




Speech By
Hon. Leeanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2016

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

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Innovation, Science and the Digital Economy and Minister for Small Business) (11.16 am): I am pleased to speak in support of the Palaszczuk government's 2016-17 Queensland state budget. In his speech to parliament the Treasurer delivered a budget to support our state's transition to a more diversified economy; one in which innovation is at the heart of our future prosperity. This is a budget which is all about innovation, investment and infrastructure. It is a budget which is clearly designed to create jobs and get Queenslanders back to work.

In contrast, the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply has underlined the LNP's lack of vision for the future of Queensland's economy. In his response to the budget, the Leader of the Opposition once again failed to offer any hope to Queensland that he has a policy to diversify the economy. Queensland's start-up, entrepreneur and research and science community should be quite rightly concerned by the Leader of the Opposition's budget reply. Not once did he mention start-ups, entrepreneurs, researchers or the digital economy, he did not even mention the world 'science' and there was hardly a word about innovation—something that governments across Australia and around the world recognise as being a key for the future.

Did the shadow minister for innovation provide any semblance of hope for Queensland's innovation and science community in her budget reply? Sadly, she did not. What we did hear throughout her speech was negativity and some bizarre, irrelevant reference to her love of reality TV. There was not one mention of the opportunities that the digital economy is providing; not one mention of driving innovation in existing industries; not one mention of supporting start-ups. In effect, last night the shadow minister declared that the LNP have no interest in innovation and no plans for transitioning Queensland's economy. She showed no regard for the hardworking entrepreneurs, researchers, scientists and innovators who are helping to build Queensland's future. Instead, we heard another embarrassing claim by the member for Mount Ommaney who seems unable to undertake even a simple internet search.

On Tuesday she stood in this House and asked why a strategy developed by ICT leaders across government, which was implemented in 2013 and scheduled to run until 2017, still had a photo of the former minister in the forward. She also asked why the strategy—which, I remind Madam Deputy Speaker, is scheduled to run until 2017—had not been refreshed. If the member for Mount Ommaney had bothered to click any of the other links on the page where she found the strategy or had even read the actual page where she found the strategy, she would have discovered that work is well and truly underway on refreshing the strategy to be ready for 2017. She would have also discovered that this work is being developed in consultation with ICT leaders across government and the sector over many, many months.

That is not where the embarrassment stops. The member for Mount Ommaney then stood in this House last night and claimed that the digital economy strategy had disappeared magically overnight. Another simple Google search could clear up that great mystery for her very quickly: the Go Digital Queensland strategy is right there on the Go Digital Queensland website. Given the member for Mount Ommaney's clear inability to use modern technology and simple search engines, I will chalk up this embarrassing claim to inexperience rather than deliberately misleading the parliament; however, after her performance in the House last night no-one could consider her the shadow minister for innovation, as she has clearly demonstrated herself to be the shadow minister against innovation.

In contrast to what we have heard so far from the LNP, the Palaszczuk government's commitment to innovation and building the new economy is being delivered through the \$405 million Accelerating Advance Queensland program. What we see is a stark difference in policy for a rapidly changing global economy. The Palaszczuk government has an innovation policy and a \$405 million innovation and jobs plan.

The Leader of the Opposition and the LNP have nothing to contribute on innovation. We have a clear vision and are on a path to prepare our state for the future knowledge economy. We are helping Queensland embrace the opportunities innovation and the digital economy are providing to diversify our economy and create jobs now and jobs for the future. For example, we are investing \$6 million to develop regional innovation hubs to create a statewide innovation network and a further \$6 million for small business digital grants to help Queensland small businesses engage with the digital economy.

Mr Whiting interjected.

Ms ENOCH: I take that interjection; it is. The Palaszczuk government has also committed \$9 million for industry accelerators to increase productivity in key industries, and we are investing \$10 million in a platform technology program to support collaborative research and development activities on technologies like UAVs for use in areas such as agriculture, disaster management and environmental monitoring.

What the LNP have to offer is, sadly, an empty policy cupboard and, quite frankly, no vision for ensuring future generations of Queenslanders have the tools and the infrastructure to compete in domestic and global markets. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Can you confirm that you have approval from me as the Deputy Speaker?

Ms ENOCH: Yes, I do confirm that.

Leave granted.

This Budget is also about people and the residents in my electorate of Algester have benefited from announcements made this week.

Grand Avenue State School will receive \$300,000 in funding to refurbish three existing Special Education Program Learning Space areas.

Investing in local education infrastructure now would deliver benefits into the future for the community.

As we move towards the knowledge-based economy of the future, it is vital that we provide our children with the best possible learning environment.

To prepare the next generation for the jobs of the future we have to equip them with the tools to make the most of the opportunities the new economy will present.

