




Speech By  
**Charis Mullen**

**MEMBER FOR JORDAN**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2018

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

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (1.39 am): I rise to speak on the Appropriation Bill with a clear sense of pride that the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering for the people of Queensland. Like all good Labor governments, this year's budget ensures that we are tackling the big issues: jobs, education, health, cost-of-living pressures and, importantly, infrastructure for our growing state. For my electorate of Jordan these are also the issues that constituents speak to me about. These are the issues that are front and centre in their minds.

I am pleased to see the Palaszczuk Labor government honouring our election commitment to boost the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative with \$80 million in 2018-19 and extending the initiative for two years with a further \$160 million. This is such an important initiative by our government which helps disadvantaged jobseekers participate in community driven projects and gain nationally recognised training, skills development and jobs. This is about creating jobs. I have seen this program up close, having met some of the participants in a recent community construction project in Springfield. I particularly recall speaking to the mother of one of the participants who told me, 'This is the best thing that could have happened for my son.'

I am also pleased to see the importance of small business as a job generator recognised in the state budget, with additional funding for small business consultation panels and funding to deliver business advice and mentoring. I recently hosted a networking event for Small Business Week, and small businesses in my electorate were very interested in accessing additional support through the Queensland government.

I am particularly proud of the fantastic schools we have in the Jordan electorate, and this year's budget provides a fantastic boost for our growing area, delivering a great start for our children. The almost \$9 million multipurpose hall for the Springfield Central State High School will get underway shortly, and I know this is a much needed facility for the school community. Construction will also begin on a new building for the Flagstone State Community College, incorporating five special learning classrooms and five general learning classrooms at a total cost of \$4.9 million. I have had the opportunity to meet some of the special education teachers at the high school who shared with me how important it is to get the spaces just right for students with special needs. I am so pleased that we will be delivering these new classrooms for the school.

Only last month I had the opportunity to also spend some time at Augusta State School in Augustine Heights. This is a wonderful and very popular school, so I am pleased that the 2018-19 budget confirms a \$4.7 million investment in a brand-new building that will include eight new classrooms. On top of this, the Jordan electorate has also received \$1.27 million for maintenance and minor works across all our state schools, which I know will be most welcomed.

We all know that nothing is more important than your family's health, and when that health is compromised you need to feel confidence in our public healthcare system. I am proud to be part of a government that understands the importance of resourcing our health system properly, and the record investment of \$18.3 billion in health services and infrastructure is a testament to this. These are challenging times in moving our growing population from illness to wellness. We know that building more hospitals will not improve the health of the population unless it is supported with local and coordinated regional and statewide programs to improve the wellness of the population.

Our government is about keeping Queenslanders healthy, but I am particularly grateful for the increased infrastructure spend on both of the regional hospitals servicing my electorate: \$124.5 million for stage 1A of the Ipswich Hospital expansion and \$281 million for the expansion of the Logan Hospital. I will continue to advocate for more health services for my region, and I will continue to press for the development of a new public hospital in the future to cater for the increased population in the south-west growth corridor of South-East Queensland.

We know that growth in our population brings challenges and opportunities. I am pleased to see the funding confirmation of the election commitment that I made relating to the Springfield Central park-and-ride upgrade. I know how important this issue is for my community, and the petition that I undertook calling for action attracted hundreds of signatures. The petition was an eye-opener in understanding where commuters were travelling from to access the Springfield train not only from within greater Springfield but also Greenbank, New Beith and Jimboomba, as well as Yamanto and Deebing Heights.

I was pleased that the Palaszczuk government listened at the time and confirmed \$44.5 million for a significant upgrade that will see construction of a new multistorey carpark that will more than double the number of carparks currently available. This is a significant project that I am pleased to champion. A potential site for the new carpark has been identified and work has commenced on surveys and concept planning. I do have some concerns in relation to the estimated date of completion, which has been set down for 2022. I will be meeting with the minister to advise him that our community simply cannot wait that long and urge him to progress this very necessary infrastructure as soon as practicable.

Speaking of necessary infrastructure, the Mount Lindesay Highway is important for my constituents who live in the southern part of the Jordan electorate. The state budget for 2018-19 as well as QTRIP—the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program—shows the significant amount of funding that the Palaszczuk government is investing in the Mount Lindesay Highway. QTRIP identifies eight sections of the Mount Lindesay Highway that are being addressed in 2018-19 alone, including the North Maclean safety improvements, planning for the Camp Cable Road to Jimboomba upgrade and design of safety treatments on Stockleigh Road, South Maclean. I wish to pay particular tribute to the member for Logan, who has been such a strong advocate and who put funding for the Mount Lindesay Highway firmly back on the agenda when the previous LNP government completely dropped the ball. I am pleased to be working together with the member for Logan on advocating for even more funding for this important regional highway.

Another highway that is important for my constituents is the Centenary Highway. I was pleased to recently announce the completion of the Centenary Highway-Logan Motorway interchange planning study, which has identified options to relieve congestion and improve safety at this major interchange. I will now press for further funding to undertake more detailed planning for this interchange which will allow for proper costings to be done for further consideration by the Queensland government for funding. I know that this interchange is the cause of much frustration for commuters and, whilst the planning was too late for funding consideration in this year's budget, it is an issue that I will continue to prosecute with the minister and Treasurer.

Finally, I would like to say a few words about how our government is helping to support those in the Jordan electorate with cost-of-living pressures. I am particularly mindful that mortgage pressures and cost-of-living pressures are significant issues for those in my electorate. The Palaszczuk government, through this year's state budget, has announced more than \$5.5 billion in rebates and concessions—an increase of \$200 million over previous years. There are a range of subsidies and schemes available, and I regularly provide support to constituents to assist them to access some of these concessions—for example, the School Transport Assistance Scheme, which helps eligible families with school travel costs and the Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme, which offers a subsidy for pensioners to lessen the impact of local government rates and charges, thereby assisting them to continue to live in their own homes. The Smart Savings website brings together all of the concessions available, and with the incredible boost in the state budget this year I look forward to assisting even more Jordan electorate constituents access these opportunities to assist them with those cost-of-living pressures.

As I said at the start of my speech, this is a budget that addresses the issues that matter the most to Queenslanders: infrastructure, education, health, cost-of-living pressures, and of course job creation. I commend the Treasurer and all ministers involved in the preparation of this year's budget, and I look forward to seeing the result of this workflow through my electorate of Jordan.