




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (4.57 pm): I rise to speak on the appropriation bills and the abysmal budget laid out before us by this do-nothing Labor government. Let us look at some fast facts. Over the next four years, state debt will bloom by another \$9 billion to \$81 billion. In simple terms, that represents \$15,800 of debt for every man, woman and child in Queensland. Debt interest costs will remain at around \$3.6 billion or almost \$10 million a day. Based on this single fact alone, I fail to understand how any members opposite can stand in this House and claim that this budget is delivering positive outcomes for Queenslanders.

The massive police investment that the LNP committed to in 2012 is well and truly over, with this budget providing for only 40 additional officers statewide and 30 specialist counterterrorism officers. In their own brochure promoting the budget spend on the Gold Coast, they list new teachers and nurses but do not make any mention of a single new police officer for the Gold Coast. The LNP put more than 1,100 police on the beat, 1,100 more nurses into hospitals and 761 more teachers and teacher aides into our schools, with specialist services dedicated to the Gold Coast. When will Labor deliver a budget for Queensland and not just for Brisbane?

In the past year, personal safety offences have increased by 11.8 per cent, including assault by 12 per cent and robbery by 32 per cent. In the past year, property offences have increased by 11.9 per cent, including break-ins by 13 per cent and car theft by 22.8 per cent. The fight against organised crime is being softened at a time when the gangs are re-establishing themselves in Queensland. It was an LNP government that introduced tougher laws and cracked down on organised crime with an increased investment, and we saw crime rates reduce and bikies flee the state. However, now under Labor the criminal gangs are back in business.

Mr Stevens: Welcome back!

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. Welcome back! Coupled with softer laws, the safety of Queenslanders is being put at risk by this soft-on-crime Labor government, particularly on the Gold Coast.

As we all know, tourism and education are significant economic drivers on the Gold Coast. Last week at a Southport Chamber of Commerce breakfast we heard from Leigh Sorensen, the general manager of Tourism Australia, who provided an expansive overview on the significant growth that we are seeing nationally in international visitors. He also provided some insight into the major drivers that attract international visitors. Among the top 5 we heard that value for money, food and wine, nature and wildlife, and aquatic experiences are right up there. The No. 1 driver for international visitors, both students and tourists, is personal safety. The No. 1 driver for visitors is personal safety, and the No. 1 driver for families choosing to send their children here to study is also personal safety. At a time when the Gold Coast is enjoying significant growth in visitation and increases in international student

numbers, and with us on the eve of the Commonwealth Games, it seems crazy that this out-of-touch Labor government would want to tear down the great policing and tough laws that we had in the past and put at risk the safety of our visitors.

I am very concerned about this budget. Labor is simply not taking law and order seriously when it comes to the coast, because if they were there would be more police for Southport and Surfers Paradise, there would be more police in the north of our city and there would be more police in Broadbeach and other parts of the city. Furthermore, they would be reinstating RAP, the rapid action task force, that they so recklessly disembowelled last year. Each year the Gold Coast attracts over one million international visitors. According to Tourism Australia, 62 per cent of these are from Asia and 38 per cent come from the west. We have Griffith University on the Gold Coast with some 48,000 domestic and international students, which creates some 4,000 jobs and an estimated \$700 million economic impact to the Gold Coast economy every year. Over and above this, there are thousands of domestic and international students who attend many of our schools and colleges like Bond University and Southern Cross University. Given that personal safety is such a significant driver, Labor's 'softly, softly' approach to crime is not only putting Gold Coast families at risk; it also puts at risk our entire tourism and international student education programs to the detriment of the Gold Coast and Queensland economies.

I want to move on and speak briefly about housing. This budget is too little, too late for Queensland's vulnerable children and families. Quite frankly, the great big shiny \$1.8 billion housing and homelessness announcement is not only cruel but deliberately misleading. Like so many of Labor's announcements, the devil is in the detail. You need to read the fine print, and the fine print is that it is \$1.8 billion over 10 years. In real terms this is a cruel, significant reduction in real spending compared to the past five years. As part of their 10-year strategy Labor says they will allocate \$1.8 billion towards their new Housing Strategy and that every Queenslanders should have safe access to a secure and affordable home that meets their needs and supports them to participate in the social and economic life of a vibrant and prosperous state. Frankly, this Housing Strategy is a joke. This year the Gold Coast has been promised a paltry \$8 million for new housing. I am no rocket scientist, but if we assume that an average two-bedroom apartment costs between \$350,000 and \$450,000, then that is a paltry 20 dwellings to meet housing and homelessness demand in Australia's fastest-growing city and to address some of the state's longest waiting lists.

