




Speech By  
**Mark Ryan**

**MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD**

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**APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)**

 **Mr RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (3.34 pm): The member for Maroochydore started her contribution by saying that she thought that she was in an alternative universe. From that contribution, I can say that she definitely is in an alternative universe. Not only is there a massive disconnect between the reality of how our economy is going in Queensland and the member for Maroochydore's perception but also I do not think she was even speaking to the bill. We heard a lot about hospitals without patients and trains with no drivers. If anyone needs a dose of reality, it is the member for Maroochydore and her colleagues opposite.

I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2016. In particular, I would like to speak to report No. 31 of the Finance and Administration Committee. I note that, after considering the provisions of the Appropriation Bill, the committee unanimously recommended that the bill be passed.

This Appropriation Bill reflects the good news that is happening in our economy. It gives me a good opportunity to talk about that good news, the state of the Queensland economy, and the good work of the Queensland government and our Treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, Curtis Pitt. Our Debt Action Plan is delivering results. In the Appropriation Bill, there is an early payment of dividends from our government owned corporations, which further reduce general government debt by \$296.985 million. As some members have discussed already in their contributions to this debate, the Queensland Labor government is delivering on its election commitment to deliver a better way for Queenslanders and ensure that we continue to create economic opportunities for Queenslanders and, in turn, create job opportunities for Queenslanders.

Before going into more detail about the state of the Queensland economy and how it relates to this Appropriation Bill, I want to also highlight some of the unforeseen expenditure incurred by departments that are covered by this Appropriation Bill. I note in particular the \$39.5 million for the community service obligation under the uniform tariff policy. This is a very important policy for people who live in regional Queensland. It not only ensures that electricity prices are affordable for those who live in regional Queensland but also provides some parity and equity across Queensland, which, as we know, is a very diverse and geographically large state. I am very pleased that our government is committed to the community service obligation under the uniform tariff policy, because it ensures that those people living in regional Queensland can access affordable energy. That is a very important thing for all Queenslanders.

I also note that there was unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Public Safety Business Agency of \$8.895 million. One aspect of that unforeseen expenditure is ensuring that the flood focused road safety campaign is properly funded. We heard last year that the former Newman LNP government may have made some decisions that led to that particular campaign not having any dedicated funding. As we head towards storm season, cyclone season and flood season, it is very important—

**Mr Emerson** interjected.

**Mr RYAN:** I see the former transport minister. I wonder if he can stand up and say whether there was any money allocated to that campaign to ensure that Queenslanders were properly informed and reminded about safety around flooded roads. In May last year in the Caboolture region there was a massive tragedy. Many people lost their lives as a result of driving into flooded waters. Many people in the Caboolture region know the importance of ensuring awareness around flooded roads. I am very pleased to see that, in this bill, money is allocated for flood focused road safety campaigns. We must ensure that awareness of safety around flooded roads is always front and centre in Queenslanders' minds.

I note that the member for Toowoomba North is on the speaking list. I am looking forward to hearing the contribution of the member for Toowoomba North because there is a future appropriation that I think the member for Toowoomba North will be very pleased about. I am very pleased to see that Toowoomba State High School Wilston campus will be getting a \$5 million hall.

**Mr Watts:** So am I!

**Mr RYAN:** Yes, I know. The reason I am looking forward to the contribution of the member for Toowoomba North is that it is a Labor government that will be delivering that hall project, a Labor government that found the money to deliver that project, something that the member for Toowoomba North and his colleagues could not do when they were last in government. I am looking forward to the member for Toowoomba North speaking very favourably about how this government is allocating future appropriations to the Toowoomba State High School community.

This is an important opportunity to talk about the Queensland economy and how the economy is going under this Queensland Labor government. We are seeing some great data coming out which reflects great opportunity and great activity in our economy. A number of previous speakers have already mentioned the recent comments of the rating agencies. I think it is important to go over those comments once again. We see both Moody's and Standard & Poor's confirming their credit ratings for Queensland. There is some good commentary from Standard & Poor's Global Ratings where, after an analysis of the state's economic performance, they note that the economy is a very strong economy, there is strong financial management and budgetary performance, and there are low contingent liabilities. That is a direct result of the great management of our economy by our Treasurer, but also a direct result of our economic plan which is delivering positive outcomes for our community.

I also note that Deloitte Access Economics, in its Business Outlook for the September quarter 2016, says that Queensland should record the nation's leading growth across the next decade. The National Australia Bank's business confidence index again ranked Queensland as equal first with New South Wales and South Australia. The Westpac-Melbourne Institute Survey of Consumer Sentiment reflects a positive outlook for the Queensland economy. ABS figures indicate not only that unemployment continues to fall under our government but also that there is a rise in dwelling approvals, which is very important for the construction sector and very important for jobs.

As many speakers before me have said, the Queensland Labor government has been locked firm in its commitment to creating job opportunities for Queenslanders. We have already seen more than 40,000 jobs created since the last election. Queensland continues to report very strong economic growth which in turn creates a stronger investment environment for businesses to continue to invest in Queensland and, of course, deliver those additional job opportunities for Queenslanders.

We always have to remind ourselves about what our government stands for and, of course, what those opposite stand for. I am very concerned that the hard work of our government is being undermined by the negative commentary of those opposite, but I am also very concerned about the lack of plans that those opposite have for Queensland. We have made some very tough decisions to ensure that we create jobs, that we stimulate economic activity in our community and that we invest in an innovation economy so that we can create jobs not only now but also in the future. We have been able to do that by reducing debt through our Debt Action Plan, all the while by holding onto our most profitable income-producing assets, just like we said we would at the election. We have achieved some great economic results, just like we said we would at the last election. We have not heard what those opposite propose to do, with the exception, of course, of the Leader of the Opposition mentioning in a speech just recently that he looks to 'right-size' the Public Service. We all know what happens when those opposite look at changing the size of the Public Service. That means more sackings, more front-line cuts.