




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CONDAMINE

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

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (5.30 pm): I rise today to make my contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2016, presented to this House by the Treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, the Hon. Curtis Pitt, on Tuesday, 14 June 2016. This is another Labor budget that has relied on a raid of the savings of Queenslanders—families who are working hard to ensure they provide a future for their families and a nest egg for their retirement. Last year we saw the Treasurer launch an attack on the long service leave funds of everyday Queenslanders and move government debt onto government owned corporations.

In 2016 the Treasurer has found yet another hollow log to invade in the form of the public sector superannuation fund. Despite the advice received from the State Actuary that it would be unwise to withdraw in excess of \$2 billion from the fund, the Treasurer has raided the fund to the tune of \$4 billion. If this money were to be spent wisely growing the economy and reducing the spiralling government debt, we could perhaps draw some comfort from that knowledge, but the record of the Palaszczuk government, as with previous Labor governments before them, would seem to prove otherwise.

They are renowned for their failure to provide a sound economic plan for our state. After all the great work done by the previous LNP government and then treasurer and now Leader of the Opposition, Tim Nicholls, in halting the debt spiral and producing an actual surplus, this is in stark contrast to what we see from the current Treasurer. The Palaszczuk government talks loudly and at length about the magical surpluses that are going to appear, but it always seems to be next year or maybe the year after that or some time in the far and distant future.

There is no greater comparison of the results that can be achieved with prudent management and skilful, effective and efficient use of funding than the outcomes realised by the previous LNP health minister, Lawrence Springborg. The achievements in the Health portfolio by the previous minister should be acknowledged. The LNP government responsibly managed the money available and the results were astonishing. In the space of one term, Queensland Health went from a dysfunctional basket case to being the envy of all other states. Under this Palaszczuk government, we have seen waiting times increase again and the Health budget blow out by \$100 million over the last 12 months. This health minister, like previous Labor ministers before him, believes the only way to improve services is to throw money at it. The LNP, in contrast, believes in service delivery and results, not spin.

This budget will see money thrown at government departments and the establishment of a number of new boards, one of which is the new Office of Rural Affairs within the agriculture department. I am curious as to the role of this new board. We have a stand-alone agriculture department thanks to the previous LNP minister, John McVeigh, and the establishment of this board would appear to be adding another layer of unnecessary bureaucracy. The primary producers in Condamine need fewer levels of bureaucracy, not more. I also note the allocation of \$7.8 million to secure high-resolution

satellite imagery coverage of Queensland. With the proposed government changes to the vegetation management laws, one can safely assume this to be the primary purpose for this investment of taxpayers' funds. The tree police are back, Big Brother is watching, and the bad old days are upon us again.

When I perused the budget announcements for the seat of Condamine, it was like back to the future. What I found was the pronouncement of projects that were announced by the previous LNP government. The widening of the Warrego Highway to four lanes between Charlton and Kingsthorpe was previously announced. The turn-off and overtaking lanes between Oakey and Dalby were also previously announced. Work has already started on these projects, and I have had numerous meetings and updates with the department of main roads over the past two years on the progress and completion time line for these roadworks.

The widening of the Cecil Plains to Toowoomba Road from the Wellcamp Airport to Toowoomba was announced by the LNP government under the Royalties for the Regions scheme. Of course, we all know that the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing was announced by the LNP when in government. Perhaps the minister would like to have another sod-turning ceremony to celebrate this announcement. We will only need another one or two sod turnings and the cutting will be dug. There are some state roads in the seat of Condamine that would benefit from funding. I speak of the road between Dalby and Cecil Plains and the Bowenville Norwin Road. There is a lot of heavy transport in the form of B-doubles and road trains that use these routes, and these roads could now only be termed as dangerous.

There is nothing in this budget that will inspire confidence in the business sector within the Condamine electorate to expand, develop and create more jobs that has not already been announced by the previous LNP government. This is not exclusive to the Condamine electorate but across all of Queensland. The only area that is expanding under this Palaszczuk government is the Public Service. Despite the continued reckless spending, there is nothing in this budget that will deliver a legacy other than spiralling and excessive debt. The Treasurer reminds me of a kid at the show. He goes off with a pocketful of money and comes home with nothing to show for it and no idea where the money went. This is another bad Labor budget and Queenslanders deserve better.