I'm proud to be part of a government which is committing record funding to education.

There was also \$11.2 million provided to assist people with a disability and their families to access the support and services they need, including funding for Corporate Development Services and Wapdas in Parkinson and UnitingCare in Boronia Heights.

Ongoing funding of \$4.87 million will be delivered to ensure children in need of protection have a safe place to stay—including organisations like Mercy Community Services in Algester and Doolandella.

Services to support families to safely care for their children were provided \$636,000 in funding which will go to organisations like The Spot Community Services in Parkinson.

There was an allocation of \$124,000 to support young people and the community, including funding for the Salvation Army at Forest Lake.

And \$822,000 was provided to assist persons under 65 or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person aged under 50, with a disability or condition that restricts their day-to-day living to stay living at home, including funding for Flexible Living in Hillcrest.

I am delighted to see so many services providing support to my local community receive important funding.

Mr Speaker, right at the centre of the budget is the Accelerating Advance Queensland program.

This program has seen the \$180 million Advance Queensland innovation and jobs plan boosted to become a \$405 million whole-of-government program.

The Palaszczuk Government understands that investment in innovation and entrepreneurialism is going to be critical as we prepare Queensland for the knowledge-based economy of the future.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to update the House on the key role my departments are playing in the delivery of this Budget promise.

Through the Advance Queensland initiative we are working diligently to deliver a better future for the people and businesses of this state.

The initiatives led by the Departments of Science, Information Technology and Innovation and Small Business are delivering a sweeping agenda of economic transformation that will lay the groundwork for a bright future for all of us.

The Palaszczuk Government has increased its investment in innovation and creating the jobs of the future to \$405 million, an increase of more than \$225 million on the initial \$180 million announced last year.

This significant increase in innovation spending will position Queensland as the national innovation leader and broaden our focus to embrace further opportunities across the economy.

Advance Queensland is key to our state's economic diversity and our commitment to accelerate Advance Queensland will ignite economic growth and help create the jobs of the future.

Accelerate Advance Queensland is about this Government backing entrepreneurs and innovators across all sectors and across our regions, including startups, small business, school children, farmers, scientists, researchers, tradespeople, engineers, doctors and teachers.

This new investment has four primary objectives.

- Unlocking the potential of business to innovate
- Growing our regions
- Harnessing existing strengths and fostering emerging opportunities
- Building future generations.

I would like to expand on these objectives.

To Unlock the potential of business to innovate my departments will invest:

- \$22.7 million over three years for the Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy; and
- \$10 million for a Platform Technology Program.

The Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy has an emphasis on:

- stronger advocacy for small business;
- making it easier for small business to do business and connect with government and each other; and
- empowering small businesses to start, work smarter, grow and employ.

The strategy will be implemented from 1 July 2016, and will create an environment to increase Queensland's business competitiveness and make Queensland the state to start and grow a small business.

Under the strategy, we will establish an Office for Small Business.

The office will help small business create jobs, drive business growth, harness innovation, build digital capacity and improve coordination of small business initiatives across Government.

The office will develop and deliver programs to foster future entrepreneurs through the Queensland Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow program and expand the highly successful Mentoring for Growth program, with special focus on supporting women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

We will put in place actions to advocate for small business such as appoint a Small Business Champion to advocate on behalf of Queensland's small businesses at state and federal discussions, and bring us in line with other states.

A new Small Business Knowledge Hub will also be created to research key issues impacting Queensland small business and draw on this to inform and influence policy decision making across Queensland Government.

It will also provide targeted support for small business to get a better start including \$10,000 Digital Capacity Grants and \$5000 grants through the Queensland Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow Program.

These initiatives will help small business increase their digital capabilities, presence and sales; ensure a more coordinated approach to service delivery across the government; strengthen support for regional small business; and provide a stronger advocacy voice for small business.

The Advancing Small Business Queensland Strategy has a strong regional focus, with initiatives that will build better partnerships with government and regional stakeholders.

Under the Platform Technology Program, \$10 million will be invested to position Queensland at the forefront of the development and application of key technologies.

The program provides investment for collaborative R&D activities, focusing on technology platforms such as autonomous vehicles, drones, sensors, robotics, cloud and big data.

Projects supported will bring together large companies, SMEs, startups and research organisations to undertake R&D, support demonstrators and look at the broader regulatory environment to enable these technologies to enter new markets and uses.

Alongside generating new exports, these technologies have the potential to drive productivity growth in a whole range of existing industries including, aerospace, defence, agriculture, oil and gas field management, disaster management and environmental monitoring.

The program will help position Queensland as a leader in the Asia-Pacific region and speed technology emergence in the market.

To grow our regions, through the Accelerate Advance Queensland program, the Palaszczuk Government will invest \$6 million in Regional Innovation Hubs.

