




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:
PUBLIC WORKS AND UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (11.03 pm): I point out to the last speaker that no-one stopped those opposite asking decent questions. The only people that stopped them asking decent questions were themselves. I rise to support the public works committee report—there is another point I want to make. They have been wheeling out this misnomer or misleading statement about the cuts from year to year. I point out once again that it is a four-year program. As was pointed out more than once to them, they should compare a four-year program to a four-year program. That is the way to do it. They cannot compare year to year. Within that four-year period there are federal payments coming through, projects being completed and a variety of other things that alter those long-term projects in that four-year time frame. Comparing year to year within QTRIP is misleading.

I found the process of the estimates was invaluable in actually revealing the extent of the LNP cuts that have affected the power industry and also the roads program. We learned that the LNP had slashed \$600 million from the QTRIP program.

Ms Boyd: Shame!

Mr WHITING: Absolutely! We talked about missing line items, things that had just disappeared over the years. When I came in as the MP I asked, 'What happened to the Deception Bay Road widening and overpass?' It just disappeared one year while the LNP was in government. It was just taken out. That had to be put back in in the form of this project that we now have. We are putting in \$30 million towards the \$150 million Deception Bay Road overpass program. What I found really interesting though is that the LNP candidate in Bancroft started a petition for us to put money into the Deception Bay Road overpass program. I found that incredible because that is a project that those opposite cut from QTRIP. The candidate was campaigning to restore a project that they had cut. That is wonderful. That is great coordination that they had.

A government member: Great for you!

Mr WHITING: It is very much good for me. One of the other things we learned, as has been touched on before, is that those opposite oversaw cuts of more than \$100 million from cycling infrastructure and they ripped out \$25 million in cycle network grants. They disregard the needs of the 820,000 Queensland cyclists who ride each week and those people who transport themselves that way. Compare that to Labor's record. We can look at the Moreton Bay Rail Link, where there are 12 kilometres of cycle path and even more will go in when the Boundary Road overpass is done. I found it useful to learn that there were no cuts, but we have increased spending on transport to a record \$21 billion, and \$16.5 billion of that is in road infrastructure. We will keep on increasing this because, as we learned, an extra 140,000 cars were on the road in Queensland in the last year. We will keep on investing in that road infrastructure.

When we talked about the issues of power we learned about the Powering Queensland Plan—a \$1.16 billion plan to put downward pressure on energy costs and deliver new jobs and investment, particularly in regional Queensland. Through that \$770 million commitment we made in the budget we are shielding Queenslanders from the worst of the rise in electricity prices that we are seeing all around Australia. Obviously we are in a much better position.

We found this to be the weakest performance by the LNP opposition during the time we have been here. They did not trouble a minister; they just battered away the questions. I have to say their performance was tepid, morose and uninspired. They started off with these aggressive questions that went nowhere. We explained to them things, but they did not get it or chose not to take any notice. What we saw was an LNP opposition that was ill prepared. I state once again that they complained about the four-year program—the idea of funding cuts is absolutely ludicrous. They could not be bothered to put in an effort in estimates. If they got into government, they would not be bothered to put in a real effort as well.