



Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGERTER

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerter—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (3.43 pm): Today I am pleased to rise to speak in support of the Palaszczuk government's 2015-16 Queensland state budget. Our government's budget is unashamedly a budget about people. It is our road map for implementing the better way for Queensland that we promised at the election. It puts people at the heart of government service delivery in the area of housing and restores dignity to social housing tenants—people whom the former LNP government treated as nothing more than contractual parties to a lease agreement. The Palaszczuk government understands that we cannot get quality health and education outcomes and strong employment opportunities unless we get the basics like housing right. Our government's first budget is also a pro jobs budget. The budget centrepiece, Advance Queensland, is at its heart a jobs plan. It is a plan for jobs now and jobs for the future.

As the member for Algerter, I am passionate about the opportunities and services that this budget delivers for the residents of my electorate. As a former high school teacher, I know the value of education in helping young people reach their full potential. It is very exciting to see my electorate is expected to receive up to seven new teacher positions over the next three years. The budget also provides more money for families, children and individuals living with a disability in the electorate of Algerter, and I welcome those allocations. I will continue to work hard over the coming years to fight for the resources Algerter residents need to keep our community a vibrant part of South-East Queensland that we choose to call home.

As Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation both of the departments in my portfolio have benefited from the measured and responsible initiatives included in this budget. Support for some of our more vulnerable residents has been the focus of the Housing and Public Works budget. A massive capital spend of \$435.6 million is allocated in this year's budget, which is an increase of \$84.6 million over and above the capital spend in the LNP's last budget. However, despite this, the shadow minister, the member for Southport, last night tried to create the false impression that there had been a reduction in capital expenditure by selectively cherrypicking certain capital figures from the budget papers. Unfortunately for the member for Southport, he misquoted his own former government's capital grants figure from the 2014-15 budget in the process. He was only a mere \$19 million out! In order to assist him, I have checked the facts for him. If the member for Southport had done his own homework and looked at page 64 of the 2014-15 Capital Statement for Housing and Public Works, he would have found his \$19 million error for himself.

I also want to respond to the Leader of the Opposition, who yesterday claimed that standard disposals of properties which are no longer required as government employee housing are asset sales by another name. It is disappointing to even have to respond to such an absurd suggestion, but for the record I am happy to advise the House that the disposal program the Leader of the Opposition referred

to is in fact business as usual and necessary to efficiently manage the government's employee housing portfolio, particularly if we are to ensure quality housing is available to attract and retain skilled employees such as health workers, police and teachers across the state. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

In relation to the electorate of Algester, the allocation for additional teachers is very welcome.

This commitment is part of the Palaszczuk Government's initiative to let teachers teach, provide more curriculum coordination time, more teacher release time and more specialist teachers in high schools.

As Member for Algester I am committed to assisting people with a disability and their families access the support services they need as they move through different stages of their life.

That's why I am delighted to welcome the \$6.6 million of funding allocated to disability services across the Algester electorate.

Helping people with a disability to stay living in their own homes is also a priority with \$800,000 allocated to provide support to assist people with a disability or condition that restricts their day-to-day living, to do just that.

I was particularly happy to see The Spot Community Services at Parkinson will share in funding of \$619,000 to support families to safely care for their children in Algester.

Local residential care service providers will also share in almost \$4.3 million to help ensure children in need of protection have a safe place to stay.

Also, Pallara State School will receive more than \$12,000 to continue to provide the additional classroom spaces that they need.

In the portfolio of Housing and Public Works, this year's increased capital spend includes more than \$183 million will be allocated to the government owned social housing portfolio of more than 60,000 properties across the State.

The department will commence construction of 274 dwellings, purchase an additional 32, and complete construction of another 258.

Queensland's Indigenous communities will also benefit from this budget, with \$129 million allocated toward social housing within these communities.

This funding includes \$112.8 million through the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH).

The NPARIH funding will be used to construct new dwellings and carry out works on the existing social housing portfolio in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Construction of 60 dwellings will be commenced and 207 more will be completed with this budget allocation.

There's a number of other important initiatives in the Housing Budget for the next 12 months, including:

Funding of just over \$9 million through the Employment Related Accommodation Program (ERAP) to commence construction of a facility in Townsville to support young people from Indigenous communities pursuing employment, education and training opportunities.

\$5.6 million has been allocated to construct a facility in Cairns to provide specialist supported accommodation for rough sleepers.

