




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee, Report

 **Mr KING** (Kallangur—ALP) (11.00 pm): I rise today to speak to the third report tabled by the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee—the report on its consideration of the Appropriation Bill 2015. As committee chair for the first time I was excited to see how the process worked. I must also admit to being a bit apprehensive. As this was our committee's first public hearing, it seemed a bit like a trial by fire. However, our committee negotiated well together to nominate the times and conditions for the examination of each portfolio area. We worked well together during the day.

I would like to thank the committee's deputy chair, Rob Molhoek, and committee members Jason Costigan, Dale Last, Don Brown and Chris Whiting for their work and for the amicable way all issues were resolved. I hope our committee can continue to work together in this way as I think that is what the people of Queensland would want and expect. I would also like to thank the ministers, their staff, the directors-general and their departments and the GOC executives for their participation on the day. We had a number of non-committee members who attended on the day to question the ministers, directors-general and CEOs. I would like to also thank them for their participation. I would, however, mostly like to thank the Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee secretariat for their hard work in preparing for the day and their work on the day. To Kate, Rachelle, Julie and Lisa, thank you all very much. I give many thanks to the Hansard staff as well.

Obviously, as a new chair there was a fair bit of testing carried out on me by the opposition. There were a few ideologically, politically motivated rants. I had an interesting, and at times challenging, session following the standing orders to rein in questions which were speeches instead of questions, imputations and interjections, hypothetical questions, the asking for opinions and the asking of policy questions of departmental staff instead of the minister. This was all while I was still trying to give opposition members the lion's share of the time allotted. Once we sorted out the rules, a robust, bipartisan examination occurred. Although time did favour opposition members, it still provided an interrogative look into the Appropriation Bill for the portfolios examined.

I was disappointed to see the amount of money spent by some GOCs, departments and port authorities in their preparation for possible privatisation and contestability—that is, asset sales—despite assurances from the former LNP government that asset sales were being taken to the election and not already being worked on. As I am from the energy sector, my highlights from the process were largely from that area. Firstly, I must say that I am immensely proud that we have kept our electricity supply assets in public hands and maintained the uniform tariff policy to keep regional power prices in line with metropolitan prices. I think our regional people would like that. It is important that we as a government look after our regions and make living in the regions as affordable as possible. Retaining this policy is vital to remote and regional residents. I was pleased to see that we seek to lead the development of biofuels and to expand Queensland's biofuel and biomanufacturing industries.

One other highlight from the budget with regard to the portfolios we examined was the news that flashing lights have been and are continuing to be installed at several schools in my electorate. Kallangur State School received flashing lights on School Road in May this year. Narangba State School got flashing lights this month. I was pleased just last week to be in attendance at Pine Rivers Special School with the acting principal, the deputy principal and the local councillor, Mick Gillam, when the lights went up there. This is a particularly dangerous bit of road. A lot of trucks use it regularly. These lights are very welcome and timely. I commend the report to the House.