What is even more concerning—and there is some pork-barrelling going on here—is that, while the Gold Coast gets \$8 million, Cairns, the Treasurer's home patch, receives \$96 million and there is a further \$41 million for Townsville. On top of this, what I find just as concerning is Labor's half-hearted commitment to construct two—only two—special refuges for women and children escaping domestic and family violence for the entire state not this year but, as the budget documents say, sometime this decade.

I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

This is hardly a serious commitment to support our state's most vulnerable, two shelters is completely inadequate.

The entire housing budget is a sham, in real terms means fewer homes and less support for those who are currently homeless or at risk of homelessness right across Queensland.

The issue of homelessness is growing. Currently the wait period for high needs housing is 8 months. An 8 month wait for domestic violence victims, the elderly, people with a disability and families.

Let's consider how long 8 months is, a woman could be almost the whole way through her pregnancy in that time. Where does that leave her and her child?

In fact I had a young mother with 2 children and a third on the way come to my office only a matter of weeks ago, pleading for housing for her family. She had been homeless or in emergency accommodation for almost her entire pregnancy, her children couldn't go to school without a fixed address and she was faced with being on the street with a newborn and 2 young daughters. How do we tell her to keep waiting? At what cost to these three little lives?

The Premier and Minister for Housing should hang their heads in shame, this housing budget is a sham, we're not just dealing with numbers on a spreadsheet, these are real people, real lives and they quite rightly should expect more from this "do nothing", LOST Labor Government.

Schools

Southport families are going to be paying the price for Labor's lack of investment in infrastructure with next to nothing in the way of funding for growing schools.

We developed and delivered the \$131 million Great Results Guarantee, providing real needs based funding for state schools focussed on increasing literacy and numeracy levels and we created a \$300 million "fixing our schools" fund to clear the school maintenance backlog we inherited from Labor.

However this year in Southport only one school, Southport Special School, the school which looks after families and disadvantaged children from across the city is to receive any capital funding.

No other school in my electorate has been earmarked for capital expenditure, no new classrooms, no new building and no plans for any new school in this rapidly growing part of the Gold Coast.

Over the past few months I have spoken to or visited all of the schools in my electorate and I can inform the house that every one of them is absolutely bursting at the seams, some are at capacity, some are over capacity and some are on the brink of capacity.

In less than a year from now the Commonwealth Games will have come and gone and the new village will eventually be filled with families and their children, thousands of them and where will they go to school?

Lack of foresight seems to be a symptom of this do-nothing Labor Government and now our local kids and families will be left to bear the impact.

Health

Yet again Queensland's health system is in crisis. All we have seen this week is the classic Labor Health budget made up of massive cost blow outs, poor patient outcomes and millions underspent in promised capital investment.

We have seen a record number of health public servants hired and outcomes have gotten worse for patients.

Only today I received this email from a local family concerned about the level of care and staffing levels:

My father is currently in hospital. He thankfully should be home this Friday, I say thankfully because the level of service has dropped very suddenly and I would feel safer in some ways with him at home. I think the main issue is staffing. The nurses in the ward are good at their job but are stretched to the limit and this is leading to poor patient care. I would be very surprised if this issue was not a hospital wide issue and not just limited to this ward. I think more noise needs to be made about getting adequate staffing numbers in order to provide an appropriate level of care to patients or deaths could result. There is also a lack of communication between departments.

Some of the issues experienced by my father—

- Length of time to answer nurse call buttons. It is not uncommon to average 7-10minutes to get a response. And when you do get answered there is no guarantees that the nurse will be able to deal with you then. It may take another 10-20mins depending on how busy. In dads case he has buzzed to be taken to the toilet waited 10-15mins to get a response then told he would still have to wait. By this time he has had to go in his pad making twice as much work for the nurses. He has also had two low blood sugar episodes where his blood sugar dropped to very low level and it took too long for nurses to respond. I don't know if you know about blood sugar but if you get too low you can go into a coma and potentially die if something is not done quickly to bring the levels back up. This is a dangerous situation.*
- Agency nurses who are bought in to fill voids who do not take time to get to know a patient history or read a patient notes which is leading to the mistreatment of patients.*
- Being sent for scans without the nurse caring for the patient's knowledge. In dad's case he was sent down with no pain killers which was required and sent in a wheelchair and not a bed which was required.*

There are probably more issues but I think you get the drift. There need to be more staff and support. All the nurses on the ward are admitting there are issues but fear for their jobs. They have said to dad they don't know how much more they can take. One even contemplated walking out. If this is not isolated to this ward then the hospital is in crisis.

Patient outcomes have been lost in Labor's two and half years of political spin, when is it going to stop? When are we going to see long term planning? How many lives need to be lost before this do-nothing Labor government get out of their seats and get the Queensland the health care system up and running again?