These hubs will build Queensland's regional innovative capability and create a statewide network encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing.

They will be a focal point for linking entrepreneurs, startups, businesses, major corporate players, councils and universities to drive innovation within the regions.

Innovation Hubs will be a key point of access to support for business growth and innovation, R&D partners, mentoring and investors.

To harness our existing strengths and foster emerging opportunities we are committing:

- \$9 million for Industry Accelerators
- \$5m million for a Biofutures Commercialisation Program

Funding will be provided for a series of accelerators focusing on key industries such as agtech, mining and METs, lifesciences and medtech, tourism innovation, and the internet of things.

These accelerator programs will offer intensive support to help ambitious, early stage companies develop and market-test new products and services, build customers and attract angel and venture capital investment.

The programs will provide mentoring, advice, hands-on support and in some cases, seed capital to participants.

We know high growth, small businesses are the key drivers of job creation in the nation. We are determined to provide them with the best possible support to realise their growth ambitions.

The 10-year Biofutures Roadmap and Action Plan sets out a vision for a billion-dollar, internationally competitive industrial biotechnology sector in Queensland by 2025.

Through this initiative, the Palaszczuk Government will put in place a suite of initiatives to realise the opportunities the sector presents to grow new exports and jobs.

The Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation will lead work on a Biofutures Commercialisation Program to help this industry find its feet and grow strongly.

Support will focus on demonstration and scaling high-potential technologies, linking businesses with research partners and investors, build supply chain connections and critical mass, and evaluating global market potential.

Through the initial \$180 million Advance Queensland group of initiatives, the Palaszczuk Government has approved more than 183 funding applicants to undertake work in priority areas, such as developing cleaner, renewable energy technologies, improving health services, protecting the state's biodiversity and improving agricultural practices and outcomes.

In addition to the new Advance Queensland initiatives I have outlined, the Palaszczuk Government is determined to ensure that businesses, entrepreneurs, communities and research organisations have access to the infrastructure and connectivity to thrive in the digital age.

Not only is my department leading work on a digital infrastructure strategy to complement the State Infrastructure Plan, through this Budget, the Palaszczuk Government has committed an additional \$15 million to improve mobile coverage in Queensland.

This new investment will leverage additional funding from the Australian Government and mobile network operators.

As a result of previous funding to tackle mobile blackspots, 68 new mobile towers are in the process of being built across Queensland.

This new investment will see around 80 further towers being added, greatly benefiting communities and businesses across the state to whom mobile coverage is vital to their operations.

The Palaszczuk Government has worked with local governments to identify community priorities and consulted with mobile network providers to seek feedback on viability, cost estimates and eligibility of locations.

The locations to be funded under Round 2 will likely be announced in the second half of 2016, and will be rolled out over a two-year period.

Together with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM), we have also secured new funding to provide higher resolution and more frequent satellite imagery to support improved management of the environment, vegetation and of course the Great Barrier Reef.

The Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation develops and produces a broad range of land-cover and land-use mapping and monitoring products based on remotely sensed satellite imagery.

These products that are used extensively by farmers, industry, researchers and public safety agencies.

New funding for satellite imagery will provide access to the higher resolution and more frequent (up to five days) Sentinel-2 imagery from the European Copernicus program.

This new funding will support Queensland's contribution to an agreement between Australia and the European Commission to secure access to free, regular, medium-to-high resolution satellite imagery from the multi-billion-dollar Copernicus Earth Observation Program, operated by the European Space Agency.

Together with DNRM we will spend \$7.8 million over four years on high-resolution satellite imagery coverage of Queensland.

This will ensure that Queensland has one of the most comprehensive imagery datasets in the world.

Timely, high-quality digital satellite imagery will assist in vegetation management monitoring and the early detection of land cover change; particularly in vulnerable Great Barrier Reef catchments where satellite imagery will be collected on a more frequent basis to aid our vital management work.

I look forward to seeing the bright future made possible by these initiatives being led today by the Departments of Science, Information Technology and Innovation and Small Business.

Let me finish by reflecting briefly on the Advance Queensland Innovation and Investment Summit we held in April.

The Summit marked a pivot point in our economic journey.

It showed the world that the spirit of innovation is burning bright here in Queensland.

This Budget and the additional \$225 million to accelerate Advance Queensland is a clear demonstration of our faith and commitment to back the ingenuity and entrepreneurship of Queenslanders.

This is a budget for innovators everywhere—in our schools, in small business, in technology startups, in government and across all of our regions.

It is a budget that seeks to make technology work for us—a Queensland that not only embraces change but shapes it on the global stage.

And through this Budget, this Government has shown our commitment to realising this potential.

I commend the Budget to the House.