




Speech By
Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2016

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (5.54 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the budget consideration in the portfolio areas of Justice and Attorney-General; Training and Skills; Police, Fire and Emergency Services; and Corrective Services and to talk to report No. 34 of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee. I start by acknowledging the work of those people who served on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee for this year's estimates and acknowledge the chair, Mr Furner, the member for Ferny Grove, and all of the committee members and the secretariat for their respective contributions. I was on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee last year and attended budget estimates last year. I acknowledge that it is an important area for the Queensland government and of course an important area for Queensland.

I am very pleased to touch on some of the highlights which have been outlined in the budget estimates report No. 34. The first highlight I would like to touch on is the investment in domestic and family violence which is contained within the portfolio spend of the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. I am very pleased to see that there is further contribution to funding for domestic and family violence courts and support at local courts for those people who are involved in domestic violence orders. I acknowledge the great work being done by Legal Aid and the Women's Legal Service at the Caboolture courthouse, providing support to those people who are experiencing domestic and family violence and providing legal advice and support to those people who are involved in the making of those domestic and family violence orders.

I acknowledge that the funding to community legal clinics and Legal Aid has been enhanced through this budget. I note that the Attorney-General has spoken on this matter before, but there is a need for the federal government to step up when it comes to funding community legal clinics. It has long been a practice of both federal governments and state governments to fund community legal clinics because they do provide very good work and very good service for our communities, but they assist some of the most vulnerable people in our community. I think we always have to keep in mind that a person's access to justice is a key sign of how strong the social safety net is in our community. If people cannot access justice and get advice about their legal rights and responsibilities then our community as a result suffers. There are some inefficiencies created by denying people the opportunity to access justice and advice about their legal rights and responsibilities. I am very pleased to see that the Attorney-General has a strong commitment to providing support to Legal Aid and also to community legal clinics.

I note that there are some changes to how that funding will be provided which has been outlined in the portfolio area of Justice and Attorney-General. I note that for many, many years the LPITAF fund has been a key provider of funding for community legal clinics and access to justice programs in Queensland but, because of a number of advances in technology and money remaining in the trust account for shorter periods, the interest earned on the solicitors' trust account fund has actually reduced overall and the cost of providing those services has increased over time. I am very pleased to see that

there is a greater contribution to community legal clinics and programs which support access to justice contained in the budget for this financial year.

I also note that in the area of Justice and Attorney-General there is a continuation of the reinstatement and rollout of specialist court and court diversionary programs including the Murri Court and the Drug Court. These are proven programs. These programs ensure that, wherever possible, there are additional supports provided to people to ensure that they do not reoffend. That is a good thing not only for those individuals to ensure that they are not reoffending and they are rehabilitating but also for our community. When we have recidivism and reoffending in our community, there is a social cost associated. One of the key things that I note in the youth justice space is additional support and funding to those diversionary programs and the support program. I am very passionate about youth justice and I am very pleased to acknowledge the great contribution of the Morayfield Youth Justice Service.