




Speech By  
**Leanne Linard**

**MEMBER FOR NUDGEES**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:  
HEALTH, COMMUNITIES, DISABILITY SERVICES AND DOMESTIC AND  
FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION COMMITTEE**

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (9.31 pm): I rise to speak on the Health, Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee's report on the 2017-18 budget estimates process. The committee made one recommendation: that the proposed expenditure be agreed to. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to once again chair the estimates hearing for the portfolio areas of Health, and Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services—the services Queenslanders need and depend on when they are at their most vulnerable.

In 2017-18 the Queensland Health budget will exceed \$16 billion, in addition to an over \$900 million capital program. This budget, like the two that came before it, continues to invest in the front-line services and world-class health and hospital facilities that Queenslanders demand including \$126.5 million to continue to reduce specialist outpatient long waits, \$68.9 million for a new adolescent mental health facility at the Prince Charles Hospital and \$3.3 million for the establishment of a step-up step-down mental health facility at Nundah to support the recovery of patients in the community.

In the Ambulance Services portfolio, there is a budget of over \$719 million to recruit an additional 75 ambulance operatives, for the planning or delivery of new and replacement ambulance stations, for new vehicles and equipment and for investment in systems and service improvements across Queensland. My electorate of Nudgee and all of Queensland will be well served by these investments in Health and Ambulance Services.

Few areas of policy invoke more emotion than that of child safety. None of us can help but be moved by it and we must all be moved to greater action, which this budget seeks to deliver. The committee heard that the total operating expenditure to deliver targeted early intervention, support and recovery services to vulnerable Queensland families will again exceed \$1 billion in 2017-18 out of a total departmental budget of over \$3.6 billion. This will include an additional 236 child and family services staff in 2017-18, increasing to 292 in 2018-19; \$1.4 million to establish a new child safety service centre in Morayfield; and \$7.4 million to support families affected by the drug ice.

Across the communities portfolio more generally there is: \$290 million in concessions including the electricity rebate, pensioner rate subsidy and SEQ pensioner water subsidy schemes to ease the cost of living for eligible Queenslanders; \$7.3 million to continue the upgrade and construction program for multipurpose and neighbourhood centres, often the absolute lifeblood of local communities—I know they are in my electorate at Nundah and Zillmere; and a further investment of \$9.2 million on top of the already committed \$89.5 million for domestic and family violence prevention measures.

Over \$1.9 billion will be spent on the delivery of disability services in 2017-18, including the rollout of the NDIS to Ipswich, Bundaberg and Rockhampton; readiness initiatives; supported accommodation and respite services; and aids and equipment to assist people with disability to access and participate in their respective communities.

I would like to acknowledge and thank ministers Cameron Dick, Shannon Fentiman and Coralee O'Rourke, their directors-general and chief executive officers for the genuine willingness they displayed to answer questions related to their portfolios. I would like to acknowledge and thank our secretariat, my fellow committee members, Hansard and the Auslan interpreters for their valuable assistance on the day.

It would be remiss of me not to reflect for just a moment on the statement of reservation tabled by my opposition colleagues following the hearing. The first line of the statement makes the claim of a 'jobs crisis' and of Queensland falling behind other states with regard to job security. They are not wrong. Since being elected, this government has consistently invested in rebuilding front-line services across Queensland following the savage cuts experienced under the former LNP government. Where they cut, we have employed an additional 3,172 nurses, 1,191 doctors, 882 allied health professionals and 250 ambulance operatives.

Most disappointing was the attack on the professionalism of the director-general of communities, child safety and disability services. Here is a man who has served under both the previous LNP government and the current government. When members opposite did not get the answer they wanted when he confirmed that the cuts under their previous government did impact on front-line service delivery, they sought to besmirch his professionalism. However, that wrong is reserved wholly and solely for their former government. This is a budget that puts jobs and Queenslanders first. I commend the report to the House.