




Speech By  
**Brittany Lauga**

**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2017

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE  
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (11.03 pm): Around 2½ years ago Queensland Labor told Queenslanders that there was a better way, which included consulting and engaging with communities, stakeholders—big and small—business and industry groups and, of course, individual Queenslanders. That better way included restoring front-line services. Over the past two years we have put Queenslanders first, with more than 9,000 additional doctors, nurses, teachers and teacher aides, police, health professionals and ambulance officers employed across the state. That includes 67 extra nurses, 47 extra doctors and 132 extra teachers in Central Queensland.

We promised to create jobs. We now have close to a net 60,000 extra jobs since 2015. This budget, with \$788 million for productivity-enhancing infrastructure and capital works in Central Queensland, \$566 million for the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service and \$25 million for maintenance and capital works projects for schools in Central Queensland, will support directly a whopping 3,200 jobs in Central Queensland in 2017-18.

Before I speak about what this budget means for the electorate of Keppel, I want to talk about Cross River Rail. Why would a member from regional Queensland want to talk about Cross River Rail? It is because I am annoyed that Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull consistently refused to commit to a matching federal government commitment to the traffic congestion-busting Cross River Rail project for South-East Queensland. Before the budget was handed down on Tuesday, the Palaszczuk government had committed \$850 million for Cross River Rail. We asked, and we asked and we asked for a matching commitment from the Turnbull government so that work on the project could get underway. This is a shovel-ready project, with all of the major state approvals in place. The business case was finalised and provided to the Turnbull government 12 months ago. This is a project that will take up to 18,500 car trips off our major arterial roads every day and deliver thousands of jobs. It is Queensland's No. 1 infrastructure priority.

**Mr Elmes** interjected.

**Mrs LAUGA:** I will tell the member for Noosa why it is relevant to the electorate of Keppel in a moment. The Turnbull government has funded major rail projects in New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia, but it refuses to give Queensland our fair share. The Prime Minister had absolutely no excuse for continuing to fail to fund Cross River Rail to help alleviate traffic congestion. Those opposite have been so quiet about Cross River Rail. They know that we need it, but they did not stand up for it. They did not say, 'Come on Prime Minister, let's get Queensland moving. Can you help us out? Let's get this project going.' No. All of them were silent. They refused to go into bat for Queensland.

As a result, the Palaszczuk government has had to swoop in, save the day and go it alone for Cross River Rail. We were sick and tired of the political games from Malcolm Turnbull and the LNP. Instead, we had to fully fund this \$5.4 billion project—one of Queensland's biggest ever infrastructure projects—in the state budget. We will no longer wait for the do-nothing Turnbull government. We are getting on with building Cross River Rail without its funding commitment.

However, I am angry. I ask members to imagine what we could do with the \$850 million in funding that Malcolm Turnbull and his government should have contributed to Cross River Rail which, instead, has had to come out of state coffers. It is like when I was a university student living in a share house with a housemate and it is the housemate's turn to buy the toilet paper. Of course, the toilet paper is an absolute necessity. You cannot go without it—just like Cross River Rail is an absolute necessity for Queensland. But your housemate has let everyone down and not bought the toilet paper. Even though you bought it the last time, you have to dip into your own cash and buy this essential household item out of your own money. You are spending your own money on something that you really should not have to, because it is not your turn. You would much rather spend that money on something else—like rent, bills or beer.

The Palaszczuk government is the good housemate. It is stumping up the cash for Cross River Rail, because our federal government—the bad housemate who does not meet their part of the bargain—is not stumping up with its fair share. That money could be spent on other things, such as the electorate of Keppel. Imagine the jobs that could be generated in building additional roads, water infrastructure, hospital upgrades, and classrooms right across the state. Imagine what we could do with that money. Hundreds and millions of additional dollars could be spent in rural and regional Queensland helping farmers cope with the drought. Imagine the stimulus and jobs that additional money would create in cities and towns.

Malcolm Turnbull refused, refused and refused to contribute his fair share to the Cross River Rail project. That means that \$850 million less now can be spent across our amazing state. What a shame that the \$850 million black hole that the Turnbull government left had to be filled by the Palaszczuk government—the Cross River Rail saviours—and that that money could not otherwise be spent on job generating projects in regional Queensland.

I could go on and on and on about this budget and the \$42 million in job generating projects that this budget delivers in Keppel, but I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Mister Speaker, the Palaszczuk Government is focused on supporting continued growth and creating jobs for Queensland, while enabling the state's \$300 billion economy to transform to a more innovative, diverse and productive economy.

