




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee, Report

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (11.33 pm): I rise to respond to the budget estimates committee report prepared by the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee. I would like to start by thanking the committee for its time and consideration and all those who made the arrangements and provided support for the process. I am also pleased to have the opportunity to reiterate my passion and commitment for the work being done in my portfolio and to address a number of points raised in the statement of reservation by the member for Southport. A number of issues raised in the member's statement were, in fact, addressed and answered during the hearing, but for the benefit of the House and the member I am happy to go over them again tonight.

When it comes to social housing policy, members opposite simply do not understand the serious negative impacts that their policy changes have had on housing tenants. That was evident at the estimates hearing and it is evident in the member for Southport's statement of reservation. The previous LNP government's changes to housing policies have had a direct impact on vulnerable Queenslanders. That is why we have committed to reviewing the state's social housing policies in order to ensure there is fairness in the system. This is a commitment we took to the election and this is a commitment we are delivering on now.

We are also reviewing other decisions that were made by the previous government without consideration for the impact they would have on tenants. The Logan Renewal Initiative will affect almost 5,000 households. It is the largest transfer of social housing stock ever planned in this country and the project will span 20 years. But as big as the project is, no effort was made by the previous government to consult with any of these families about how the initiative would affect them. Furthermore, there was no consultation with existing community organisations that serve Logan.

The interests of those people who will be impacted by this project and integration with the existing service system in Logan must come first. This project is huge. So it is important that we get it right. That is why I have commissioned an independent readiness review of the initiative as part of the final step before proceeding with the project. The implementation of any large scale programs of this kind will be informed by the outcomes we see in Logan.

We are also continuing to invest in new social housing projects across the state. The government has approved more than \$334 million in social housing projects over the 2015-16 Capital Works Program. That is \$84 million more for social housing this year alone, meaning more jobs in construction and maintenance across our regions. When it comes to providing housing for government employees, there is no question that it needs to be comfortable and secure for our hardworking teachers, nurses, police et cetera in places where it is needed. Where properties are identified by departments as surplus to requirements, they are divested in a business-as-usual way. The proceeds are then reinvested into

the purchase or construction of new accommodation and/or upgrades to existing properties. Property market variations play a role in how this activity is managed. That is why it is normal practice for more properties than initially identified in the budget to be advertised for sale so that the government is in a position to make prudent financial decisions based on market realities. Despite the member for Southport's comments in his statement of reservation, this was explained to him at the hearing.

I now turn to my Science and Innovation portfolio. In response to comments relating to Advance Queensland, I would like to emphasise that we are working to refocus Queensland as a knowledge based economy. As I informed members of the committee at the hearing, Advance Queensland is already rolling out across the state. Comments made by the member for Southport in his statement of reservation that Advance Queensland had not yet commenced are incorrect and do not reflect the answers I provided to the committee. To name just a few, the Advance Queensland research fellowships were launched by the Premier on 5 August, the PhD scholarships were launched on 15 August, the Women's Academic Fund was launched on 15 August. Since then, the Knowledge Transfer Partnership program was launched on 3 September. Also announced on 3 September was the extension of the PhD Industry Experience program, and the Advance Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research Fellowship and PhD Scholarship programs were launched on 11 September. We are actively engaging with stakeholders to ensure the program will deliver a bright future for Queensland.

I also refute any suggestion from the opposition that we do not have a business plan for CITEC. My department is leading a program of work to determine CITEC's future operating model to address its financial position and create a sustainable business. Development of a new CITEC business model also provides the opportunity to strengthen the government's capabilities, as it proved during G20, to address emerging cybersecurity challenges. Regarding the management of ICT systems across the government, as minister, I am committed to ensuring we have the best governance arrangements in place. We have robust systems and policies to manage the complex nature of government ICT.

Across my portfolios, I am committed to delivering on the election commitments that this government took to the people of Queensland including restoring fairness to the social housing system and the implementation of Advance Queensland to provide jobs now and jobs for the future.