




Speech By
Peter Russo

MEMBER FOR SUNNYBANK

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2017

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

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (12.54 pm): I rise in the House to support the Appropriation Bill 2017. Today I wish to speak about the Palaszczuk Labor government's budget for 2017-18 delivered on Tuesday, 13 June in this House. I would first of all like to congratulate the Premier and the Treasurer for delivering for the people of Queensland and especially for the people of my electorate.

As a result of the redistribution by the Electoral Commission my currently named electorate of Sunnybank will be called Toohey. I acknowledge that this will not occur until the writs are issued. My new electorate now includes the suburbs of Nathan, Salisbury, Rocklea, Moorooka and Eight Mile Plains. In the time available I intend to deal with areas of the budget that directly affect my constituents in the current electorate of Sunnybank and future electorate of Toohey. The five areas I intend to deal with are education, health, housing, infrastructure and technology.

First of all I will deal with education. Since the election of the Labor government in 2015 one of the Palaszczuk Labor government's election commitments was the restoration of front-line services. In relation to teachers, this budget commits a further 698 extra teachers—not a reduction in teacher numbers which those opposite are famous for. The opposition appear to have selective memories and a blinkered view of the damage that they did to the Queensland economy when they cut front-line services. When governments fund infrastructure to build new school buildings they fund jobs.

Some of the highlights for Sunnybank in the 2017-18 budget are as follows: \$3.3 million in 2017-18 out of a total \$3.5 million to replace the manual arts facility at MacGregor State High School; \$370,000 to refurbish MacGregor State School's Special Education Unit through the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program; and under education and training, \$4.8 million in 2017-18 out of a total \$5.0 million to conduct master planning and commence redevelopment at Sunnybank Special School. The Sunnybank Special School Principal, Darren Greenway, was thrilled to hear the news of the Palaszczuk Labor government's commitment to educating and improving the lives of the students under his care. Darren is very proud to be the principal of this school and especially proud of the staff who contribute to the education of students under his and his staff's care. He is very appreciative of the contribution that is being made to them.

There are a number of hospitals in and near my electorate. The two main hospitals are QEII and the Princess Alexandra Hospital where many of my constituents attend for their many medical needs. The South-East Queensland hospitals package in the budget of \$200 million over four years is an initial investment to enhance public hospital capacity and services, including mental health facilities, restoring front-line services in our hospitals, fixing the nurse-to-patient ratio and restoring doctors to our hospitals. On Wednesday of this week I received an email from one of my constituents, Mike. His email spoke of

his experience dealing with emergency services and the Princess Alexandra Hospital Emergency Department. Mike said—

I would just like to say that from the arrival of the ambulance crew through to my discharge from the hospital, I was treated with fabulous courtesy and professionalism by everyone. Many people complain about the public health system here in Queensland, but I found on many occasions it is second to none.

I would appreciate it, therefore, if you could pass on my comments and heartfelt thanks to the Minister concerned.

I thank the Minister for Health, Hon. Cameron Dick, the member for Woodridge. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

I will now turn to the commitment by the Palaszczuk Labor government in the 2017-18 Budget to housing. In my electorate, I have the suburb of Coopers Plains where soon after the second world war Dutch immigrants built the Dutch houses, a public housing project which did stand the test of time.

The Bligh Labor government put together a housing project with private enterprise Cornerstone Building Developments for both private and public housing. I was recently at Coopers Plains with the Minister for Housing Mike de Brenni and representatives from Cornerstone welcoming the 500th resident to her brand-new townhouse.

The Queensland Budget 2017-18 has made a further commitment to public housing with the construction of 26 units of public housing rental accommodation.

I will now deal with the part of the Queensland Budget 2017-18 that deals with Infrastructure spending and job creation. In relation to the major construction of Cross River Rail, the Budget has made a commitment of \$5.4 billion to fully fund and deliver Cross River Rail. The Queensland Budget will directly support the creation of around 8,000 jobs.

Lastly, I would like to deal with funding that this budget gives to Technology advancement. I am fortunate enough to have in my electorate the Biosecurity Science Laboratory. This great facility was built by a Labor government. The facility houses the Food Pilot Plant at the Health and Food Sciences Precinct. The facility is a state-of-the-art facility designed to service the needs of the Queensland and Australian food industries. The food grade pilot plant and associated food technology, sensory and consumer science facilities are available to conduct scientific research and trial new products or processes. The \$2.4 million commitment through the Technology Commercialisation Fund is to attract external investment and increase the potential to move Queensland's agriculture and food technology Intellectual Property into commercially viable opportunities, generating innovative products for existing and new industries, transforming industries from domestic to export focused income, increasing profits and, importantly, generating new jobs. I commend the Bill to the House.