This Budget has over \$42 million in job-generating projects in Keppel. Our biggest State High School in Yeppoon, Mister Speaker, Yeppoon State High School, will receive \$1.4 million to upgrade a multi-purpose hall to continue to invest in this growing school's infrastructure.

There is \$5.5 million to be spent on much needed upgrades to the North Rockhampton Nursing Centre (and might I add that I'm so pleased the Palaszczuk Government is investing in the North Rocky Nursing Centre as opposed to letting it sit and squander and try to sell it off Mister Speaker like those opposite wanted to do).

We are investing \$1.5 million into the development of stages 2, 3 and 4 of the Hartley Street Recreation Reserve which will give Emu Park much needed new sporting facilities.

Cyclists who enjoy touring our beautiful part of the world will benefit from \$735,000 for new bike lanes on the Bruce Highway (Rockhampton-St Lawrence) at a total cost of \$2.2 million.

She said two new projects would boost hiking and camping facilities in the region.

The first is a \$450,000 investment to complete stage 1 of the Mount Archer Activation Plan involving new trails and the redevelopment of the existing trail network on the Archer summit.

And one which will be very popular on the coast is a \$460,000 upgrade of Upper Stoney Creek Access Road to include restoration and replacement of road drainage and new signage.

This is one of the most popular day-trip and weekend destinations in this region.

Another major infrastructure boost leading to more jobs is the \$3.4 million commitment to build a local disaster co-ordination centre in Yeppoon the sod for which is expected to be turned next week.

We're also putting in \$3 million towards Stage 1 of the Yeppoon Homemaker Centre to boost local business and jobs, and nearly \$2.47 million to develop an artificial hockey surface and associated infrastructure which will allow it to host national and international competitions.

The biggest spend in the budget for Keppel is \$9.35 million as part of the \$25 million Yeppoon Foreshore Revitalisation Plan which will create 680 jobs during construction.

Emu Park will receive an injection of \$1.8 million to upgrade Emu Park's Main Beach to provide drawcard tourism facilities.

At the 2015 State election I promised \$250,000 towards upgrades at Emu Park's Main Beach. I'm proud to have delivered funding more than 7 times my election commitment to improve amenity on Emu Park's main beach foreshore.

The Yeppoon Sewage Treatment Plant also receives \$5 million towards an essential upgrade critical to the growth of the town.

Health also received a significant boost including \$310,000 towards non-clinical support services to people with mental illness, their carers and families.

\$5.5 million is dedicated to assist local people with a disability and their families to access the support and services they need as they move through the different stages of their life and transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Service providers.

The Palaszczuk Government has further invested in the key issue of child safety with some \$6 million towards a wide range of programmes focusing on out-of-home care placement to ensure children and young people in need of protection are supported and safe.

Keppel parents with children 0-5 years will benefit from funds to the Yeppoon and Emu Park libraries to support parents in their child's emergent literacy development.

We're also boosting building with an extension of the \$20,000 first home buyers grant, and the extension of the successful Back to Work project and Back to Work Youth Boost for long-term unemployed.

This Budget also delivers record health and education funding as well as the greatest investment in child safety in a decade.

Mister Speaker, two years ago Labor said we would not sell our income-generating assets and we have kept our promise, with our assets remaining in safe hands and contributing to our economic growth, delivering jobs and services for Queenslanders.

Stanwell and the Gladstone Port are still there to provide the power and export capacity to keep us growing.

Because we kept ownership, we can use our assets to build infrastructure when and where we need it most especially in regional Queensland.

And, in the case of our government-owned ports like Gladstone Ports Corporation, well they are helping set export records.

Building our role as a great trading state unafraid to tackle often difficult world markets and generate valuable income to fuel further growth.

All of our government-owned businesses are generating revenue for Queenslanders not sending it beyond our borders into the pockets of private shareholders.

Queenslanders can see the returns once again in this Budget in the form of better frontline services and job-creating capital works.

We promised to drive down debt and we've delivered.

We have implemented a clear economic plan to strengthen and grow our regional, and state economies and deliver jobs.

As a result, our \$300 billion Queensland economy is growing. Confidence is up. Our unemployment rate is lower.

Our state economy is not only strong and growing, but the Australian economy would be doing far worse if not for Queensland's heavy lifting.

We said we would focus on regional economies in transition.

The past three State Budgets are packed with evidence of that commitment.

This budget eases cost of living pressures for households and small businesses.

It strengthens our social fabric.

All of this is occurring in the face of a challenging domestic and global outlook. Now that's what I call a Labor budget!