




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2016

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (11.39 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill and to respond to the Transportation and Utilities Committee report No. 21 on the budget estimates. I thank the member for Kallangur for his work as the chair of the committee. I also thank the other members of the committee and committee staff for their hard work in preparing this report.

I am very proud to stand in this House as the Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games in the Palaszczuk government. It is a government that has well and truly delivered for Queenslanders. In contrast, we have heard a number of criticisms reflected in the LNP's statement of reservation regurgitated during the debate tonight, and we have heard from the member for Surfers Paradise, the member for Glass House and other speakers opposite. It is notable to reflect that the LNP statement of reservation said that, given the government response to Varghese could be months away, the LNP fails to see the point of bringing the review forward. One would suggest that is not a criticism which has passed the test of time.

The Palaszczuk government is addressing the former LNP government's decline in patronage on public transport through our Fairer Fares package. This package makes fares cheaper for 93 per cent of Queenslanders while simplifying the TransLink zone boundaries from 23 down to eight. Under our package more people will be able to travel further for less. These Fairer Fares reforms are overdue, will encourage greater patronage of public transport and help ease congestion on our roads. Our Fairer Fares package delivers savings for commuters across the entire South-East Queensland public transport network. Under our package kids aged 14 and under travel free; seniors retain the popular One, Two, Free concession; after eight trips every trip is half price; we have extended the off-peak period to help early morning commuters; and we have provided concessions for the first time to jobseekers and asylum seekers.

We are also building infrastructure for the future. The Palaszczuk government values public transport infrastructure and is committed to working with the federal government, local government and private capital to fund it. Premier Palaszczuk led the charge in getting our fair share for Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2, which will connect Gold Coast Light Rail and our Queensland Rail trains together. This vital piece of infrastructure will be delivered in time for the 2018 Commonwealth Games and makes a huge difference to the transportation task in relation to that event. Construction commenced earlier this month. We will see the station at Helensvale become one of the most advanced public transport interchanges in the nation. This comes combined with the vital duplication of the Gold Coast line from Helensvale to Coomera, providing that missing link and allowing for more services connecting the coast. I should add that under Fairer Fares for the first time ever the entire Gold Coast Light Rail will be a new single zone of travel.

Regional Queensland has not been left behind either, with the Palaszczuk government committing \$2.5 million to encourage more freight onto our rail network by constructing rail sidings at Oakey to benefit our beef sector. Further, we are investing in the lowering of the Toowoomba tunnels to support the movement of even greater amounts of rail freight. We have also dedicated \$100 million to upgrades across the length of the North Coast line.

In relation to the Commonwealth Games, we will deliver the best games ever by ensuring venues are open well in advance of the opening ceremony as well as strengthening governance with the appointment of a new chair and new board members. This has been highlighted by the Commonwealth Games Federation Coordination Commission delivering a strong endorsement of Queensland's planning and preparation for the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. The CGF acknowledged the work that the Queensland government has done with all games partners, including the City of the Gold Coast, to deliver the best Commonwealth Games ever.

GC 2018 is also partnering with TAFE Queensland to ensure that our volunteers are games ready. Up to 15,000 Commonwealth Games volunteers will be trained by TAFE to ensure that we are delivering a strong volunteer base. Volunteers are critical to any major multisport games success, and I know it will be a great opportunity to ensure that our workforce will inherit transferrable skills that will help them in other areas as well. Contrast the Transport and Commonwealth Games planning to that of the former government: they were slashing TMR's budget by over \$1.2 billion; they were bungling the reform of SEQ's bus network; there was no action on stage 2 of Gold Coast Light Rail; and there was a failed tertiary transport concession card system.

The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job, ensuring a world-class public transport system with investment in infrastructure, fairer public transport fares and ensuring we have the best ever Commonwealth Games.