




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2016

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; DUTIES AND
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (9.28 pm): It is wonderful to hear about the member for Mount Ommaney's love for reality television. I do not share the member for Mount Ommaney's predisposition for reality TV, but I can see that she might like shows like *Kiss Bang Love* or *Seven Year Switch*.

Mr Ryan: Wearing your trackie daks, eating chips.

Mrs LAUGA: I take the interjection. The member for Mount Ommaney was all sweetness and light talking about Jess, a student who the member for Mount Ommaney provided some advice to about a school assignment that she was doing. I think that it is really lucky that the member for Mount Ommaney did not provide Jess with a copy of her budget reply speech because Jess may well have ended up very embarrassed. Her assignment would have said that the budget reply speech had no reliable sources, had lots of opinion and no fact and was essentially riddled with errors and Jess would have received a fail, fail, fail.

I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill, a bill to endorse the 2016 Palaszczuk-Pitt budget. The Palaszczuk government has delivered a budget which will deliver jobs, build infrastructure, attract investment and grow innovation in Keppel and Central Queensland. This is a good Labor budget which responds to the needs of local people. It helps the youth and the elderly, the unemployed and the disadvantaged, but it also is focused on business and industry and the future. It is the budget that Central Queensland needs right now but with a clear path for the future, an economic plan for innovation, investment and infrastructure.

I am also very pleased that \$15 million has been funded for continuation of the wonderful Yeppoon foreshore project which is part of a master plan that will grow jobs, grow tourism and help our community recover after Cyclone Marcia. This \$15 million investment is part of the total \$25 million package that the Palaszczuk government is delivering for this project. When completed the transformed foreshore will generate jobs, drive economic growth and attract major private sector investment to our region. I cannot wait to see shovels hit the ground and the jobs flowing. Hundreds of community members and many stakeholder groups provided feedback and input into the plans throughout the months of consultation. Now with the plan adopted, in the next few months Livingstone Shire Council is seeking to award the tender for the next phase of schematic design. The Yeppoon foreshore project will lead to long-term business and job opportunities for local people. It is a significant drawcard for the area and the state government is proud to have contributed \$25 million towards the project.

The government has also invested heavily in education at Emu Park, Frenchville and Farnborough state schools, an investment in our future. For our students to have the best chance at success we need to ensure our state schools continue to be quality learning environments. Our teachers and school staff deserve access to the infrastructure and facilities they need to support the great work they do. Which is why I am so pleased that the 2016 Palaszczuk government budget includes a

whopping \$26.4 million in Central Queensland to renew school facilities. Frenchville State School will be receiving \$1.25 million from the 2016 Palaszczuk government budget to extend its current administration building and to construct a new courtyard shade structure. Last week I met with the acting principal of Frenchville State School, Donna Earle-Morrison, and she was very excited and grateful for the announcement. Frenchville is the largest primary school in Central Queensland and its current administration building is bursting at the seams. This much needed new extension will allow the administration team to better service their students and its community.

Farnborough State School will be receiving \$200,000 towards a new covered play area which has been an identified need for local schoolkids. Sun safety is incredibly important, especially in Central Queensland where we make full use of the sunny lifestyle. Providing covered and shady areas for our children at school is important in order to combat the unacceptably high rates of skin cancer we have.

The work on \$3 million worth of new classrooms at Emu Park State School will continue and I am looking forward to catching up with principal Wayne McMurtrie and the students at Emu Park to celebrate the completion of these much needed new classrooms. I have been working hard to secure additional funding for our local schools so it is great to see that my colleagues in the Palaszczuk government are just as committed to delivering the infrastructure we need in Keppel. This extra school funding is a welcome addition to our region and I look forward to seeing these important projects underway and benefiting our schoolteachers, staff and students.

