




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

Record of Proceedings, 5 June 2014

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.22 pm): It is a pleasure to rise today to talk about the Coomera electorate and the northern Gold Coast area, which is the fastest growing region in Australia. The budget that has been delivered is a tough and necessary budget. I will be looking over a longer term—over the past two years, the coming 12 months and then, if I have time, where things might go for the Coomera electorate into the future.

There are a couple of things that need to be said upfront, and that is that the funding for social housing in and around the Gold Coast and the funding for homelessness is very, very important from a social perspective to ensure that those within our communities who are doing it the toughest are able to be assisted. Unexpectedly, I must say from my perspective, there was a couple of million dollars put into the budget, which is greatly appreciated, to go towards the duplication of rail between Coomera and Helensvale. That is slated to be completed by January 2018. The overall cost is \$189 million, which is a lot of money, but it is absolutely essential if we are going to take advantage on the Gold Coast of the network improvements up here in Brisbane. Simply put, right now we have a bit of a roadblock on the rail, and that planning is absolutely essential prior to the Commonwealth Games in 2018.

Talking about roadblocks, I have two other roadblocks in the electorate, one of which is the Coomera River. As far as economic development is concerned, it is very important for us to see the Coomera River properly dredged. One of the issues we have is that the dredged material from the Coomera cannot simply be taken outside and dumped as sand because it is silt. It is other materials as well as sand. We needed an area for treatment of that dredged material. Thanks to some work done with the Deputy Premier we now believe we have that land in place. We are looking forward to the Coomera being dredged and, as a result, being able to bring bigger boats down the Coomera River to the very important and very large Gold Coast marine precinct at Coomera. We will be able to bring 250-tonne boats and ships down the river and lift them out of the water. When they are being refurbished, there are many millions of dollars being spent. One of the businesses there currently employs 60 people on an ongoing basis, delivering quite large ships and refurbishments for people right around Queensland and Australia. He told me that once they can bring those bigger boats in it will immediately increase his staffing numbers from 60 to around 90. That is one business in a very large precinct and the economic benefit to the community for a matter of a few million dollars of dredging being done.

We are blessed to have Commonwealth Games facilities in Coomera. The Coomera Sport and Leisure Centre has been provided with \$12½ million. What an absolute magnificent legacy that will be for the people in the northern Gold Coast and the Coomera electorate. Those sorts of facilities are thin on the ground. It is a magnificent structure and it really will be an icon for the local area—\$12½ million is fantastic.

The main game for the state seat of Coomera in this budget and previous budgets is the high need for infrastructure. The type of infrastructure I am talking about is schools. Over the last five

years—and I have mentioned it in this place before—we have seen five new schools built in the Coomera electorate. Nowhere else in the state have there been five brand-new schools within a 10-kilometre distance along the M1. In less than 12 months time, in January 2015, we will see another two schools—a private school and a public school—come on stream. That is fantastic.

In 2015 we will see the transition of year 7 into high school. I have three high schools that will benefit from the funding required for that year 7 transition and a fourth one, Beenleigh State High, of which 60 per cent of students come from my electorate. Helensvale State High is well on its way to completing its \$10 million construction to accommodate year 7 students. It is a very large school with 2,350 students from year 7 to year 12. Just down the road we have Helensvale Primary, which has something in the order of 1,150 students. So there are a lot of young people within cooe of one another in the Helensvale area. For Pimpama State Secondary College, a further \$12 million has been made available to complete stage 2. I am hopeful that early in the 2015-16 financial year we will be able to enhance that further to make sure that we properly accommodate students. Ormeau Woods is ready to go. It has plenty of space for year 7 students and for growth over the next couple of years. They very much are the main game for us. The new state school at Pimpama is under construction. I witnessed the pour of the first slab for the school not too long ago. That will be coming on stream in 2015.

As I have mentioned, we have got five new schools over five years with two more coming on, both private and public. Some might ask why we need this type of growth in school construction. Well, we have had a 28.3 per cent growth in numbers from 2009 to 2014, and most of that is in the Pimpama-Coomera area of the electorate. The electorate stretches from Eagleby in the north to Helensvale in the south but most of that growth has been smack bang in the middle. To give members an idea of what that represents in terms of voter numbers, when I came into this place in 2009 there were just under 29,000 voters, and we are 90 short of 37,000 voters in 2014 as we speak right now.

Government members interjected.

Mr CRANDON: And they are all going to vote for me. I am looking for the 27 per cent who did not vote for me last time and I will be talking to them about the reasons they may have been unhappy, and hopefully they will come across the next time around.

I have spoken about the current budget, but what are the important things we have done over the last two years? There is a very good reason why education spending is up seven per cent, and it is because of the very good reasons that I just outlined to the House. We are talking about a \$47 billion budget this year, with \$80 billion of debt that we are aiming to bring down to a \$55 billion debt level, using \$8 billion plus on further infrastructure. Some of that infrastructure would be slated for the Coomera and Albert electorates on the northern Gold Coast, including the absolutely essential work on exit 54, just to mention one area.

I will mention very quickly what we have done over the last two years. In the 2014 Great Results Guarantee, we saw \$131 million distributed, with about \$1.6 million of that coming into the Coomera electorate for my 10 state schools. In terms of school maintenance, we have seen the Advancing our Schools Maintenance Fund initiative, which is an injection of money into the schools to play catch-up because of the legacy we were left from Labor when they let schools run down. We have \$1.625 million in that. If we add that to the standard round of maintenance, we have seen a total of \$2.25 million over the last two years go into my schools just to bring them up to scratch, and I have got to say they are looking good.

In relation to capital expenditure for schools in my electorate, I have mentioned what we are doing in this coming year. Over the last two years, this is what we have seen: \$35 million in 2012-13 with another \$12 million in 2013-14. As I have mentioned, there is another \$12 million to come. I have mentioned the \$2 million for the rail.

Government members interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I will round it up there because I am being wound up by a few of my colleagues. I understand that everybody is keen to deliver their replies to the Treasurer. I congratulate the Treasurer. I particularly congratulate the Treasurer and the Premier for making the announcement they made today to fill the gap that the federal budget left for our most conservative people, I would suggest, in the electorate—that is, the pensioners and others who are entitled to concessions. Congratulations in that regard. Congratulations on a fantastic budget. It will be onward and upward from here for the state seat of Coomera.