




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2016

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (9.04 pm): First of all I want to thank the chair, the deputy chair and all members of the committee for their hard work during the 18 months I have been on the committee. I also want to thank the staff because if we did not have great staff on the secretariat none of us would be able to get our jobs done correctly. I thank members of the parliamentary staff for all of the hard work they have done on the committee in the last 18 months that I have been on the committee and especially during the estimates. I want to look at expenditure in terms of the difference between the two governments and what is happening in the Maryborough electorate.

Mr Russo interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from my colleague: yes, we do have plenty of time. Since the Palaszczuk Labor government was elected the education expenditure and what has happened in my electorate has been brilliant. We have extra teachers for the first time ever at the school and guidance officers. Given today's press release by the minister, the minister is probably one of the best education ministers I have seen. I have been around politics a very long time. I have been around the political scene a very long time and class stress is dropping because we are providing extra teachers and we are making sure that the kids are getting an education.

Ms Jones: We're going to pay them, too!

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the Minister for Education and the member for Ashgrove: we do pay them. One thing that this side of the chamber does very well is we appreciate our teachers. We appreciate everyone who works in schools. We appreciate the business service managers, the cleaners, the gardeners and everyone who is associated with the schools. We appreciate what they do for the future of this state, and that is what we are talking about with education. I have noticed the difference in my electorate with the NAPLAN results and when you go into the schools now the teachers are happy because they have funding and they are doing a very good job.

Ms Jones: They're doing a great job.

Mr SAUNDERS: So are you, Minister. You are doing a very good job. If we look at the expenditure, we are providing families with a 12-month membership of Playgroup Queensland upon the birth of their child. That is a great step for young families to get going on the education merry-go-round. We are delivering greater access to kindergarten in remote communities, and as a person who was born in the west and who has a lot of friends out there who have children that is a great step and I thank the minister very much. We are providing money to kindergartens to support children with disabilities, and that happened in my electorate. The minister intervened when children in my electorate with disabilities could not go to kindergarten because of the federal cutbacks. Because the minister intervened, there are some very happy families at the moment and I once again thank the minister very much. There is \$102 million in ongoing funding over four years to implement the findings of the review

of admin and support staff. This is a big issue. I have had admin staff who have not had lunch because they have to work through their lunch hours because they are snowed under with work and their remuneration was very little.

This committee is very fortunate to have two great ministers—two good ministers who are looking after the welfare of the people of Queensland. Minister Enoch, the member for Algeester, is doing a great job in her portfolio. She has come to my electorate and met and talked to many people in the innovation industry. The feedback is that they are very happy with this government and they are very happy with the way we are heading with education and tourism and small business and innovation. I get pulled up countless times in the street by people saying, 'Thank you. What a difference this government is to the previous government.' These comments are coming from the traditional supporters of those opposite. These people are stopping me in the street saying, 'We are grateful that the Labor government is in power because of the difference and the attitude towards teachers, towards small business people and towards tourism,' which has thrived in my region in the last 18 months under this government. It has absolutely thrived.

It was supposed to be one of the four pillars of the previous government. I am glad it was not holding me up. When the previous government was in power, its pillars were very shaky. On behalf of my electorate, I would like to thank both ministers, the member for Ashgrove and the member for Algeester.