Paul Broughton

Finally I would like to acknowledge the contribution made to the community by Mr Paul Broughton who last week was honoured with an Order of Australia medal. Paul is widely known for his significant contribution to Rugby League. In fact just some of his service includes:

- Chair, Gold Coast Titans Rugby League Club, 2007-2012.
- Chief Executive Officer, Gold Coast Chargers, 1996-1997.
- Operational Manager, New South Wales Rugby League (NSWRL) (Australian Rugby League ARL), 1988-1995 at all NSWRL events.
- Special Projects Manager, NSWRL, (ARL), 1990-1996; Coaching Director, 1984-1985; Coaching and Development Officer, 1986-1987; Player and Mentor since 1952.
- Member, Fundraising Committee, AIDS Trust, 1990-1993.
- Director, National Rugby League Camps, University of New England, 1983-1996.
- Awards and recognition includes:
- Recipient, Gold Coast Medal, 2006; Gold Coast Sports Honour Medal, 2004, City of the Gold Coast.
- Recipient, Australian Sports Medal, 2000.
- Recipient, Life Membership, NSW Rugby League, 1995.
- Recipient, Eunice Gill Award for National Coach Education, Australian Coaching Council, 1990.

- Recipient, Life Membership, NSW Weighing Industry, 1980.
- Recipient, Life Membership, Sports Union, University of New England, 1991

However his lesser known contribution to the Gold Coast, in fact the entire Queensland community is that Paul was integral in convincing the Government to put in the bid for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games.

I've raised this before in this house and I simply raise it again today as so much of what's happening in my special patch of the Gold Coast has come about as a result of his vision and the successive work of many great people inside and outside of this house.

The Future

I also raise the matter of Paul Broughton's vision because I'm sick of hearing those on the other side of the house take credit for things they had no part of, in fact most of those across the floor were not even members when the vision was born and very few if any have made any contribution to the legacy that will be the Commonwealth Games.

And may I remind the house that it was the LNP who when elected in 2012 were confronted with the news that there was no money for the games, and it was then Treasurer, Tim Nicholls and now leader of the opposition, and the former Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney who worked with Treasury and industry to put in place the innovative funding model required to make the games village a reality and it was the LNP that undertook the planning and financing that has made the Games and the many legacy venues a reality for the Gold Coast.

Mr Speaker, I've fought hard for Southport and we are now seeing the fruits of the commitments we made when we were in Government.

It was my great honour to have served in the office of then Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney who through two separate new Priority Development Area (PDA's) declarations for Southport provided the stimulus and certainty necessary to encourage and open up development rights in the old tired Central Business District of Southport and the health and knowledge precinct adjacent to Griffith University which includes Parklands and the Commonwealth Games Village.

The momentum we created when in government has resulted in more than \$8b of government and new private sector spending in Southport over the past 5 years.

- The brand new Gold Coast Private Hospital is already expanding,
- We cleared the old hospital site in Queen St and now Gold Coast Council has before it a substantial re-development application before it which will further add to the dream of reinvigorating Southport as the Gold Coast's CBD.
- The PDA has opened up opportunities and approvals for the construction of more than 8000 new apartments, many of which are already under construction;
- Griffith University has continued its stellar expansion and growth;
- It was the LNP who finished Light Rail Stage 1 and commissioned the planning and funding for Stage 2;
- It was the LNP who re-established a Waterways Authority to undertake better management and dredging of the Broadwater and it was the LNP who provided funding for completion of Stage 2 of the Broadwater Parklands and the new boat launching facilities.
- And Mr Speaker it was the LNP who worked with Gold Coast Council to deliver the new Gold Coast Hockey Centre and Gold Coast Aquatic Centre.
- And Mr Speaker it was the LNP that commissioned and undertook significant road network upgrades to Smith St, Olsen Ave, Ferry Road, High Street, Currumburra and Bundall Roads.

All of this investment has been a flow on from strong LNP investment and forward planning!

Mr Speaker looking to the future there are so many things that we can achieve in Southport are I'm committed to;

- Increasing the capacity of schools given the significant amount of in-fill development;
- Securing new investment in the Health & Knowledge Precinct once the games are done;
- Keeping the accelerator on the reinvigoration of CBD Southport supporting great redevelopment of the old Hospital Site as the Queen St Village;
- retaining and improving parking in the CBD generally and around the Southport Courthouse;
- Ongoing expansion and promotion of the Legal Precinct, Law Chambers, and fighting for more court facilities and services;
- And, fighting for increased police numbers and further meaningful initiatives to deal with family and domestic violence and cracking down on drugs.