More than \$9.1 billion will be delivered to Queensland in a record spend on education in this budget. Last year \$178 million was spent on important school maintenance which was welcomed by principals, teachers, parents and students across Keppel. Local apprentices are also winners from this maintenance work because at least 10 per cent of all maintenance work carried out on state schools was required to be undertaken by apprentices, ensuring we continue to develop skills locally. I am so pleased that in this budget the Palaszczuk government will increase school maintenance by eight per cent to \$192 million. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Millar): It has been cleared by the Deputy Speaker?

Mrs LAUGA: It has.

Leave granted.

Yeppoon-Rockhampton Road

The Budget includes \$150,000 to commence duplication planning of Rockhampton—Yeppoon Road at a total cost of \$250,000.

For months I have been calling on the Minister for Main Roads Mark Bailey to find the money needed to begin planning this crucial project and I am pleased that my colleagues in Brisbane are hearing the calls of constituents here in Keppel loud and clear.

The Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road is an important part of the Central Queensland road network and this planning money will go into looking at how this road can best be improved.

The Rockhampton-Yeppoon Road is an important part of the Central Queensland road network with over 12,000 vehicles per day. The Road connects the two major economic centres of Yeppoon and Rockhampton and is the gateway to the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

I want to make sure this road continues to support the growing traffic demands of Keppel, now and into the future.

National Parks

One of the amazing things about Keppel Mister Speaker is the number of national parks around the electorate which provide a wonderful opportunity for locals to get out into the fresh air and enjoy our natural environment. Exploring nature has many health benefits including cognitive, social and emotional development, and it builds resilience and creativity as well. Experiences in nature as a child also leads to environmental awareness and stewardship later in life.

So I'm pleased that this Budget includes over \$1 million to improve infrastructure at our National Parks.

The main access to the coastal section of Byfield National Park, Waterpark Creek to Stockyard Point road, will be upgraded at a cost of \$415,000.

Red Rock campground at Byfield, my personal favourite camping ground, is receiving a \$350,000 makeover.

Similarly, Bluff Point is a popular local park will receive a \$265,000 upgrade. Bluff Point is situated at the southern end of Kemp Beach and is a popular picnic spot with superb coastal scenery. It features a range of coastal vegetation from mangroves and heath lands to open eucalypt forests and tussock grasslands and is the largest trachyte plug on the Capricorn Coast. Two lookout points are perfect for spotting marine life below and enjoying cool sea breezes, while the walk provides marvellous views of the hinterland.

Public moorings

I have been fighting for public moorings in Keppel Bay since I was elected and I'm pleased to announce that we've had a win.

Tourism and recreational boating on the Southern Great Barrier Reef has received a major boost with at least 10 new public moorings planned for the Keppel Bay area to be delivered in the 2016-17 financial year.

The Palaszczuk Government has announced almost \$2.4 million in next week's State Budget to fund a series of public mooring infrastructure along the Great Barrier Reef.

This project will not only open up more opportunities for marine tourism operators to help people explore the reef, but is an important investment in protecting one of Queensland's most important and iconic assets.

I have been fighting for these moorings since my election and I have lobbied the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for the Great Barrier Reef and National Parks Dr Steven Miles on many occasions to broaden the opportunities for sailors to visit our shores and enjoy the unrivalled beauty this area has to offer.

The Southern Great Barrier Reef and its island national parks are home to abundant and diverse marine life, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Corals are among the most popular attractions, yet they are the most vulnerable and it can take many years for coral to recover. Public moorings help protect the reef from damage by anchors, chain or rope.

The new mooring infrastructure, to be installed at popular anchorage spots in Keppel Bay, will facilitate increased access to the marine park, in a way which is both safe and sustainable.

The moorings announcement has been supported by Capricorn Enterprise Chief Executive Mary Carroll who said "Tourism infrastructure which assists our visitors and supports our tourism operators, whilst protecting the reef, can only benefit our destination. Capricorn Enterprise welcomes the Government's announcement of new moorings to support marine tourism to our magnificent Keppel Islands on the Southern Great Barrier Reef.

