




Speech By
Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:
INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (4.13 pm): I rise to contribute to the estimates process for the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee. I want to acknowledge the chair, the member for Mirani, and members of the committee as well as our secretariat.

During the Deputy Premier's session there was a great deal of discussion and questions around Queensland transport and Cross River Rail. The opposition tried time and time again to discredit Cross River Rail. As a Far North Queensland, even I can see the need and the benefits of Cross River Rail. The LNP are trying to put a case that Queensland does not need it. We saw concerted attempts to find a 'gotcha' moment which never eventuated. Instead, I observed a Deputy Premier and department of senior executives who understood what needs to be done to deliver this important project and an opposition committed to canning it. Cross River Rail benefits all Queenslanders, not just those in the suburbs of Brisbane. There has been speculation in this House by some members that if we have Cross River Rail it will somehow be at the expense of infrastructure in regional Queensland. I find that to be untrue and difficult to believe.

A large proportion of travelling regional Queenslanders—especially Queenslanders from the Tropical North—use Brisbane Airport and its airport train to connect between Brisbane city, its southern suburbs and the Gold Coast for work, for leisure and for medical appointments. Regional Queenslanders need Cross River Rail so that we can commute through this city and around this city well into the future so that regional Queenslanders can travel with ease by train to connect with the Gold Coast and other parts of the south-east. It is the kind of serious transport infrastructure that other cities have. It is the kind of serious transport infrastructure that this city needs, and those opposite should back it.

Another area of robust discussion was the Palaszczuk government's Works for Queensland package. The LNP just does not like it. The LNP wasted time trying to pull threads on Works for Queensland, trying to pin down public servants and argue about how many jobs will be created by installing a \$5,000 rubbish bin. It was total time-wasting. The reality is that Works for Queensland is a job-generating project. You simply need to go and talk to any regional mayor or CEO and they will tell you that, whether it is a \$5,000 rubbish bin or a \$5 million park, it all counts and it all adds up. I take the comments from the member for Glass House about three bins and top dressing the sporting oval and I say this: go and look that person in the eye who installed those bins or top dressed that sporting oval and tell them that what they did is not worth it.

Those opposite just do not get it. Every mayor and every council CEO that I have spoken to in the far north praises Works for Queensland. They praise its simplicity, its streamlined process and how it allows councils to decide their own priorities. It allows councils to use labour as they see fit to use labour in their patch. That may be internal staff or it may be contractors, but the key point is that when you spend \$200 million across regional Queensland jobs will flow from it in every corner of this state. The LNP simply cannot stomach the fact that they did not think of it first. Works for Queensland is a

blueprint for how our local governments want to see state government grants, and they are not slow in coming forward to say so. The LNP needs to listen to regional mayors and councils. If they listened even for a minute, they would hear that regional Queensland likes Works for Queensland. They would hear that Works for Queensland has generated and stimulated economies in regional Queensland and that jobs do actually flow from that work.

In the final session of the day our committee heard that the commissioner of the Family Responsibilities Commission, Mr David Glasgow, is staying on with the commission. This comes after our committee visit to him in Cairns and a tour of Aurukun with the early news that he was stepping down, so it is good to hear that he is staying on board.

The 2017-18 state budget is the Palaszczuk government's third budget. It is our third surplus budget. It is our third record investment in health and education, our third investment in infrastructure across the state and our third commitment to restoring front-line services devastated by the LNP. Since the budget was delivered we have had confirmation that 77,300 new jobs have been created in Queensland since the 2015 election. The LNP turned its back on the budget just as they have turned their back on Queenslanders.