




Speech By
Hon. John-Paul Langbroek

MEMBER FOR SURFERS PARADISE

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Education and Innovation Committee, Report

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (9.11 pm): May I begin by thanking the members of the Education and Innovation Committee for their work, especially the chair, Rosemary Menkens, the member for Burdekin, and other members as well. It was a conscientious way in which the committee was carried out, where the majority of the committee approached their work with a quiet and thorough examination of the Department of Education, Training and Employment Service Delivery Statement.

We have a relentless focus on outcomes for children—from crayon to career—in this portfolio. I am honoured to serve in a portfolio that looks after the education, training and employment of Queensland students. We just heard the member for Redlands expressing the importance of this portfolio, and it is something that I never forget.

I was disappointed, though, to hear and read another ill-conceived statement of reservation from the member for Redcliffe, who I note is no longer the opposition spokesperson and who never asked me a question in this place as the opposition spokesperson. I want to deal with some of the observations that she made in her statement of reservation about early childhood—this notion that I would not commit to 15 hours a week for students under the national partnership that concludes at the end of the year. It is fairly obvious—it is in the transcript—that we have made a commitment because of our careful savings and prudent savings.

Given that the former federal Labor minister Kate Ellis gave us an 18-month negotiated agreement that expires at the end of December, it is a bit rich to then say that we should be making sure that we are continuing this program without any reassurance from the former federal government who said it is going to end at the end of December 2014. It is in the transcript. We have said we will continue this program in 2015 because we have been careful, but we want to make sure as well that we negotiate a new agreement with the federal ministers. I think Australians should be very afraid of Kate Ellis. When she was the minister for early childhood she suggested that the main problems that Australians had with early childhood education and care were about planning, not affordability. It is obvious that affordability is a significant issue for a lot of Australians. We want to make sure we negotiate a new agreement.

I was also concerned to hear from those opposite in their statement of reservation that they cannot read releases about the VET Investment Plan, which is about \$615 million. It is very clear that we want to make sure training is leading to real jobs and not just qualifications for qualifications sake. As for the comment that January 2018 is fast approaching and that I was not prepared to speak beyond the forward estimates, how rich that is coming from a government where former ministers Shorten and Garrett could not even give us certainty for 2014! That was not the forward estimates; that was for this year. It was only because of negotiations with the federal government, with

Christopher Pyne and Tony Abbott, that we received \$131 million that we put straight into our schools without taking anything off the top. That was unprecedented, because under the Labor Party we would have received nothing.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: Can you stop the clock, please?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, there are no interjections. I will be naming members if they persist. I call the minister.

Mr LANGBROEK: More kindergarten places than ever before will be available in 2014-15. Nineteen new or extended services opening across the state will provide an extra 700 places. We are spending \$11.8 billion in 2014-15 in education. That is an increase of 7.1 per cent across the portfolio on last year. I have mentioned that we have passed on \$131 million straight to schools, not a dollar taken by central or regional offices. Under Labor we would have received nothing.

We are also spending \$535 million over the next five years under our Great Teachers = Great Results program. That is all about teacher quality, autonomy and discipline measures. Year 7 transition continues, with millions of dollars going into that, and we are preparing the biggest intake of teachers that we have had since the prep year. We have been running 20 pilot programs throughout the state about prep year. The feedback has been fantastic. Everyone is ready for that.

In relation to the Schools Planning Commission, it is interesting to hear that we have done something that has never been done before, to bring all sectors together and to bring all government agencies together to actually plan for schools. Because of the former Labor government, Mr Deputy Speaker, I will tell you how many state schools we built this year—not one. Not one state school has been opened by the government in 2014 because school planning takes some time. We will be opening 10 new schools from 2015, but, under the former government, planning was a sham. So we are working together to plan for growth.

We want to also make sure that information is available to Queenslanders whether they are in state or non-state schooling. We are absolutely committed to making sure that the landmark reforms in TAFE and training that have established TAFE as an independent statutory body under the direction of a commercially focused board are going to lead to better outcomes for students. That is what we are doing in education.

(Time expired)