Tourism

This Budget will deliver an extra \$33.5 million in funding over four years to grow tourism and make Queensland the number-one destination for millions of Asian visitors which is excellent news for Keppel.

Our tourism sector is emerging as a major driver of economic growth as more Asian visitors come to Queensland, spending money and creating jobs across the state.

That's why the Palaszczuk Government is taking a focused approach to make Queensland Australia's market leader for the Asian tourism market and to build on the momentum that has seen record visitation numbers to Queensland.

This Budget announcement is welcome news, on top of more great news today that record numbers of tourists are visiting our Southern Great Barrier Reef region, tourists are staying longer and they are spending record amounts.

The latest Tourism Research Australia figures showed the Southern Great Barrier Reef region welcomed two million Australian visitors in the year to March 2016, an increase of seven per cent, resulting in more than 7.7 million visitor nights.

The record number of domestic visitors is a great reflection of our growing reputation as a tourism destination.

The income from tourists is benefiting local businesses. Tourists are not only coming to our region in record numbers, they are spending a record amount in the region.

Australian domestic visitors spent more than \$947 million in our region over a 12 month period.

This is great news for our local businesses and tourism operators who are seeing the benefits of a booming domestic tourism market.

International Education and Training

International education and training (IET) is one of the fastest growing industries in the global economy, with particularly strong demand growth from key Queensland trading partners in Asia so I'm pleased that the Palaszczuk Government is committing \$25 million over the next five years to deliver on the IET strategy.

A strong IET industry drives innovation, builds a stronger economy and creates more jobs and the Central Queensland economy is poised to significantly grow its international education market.

The IET industry enhances Queensland's global standing and enriches our community. It facilitates international diplomacy, creates global business networks and enhances research partnerships. We also know that an increase in international students in our schools, colleges, universities and other institutions results in additional tourists, spending and local jobs.

In 2015, direct spending by international students added \$22 million to the Central Queensland economy.

Keppel is perfectly positioned to grow international education, and I'd like to see our region increase its market share of international students. Together, the world-class CQUniversity, and our safe, laid-back lifestyle, make a powerful combination to attract more international students.

And that's why in this Budget the Deputy Premier and Minister for Trade and Investment Jackie Trad committed \$25 million over five years to deliver a comprehensive new IET strategy.

In 2015, Queensland's IET industry sustained about 20,000 jobs and is the second-largest service export industry behind tourism.

The State Government believes the industry could grow annually to generate \$7.5 billion in export income and create 6,800 more local jobs by 2026.

A strong and sustainable international education and training industry that facilitates global engagement, produces lifelong ambassadors for Queensland, and becomes a key catalyst for growing Queensland's knowledge economy.

Procurement

Finally, I think we all understand that we can deliver great social and environmental outcomes through getting government procurement right. It's critical that we do this in a way maintains value for money, supports local Queensland business, and delivers other benefits in our communities.

I'm pleased to note that the Minister for Housing and Public Works will establish the Office of Chief Advisor—Procurement that will lead a whole of Government approach to enhancing our capability to achieve those broader outcomes from the things we purchase as a Government.

Domestic and Family Violence

I'm proud that the Palaszczuk Government includes a \$198.2 million dollar investment over the next five years to tackle domestic and family violence in Queensland. This is a significant investment which builds on the \$31 million committed in last year's Budget to implement key recommendations of the landmark 'Not Now Not Ever' Report into domestic and family violence. This funding includes:

- \$42.4 million to roll out specialist courts, building on the trial at Southport
- \$43.1 million for additional or enhanced domestic and family violence services to support families
- \$26.3 million for eight specialist teams across Queensland to prioritise victims and their safety
- \$10.3 million for additional perpetrator interventions to help protect victims
- \$9.6 million for a communication and engagement program to change attitudes and behaviours towards domestic and family violence
- \$8.7 million for two new shelters to support women and children escaping domestic and family violence

This funding will go a long way in Central Queensland where the community is working tirelessly to combat domestic and family violence.

