




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**

**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

---

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2017

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

 **Hon. M FURNER** (Ferry Grove—ALP) (Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (4.15 pm): I rise to support the Palaszczuk government's 2017-18 appropriation bills, a blueprint for the future economic prosperity of this state.

It is a great honour to represent the people of Ferry Grove in this parliament. The people of Grovely, Keperra, Upper Kedron, the Hills District, Bunya and Ferry Grove decided the outcome of the 2015 Queensland election. They wanted something better. The young aspirational families with kids and the mortgage to pay, the city professionals, the large number of public servants and the grandparents of toddlers who not so long ago raised their own children in our relaxed leafy urban surroundings were let down by the LNP and were let down badly. It was an LNP that sacked workers, an LNP that slashed their front-line services, an LNP that did not consult and an LNP member they sent to represent them in parliament who did not seem to listen. Queensland public servants were told they would have nothing to fear from a Liberal National Party government, the very same LNP that said Queensland had 20,000 more public servants than it could afford. Public sector job cuts are in the LNP's DNA. They also cut front-line workers, the same front-line workers who did their very best for us, the people of Queensland, in our schools, emergency services and hospitals.

Public servant job cuts had a big impact in Ferry Grove. Many people lost their jobs. While campaigning in 2014, I heard directly from small business owners who said that business was terrible. One florist told me, 'Ever since Newman sacked all the public servants, trade is down because people consider flowers to be non-essential luxuries when there are job losses in the family.' It resonates when one stands by and allows conditions of employment like penalty rates to be diminished. Where does the LNP opposition stand on the reduction of penalty rates? They stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their LNP mates in Canberra and remain silent on the savage cuts to take-home pays.

The LNP opposition can never be trusted. The hardworking people of Ferry Grove know our state's economy is strong and that their hip pockets are better off than they were in January 2015 when they booted the arrogant Newman and Nicholls LNP government out of office. The people of Ferry Grove know the Palaszczuk government is focused on continuing economic growth, on jobs for them and on a great future for their children and grandchildren.

This budget will support 40,000 jobs across Queensland. It is an investment in this great state. The people of Ferry Grove know that front-line services were restored after they were slashed by the Newman-Nicholls LNP government. The nurses and the doctors in our hospitals, the police on our beat and the teachers in our schools are back and working for the good people of Ferry Grove.

The third Palaszczuk government budget delivers a record \$16.6 billion spend on health and also \$2.37 billion on law and order to help Queensland police keep residents of Ferry Grove safe. The Palaszczuk government is enabling the state's \$300 billion economy to transform to one which is more

innovative, diverse and productive. I am proud to be part of a government that is investing \$5.3 billion to help lower the cost of living for householders. We are supporting pensioners through the \$54 million Pensioner Rebate Subsidy Scheme. That is a 20 per cent subsidy per year for council rates and charges. There is \$341 per year towards electricity costs for eligible pensioners in Ferny Grove, and \$120 a year off the cost of water rates.

Not only has the Palaszczuk government delivered real reductions in yearly costs of getting a train from Ferny Grove station to Roma Street or Central through our Fairer Fares package, there is also great news in the 2017-18 budget for the Ferny Grove station and our community. I am very pleased to announce in this budget \$1.2 million to start the construction of the \$9 million Ferny Grove station precinct transit oriented development, or Ferny Grove TOD.

The residents of the Ferny Grove electorate told me that they wanted more car parking spaces at the Ferny Grove Railway Station, and I have heard them loud and clear. I have listened, acted and acknowledged the hard work of the member for Sandgate, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer in helping me secure an extra 253 carparks for commuters making their daily trip into the city and beyond for work. That is 253 extra carparks for commuters over and above the 900 there right now. Signed, sealed and to be delivered as part of the Ferny Grove TOD. That is \$1.2 billion delivered in the Palaszczuk government's 2017-18 budget. A development application is soon to be presented to Brisbane City Council for public consultation and approval to get started on construction of the Ferny Grove TOD.