\$2.76 million has been allocated for the support component of two new women's shelters as recommended by the Taskforce for Domestic and Family Violence.

This Budget also continues this government's work in delivering our election commitments.

As I mentioned earlier, the tenant advice and advocacy service will be re-established with funding of \$6.6 million to enable tenants to access free independent and impartial advice.

Abolishing this service was one of the more short-sighted actions of the LNP, leaving Queensland rental tenants without independent advice in an area where disputes can be complex, confusing, and intimidating.

We expect this new tenant advisory service will assist 70,000 clients per year from 2016-17.

An interim tenant advice and advocacy service went live at the start of June and will help thousands of Queensland tenants in both public and private rental properties.

Another important election commitment was that we would ensure fairness is reinstated in the public housing system

Our review into this is underway, and is looking at a range of issues, such as what income is assessed when rents are calculated, the "Temporary Absences Policy" and the LNP's three-strikes policy.

This Budget allocates \$21.3 million to Government Employee Housing, including \$11.9 million to build a significant multi-unit development on Thursday Island to support Queensland Health's Chronic Disease Centre.

\$9.4 million has been allocated to upgrade the existing Government Employee Housing portfolio, which includes over 3,000 dwellings.

Ensuring good quality housing is available to attract and retain skilled employees such as health workers, police and teachers is a priority for our government which wants to be able to deliver government services across Queensland.

I can also advise the House that \$6.2 million has been allocated to undertake a roof repair and upgrades to associated structural elements on the Cairns Convention Centre.

Mr Speaker, one of the most exciting initiatives in this year's Budget is the Palaszczuk Government's \$180 million Advance Queensland plan.

Advance Queensland is about catching the next wave of economic opportunity that previous Labor governments built through their Smart State initiatives.

That wave is the creation of new industries of the future that will employ Queenslanders by translating the outcomes of research and development into commercial opportunities.

Advance Queensland is also about educating and training our young people to fill those future jobs.

It will help our state move beyond our traditional strengths and continue our transition to a knowledge-based economy with new industries, and the new jobs that come with them.

Advance Queensland will continue to strengthen our research talent base, build a thriving startup culture and encourage a vibrant venture capital sector.

The Advance Queensland plan has a number of key elements:

- A \$50 million Advance Queensland Best and Brightest Fund to develop, attract and retain world-class talent—both scientific and entrepreneurial;
- A \$46 million Advance Queensland Future Jobs Strategy, which will open the door to new industry/research collaborations, tackle the big innovation challenges, focus on translation, and deliver 10 year roadmaps for industries with global growth potential;
- A \$76 million Business Investment Attraction package, which will encourage a new wave of Queensland startups, support proof-of-concept projects, and attract co-investment through the Business Development Fund;
- And \$8 million will be set aside to give us flexibility to respond as new opportunities arise, especially as we develop roadmaps with industry partners.

We recognise that we must become a place that commercialises our innovations—we don't want to continue to export the ideas and the jobs that come from turning those ideas into products—we want to keep them here.

The Advance Queensland initiative will help make our state a place where industry, universities and government work together to take those great ideas and turn them into investment-ready proposals that attract investment and create jobs. We will be creating the entrepreneurs of the future.

By making innovation and knowledge-based industries a key focus of this Government, we are intent on delivering a new era of opportunity for Queenslanders.

The budget will also provide more than \$50 million for the rollout of the Government Wireless Network (GWN) in South East Queensland.

The GWN will provide an integrated and secure digital radio communications network for Queensland's public safety agencies—Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services and Queensland Ambulance Service.

This Budget also continues the State Government's support of public libraries across Queensland.

Our libraries play an important role in educating our children and in the cultural life of our State, so it is important to ensure access to resources for all Queensland families.

In 2015-16 the Budget will provide \$68.3 million to the State Library of Queensland, including more than \$23 million for public libraries grant funding which supports more than 320 public libraries.

Queenslanders in rural and remote areas will also benefit from the \$850,000 allocated to the Rural Libraries Queensland network.

This will help ensure these communities have 24/7 access to online resources such as ebooks and magazines, online learning, resources, and family history services.

Mr Speaker, to have a successful economy into the future, we need to drive digital innovation and transition to a knowledge economy.

This Budget will help deliver that future for Queensland whilst also bringing the most vulnerable Queenslanders with us.

I commend the Budget to the House.