and order seriously. That is why it has increased law and order funding by a further \$129.6 million to \$4.1 billion. This increase in funding will ensure that 267 additional police are on the beat. Also, \$1 million will be committed to ensure that front-line community crime prevention services, such as Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, continue their revitalisation and great work for all of our communities.

It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the LNP's second budget since being elected on 24 March last year. I have seen firsthand the incredible changes that the Newman government has been able to achieve. Community groups in my Chatsworth electorate have received significant funds from the Caring for our Community grants to continue their important work in their local areas. For example, the Men's Shed at Carina received a grant that will go towards an extension of their shed. The Camp Hill Carina Welfare Association also received a grant towards its worthwhile activities. As Assistant Minister for Public Transport, it is particularly gratifying that we will again honour our election commitment to halve Labor's proposed 15 per cent annual increase in public transport fares and will allocate money for Carindale bus interchange improvements.

The Newman government has truly lived up to its promise that it will work for all Queenslanders. This second Newman government budget sets a strong foundation for Queensland to become more resilient and to grow and prosper in the future. We are continuing to build a strong economy based on our four pillars of tourism, resources, construction and agriculture. Despite the protestations of those neophytes opposite, we are easing the cost of living and, most importantly, delivering better and resilient infrastructure that will stand the test of time.

What did those economic tyros opposite do to relieve the cost-of-living pressures in the last couple of years of their failed time in office? They abolished the fuel subsidy, breaking an election commitment; introduced a waste tax; increased motor vehicle stamp duty; increased car registration; created a \$3 billion tax for the majority of households through the Solar Bonus Scheme, expected to cost a typical household \$276 in the 2015-16 year; and who could forget they supported a carbon tax, which contributes about \$109 to the typical residential customer's electricity bill for this year? When it comes to hypocrisy, the state Labor Party knows no bounds.

This week, the Treasurer has presented another responsible budget that will ensure that front-line services are efficient and effective. We will continue to be accountable and upfront with the people of Queensland. This budget proves again that we are committed to Queenslanders' best interests, not only in the electorate of Chatsworth that I am privileged to serve but also throughout this magnificent state.

Last September when outlining our first budget the Treasurer said that it was the most important budget in a generation. This year's budget builds on the strong foundation of the previous budget. I commend the Treasurer and his office and Treasury officials for their efforts in preparing a responsible budget. Refreshingly, spin and smoke and mirrors is replaced with a no-frills continuation

of the great gains that were made last year in an effort to provide an ongoing platform of recovery for our balance sheet. Our future generations deserve no less.

Queensland is a great state to live and work. This budget ensures that Queensland will remain a great state with great opportunity. I again take this opportunity to congratulate the Treasurer, his staff, and everyone involved in putting together this essential follow-up budget to last year's most important budget for a generation. Of all the people who are present in this House today, I am delighted that the Treasurer is here to hear this small contribution from the people of the Chatsworth electorate, who I know from visiting many of them subsequently to last year's budget being introduced know all too well that this follow-up second budget is the one that will lay the foundation and provide the platform for the economic prosperity that will surely come our way. I commend this bill to the House.