With an extra 253 park-and-ride places to reduce congestion on our regional roads, the Ferny Grove TOD will be transformational. It will create a vibrant precinct with fast, efficient, frequent railway transport right to the front door. It represents an innovative mix of retail, commercial and residential development and an eight-screen cinema, creating local jobs during and after construction. It will mean that more residents have better use of public transport to the benefit of the Ferny Grove community.

With the Palaszczuk government's commitment to fully fund and build one of Queensland's biggest ever infrastructure projects, the good news keeps getting better. The \$5.41 billion Cross River Rail project will support more than 7,700 jobs for Queenslanders and deliver a train to and from the Ferny Grove Railway Station precinct on average every six minutes during peak periods. That is a train on average every six minutes. It means more services and faster travel times.

Every child deserves a good education. This is something the Palaszczuk government is passionate about. The Palaszczuk government is investing a record \$13.7 billion in education, up 6.4 per cent on last year, and the students of the Ferny Grove electorate will share in that. I have worked hard to secure extra classrooms at Mitchelton Special School. Some \$500,000 is locked in to get started on the delivery of a \$6.1 million construction project at Mitchelton Special School. This will involve new classrooms. As a Labor government we believe every child deserves the best education. There is \$400,000 in the budget to refurbish block D—the manual arts unit—at Ferny Grove State High School under the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program.

The Palaszczuk government's \$1.8 billion Housing Strategy commits \$4.69 million to complete 20 new public housing units in the Ferny Grove electorate. We are backing first home buyers to get into the housing market. There are plenty of options to do just that from the Hills District to Mitchelton and Gaythorne with \$30 million to extend the \$20,000 first home buyers grant.

As the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, I am proud to be part of a government that is investing \$75 million to progress home ownership in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Palaszczuk government's budget is investing \$120 million over four years in water and waste infrastructure for Indigenous councils and their communities. Despite the misinformed claims of the LNP's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnerships shadow minister, it was the Newman LNP government that flushed the water and sewerage program for Indigenous councils down the drain. It was the LNP that slashed the State Government Financial Aid program to Indigenous communities.

It was a great irony that Mayor Fred Gela and his councillors from the Torres Strait Island Regional Council came to plead their case at 1 William Street to remedy the wrongs of the Newman government's cuts in their communities. The tower of power was the sort of infrastructure Campbell Newman was interested in, not infrastructure in Indigenous communities. There was nothing for a better life for our Indigenous Queenslanders.

Only the Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to closing the gap on disadvantage. We are investing with business in strategic innovation, because supporting small business is vital for Queensland's and Ferny Grove's economic growth. The Palaszczuk government's budget provides an

additional \$400 million for local government to invest in jobs and vital community infrastructure. Happy campers, thrilled; that summed up the reaction from the Local Government Association of Queensland and councils to the Palaszczuk government's 2017-18 budget. The LGAQ's budget scorecard delivered a rare, six big green ticks of approval.

As Minister for Local Government, it was important to secure \$120 million over four years for new water, sewerage and waste infrastructure for Indigenous councils. Everybody should have access to a reliable supply of clean, fresh water and the safe disposal of waste wherever they live in our big state. We have also increased the State Government Financial Aid program for Indigenous councils to more than \$33.7 million and restored the indexation former LNP Newman government treasurer, Tim Nicholls, disgracefully took away. There is \$5 million over two years to help small councils add the dental health benefits of fluoride to their water supplies if they choose to do so. There is an extra \$90 million in road funding for councils and \$10 million in infrastructure planning.

In every regional community I visit, mayors tell me how much they love the flexibility of the Deputy Premier's Works for Queensland program. The Palaszczuk government's budget is investing an additional \$200 million over two years. Works for Queensland delivers infrastructure and jobs, up to 6,000, where they are needed most in regional Queensland.

This budget—the third Palaszczuk government budget—builds capacity for local government to support jobs, infrastructure and vibrant local communities. It is a budget that delivers for Queensland. It is a budget that delivers for Ferny Grove. I proudly endorse the bills.