Environment

This Budget Mister Speaker puts the focus back on climate change and provided an additional \$6.8 million over four years to lead the development of the Government's climate change strategies.

This funding is in addition to the Government's \$12 million initiative to help coastal councils like mine defend our communities from the impacts of climate change (the QCoast2100 program), which was announced in last year's Budget.

Rapid action is also required to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

The Government is using recommendations from the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce to deliver on our \$100 million commitment for cleaner water for a healthy reef.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to preserving natural conditions and protecting cultural resources and values to the greatest possible extent.

The Budget includes \$2.275 million to support the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan including: information management; catchment monitoring; ground cover and water monitoring; wetland mapping; Queensland Wetlands program support; training on wetlands in agriculture; and supporting the State Council of River Trusts works program.

I'm proud that the Budget includes these funding allocations to help protect our Great Barrier Reef, improve water quality and adapt to climate change.

Health

I'm also proud that Queensland's multi-billion dollar health budget will jump 7.7 per cent to meet growing demands for health services across the state.

This record health budget will see an increase to \$15.274 billion in 2016-17, ensuring world-class health services for Queenslanders.

The bulk of the new budget, totalling \$12.614 billion, will go to the states' 16 Hospital and Health Services, Mater Health Services and Saint Vincent's Health Australia, which deliver the health services on the ground throughout Queensland. This year's funding increase will mean more people will be treated in the health system and more staff will be employed.

The health budget also includes \$230 million to fund significant health infrastructure upgrades around the state, while a further \$170 million will be spent on upgrades to critical ICT infrastructure.

In total, \$1.4 billion will be invested on capital works infrastructure in 2016/17.

Mister Speaker, I'm so pleased that Rockhampton Hospital will be getting a multistorey car park! A multistorey car park at the Rockhampton Hospital is a major issue for Central Queenslanders. So I'm pleased that Central Queensland Health and Hospital Service is finalising a business case for a multistorey car park and that it will go to tender by the end of 2016.

I'm extremely pleased that the Palaszczuk Government is investing in health. This is a Labor health budget where the priority is on frontline services.

Back to Work Package

We know some regions, some employers and some jobseekers need a confidence boost and support. The Palaszczuk Government's Back to Work program is a two year \$100 million package giving businesses in Keppel and in regional Queensland the confidence to employ jobseekers and providing an economic boost to regions facing challenging times.

The world is in transition following the unwinding of the commodities boom—economies and jobs are changing. Queensland is not immune. Back to Work is a package of assistance aimed squarely at those regions and those individuals who need our help the most.

The \$100 million Back to Work—Regional Employment Package provides: support for employers to build their skills base; support for regions doing it tough; and support for jobseekers to build confidence, upskill and retrain for jobs in a more agile Queensland economy. Back to Work includes:

- \$80 million for support payments for employers to take on regional jobseekers, including long term unemployed jobseekers
- \$10 million for additional training for eligible jobseekers to gain the skills they need for work through the Back to Work Certificate 3 Guarantee Boost

- \$10 million for Back to Work Navigation Teams to work with local employers and build regional employment solutions. Teams will also help create the capacity needed to meet emerging needs through networks and other innovative ideas.

Payments of up to \$10,000 will be available to employers to provide up to 8,000 real jobs to eligible jobseekers in regions outside South East Queensland. An additional \$5,000 is available for employers who take on someone unemployed for 52 weeks or more.

I am confident that this program will make a huge difference to unemployment in Central Queensland.

Back to Work will help Central Queensland businesses to build their confidence to employ jobseekers and provide a much needed boost to our local economy.

Mister Speaker, this is a Back to Work Budget—where every major initiative is geared at getting Central Queenslanders back in jobs—or making their existing jobs better and safer. It is a Budget that recognises some areas of the State are doing better than others.

This is a Budget that helps all Queenslanders share in the growth our economy is generating. It is a Budget that will Advance Queensland and secure our economic future.

I commend the Bill to the House.