




Speech By
Daniel Purdie

MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

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

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (8.56 pm): Tonight I rise to speak on the 2018 budget. This is a budget that shirks the hard work. This is a budget that avoids tough decisions. This budget is an emblem of this government—content with standing still and avoiding trouble rather than building Queensland's ambition. This is a budget and a government that lacks leadership, lacks vision and fails to foster the economic conditions in which Queenslanders can thrive. This budget is not just an emblem of the current government; it is covered in ALP DNA because more debt and higher taxes are at the core of the Labor Party's DNA. We have had more than a century of Labor administrations addicted to debt and taxes and, no matter what one says about this government, it is following lock step in that tradition.

There are five new taxes including a waste tax, a property tax, a land tax, a car tax and a gambling tax and there are four new fees that are set to rip \$2.2 billion from the pockets of Queensland taxpayers. The state is on a downward spiral to reach a record debt bomb of \$83 billion. Once again, this budget has confirmed that the government has no inclination to arrest the decline to this dungeon of debt—a debt it seems happy to pass on to our kids and grandkids. The Palaszczuk government won the 2015 election on the back of a promise to resolve the debt without the need to sell assets. It was a totally disingenuous statement then that has now proven to be a lie. The Treasurer in her budget speech did not even mention the debt, hoping that by not mentioning it maybe no-one would remember. But people do remember. In the last term the government paid \$5.6 billion in interest—enough to cover the cost of its pet Cross River Rail project, an interest bill that equates to—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Sorry, member. If members want to have a conversation, take it outside please.

Mr PURDIE: That is enough to cover the cost of its pet Cross River Rail project with an interest bill that equates to \$10 million a day, \$420,000 per hour and more than \$7,000 per minute. History shows that this is a government that robs Peter to pay Paul. Even with raids on the superannuation funds of public servants—the same public servants those opposite tout to respect—this government still has no plan to steer our state into a future position of prosperity.

Even with the benefit of blind luck and a \$2 billion windfall from royalties, that is lipstick on this pig of a budget—lipstick that comes from higher royalties from coal. Ironically, that is the same commodity that this government traitorously tries to undermine in Queensland primarily to save the political career of the person delivering this budget.

The Palaszczuk government is trying to fudge the debt by cooking the books and parking debt on state owned corporations that, in turn, charge every Queensland and Queensland family through higher fees, charges and tariffs—hidden taxes on top of the recently introduced five new taxes. Once again, we have seen a new Labor Treasurer, but the same strategy of shirking the hard work, fudging figures, totally ignoring the real issues and failing to make the tough decisions to deal with debt. In line with true Labor tradition, the government is spending more than it can afford and it is happy to leave the hard work and heavy lifting to a future competent government.

The Treasurer claims that this continued spending is required to avoid an infrastructure crisis. I think that all members would agree that we are facing an imminent infrastructure crisis. The RACQ has been warning that Queensland is in danger of grinding to a halt. As it constantly does, the government has tried to pass the buck and accept no responsibility for this crisis, but the people of Queensland know better. They have watched consecutive state Labor governments recklessly waste their money. History shows that 25 out of the past 30 budgets in this state have been delivered by a Labor Treasurer. There is no shying away from the fact that our infrastructure crisis and alarming debt bomb are thanks to the recent 25 years of Labor rule in this state. Moreover, a large portion of this debt was created because Peter Beattie wanted to prepare South-East Queensland for the future. Apparently, he borrowed to avoid an infrastructure crisis. We now have the debt but not the infrastructure.

This budget also confirms that the Palaszczuk government is still a Brisbane-centric government. It purports to fight for Queensland and all Queenslanders, but all it really cares about is the inner city and South Brisbane and firming up its coalition with the Greens to secure its own seats. An example of this Brisbane-centric attitude is \$65 million allocated to bike paths in Brisbane. Half of that money could solve all the congestion-busting and critical infrastructure projects that are desperately required across the electorate of Ninderry. At the last election, the good people of the Ninderry electorate spoke loud and clear and endorsed a number of infrastructure upgrades across the electorate, none of which have been addressed in this budget. All of those could have been solved with less funding than that allocated to bike paths in the electorate of the transport minister.

Another essential priority that the good people of the Sunshine Coast demand is the north coast rail duplication where the government is, once again, a day late and a dollar short. Infrastructure Australia has identified the north coast rail duplication project as a top priority—a project that the former Bligh government pledged to fully fund over a decade ago. This government is refusing to contribute any more than 20 per cent of the \$760 million that is required. A number of previous state governments have committed to fully funding this project and never before has the federal government contributed any money to a state rail project. The federal government has gifted the state \$390 million towards this upgrade. This government commissioned and submitted the business case for this project and is now deflecting its responsibility to deliver it.

Another much needed and long overdue project for the Sunshine Coast is the upgrade of the Bruce Highway. The federal government has pledged \$880 million towards this upgrade, but the state government has again dropped the ball and has not allocated any new money to upgrade the Bruce Highway. This \$880 million, coupled with the \$370 million contributed by the federal government for rail, equals a total of \$1.25 billion gifted by the federal government towards these vital projects and the government is refusing to contribute a fraction of this amount to see these long overdue projects built. The residents of the Sunshine Coast deserve better. The people of the Sunshine Coast are sick of the blame shifting and want results. Squabbling over who is responsible for what percentage is irrelevant to them. That is why I am glad that Deb Frecklington and the LNP have stood up for the Sunshine Coast and confirmed their commitment to six-laning the Bruce Highway all the way from Caboolture to Caloundra.

The LNP understands that the north coast rail duplication and the Bruce Highway upgrades are vital infrastructure projects not just for the Sunshine Coast but for all of Queensland. It is not just commuters who rightly demand better connectivity and more reliable and efficient transport options to Brisbane; it is also imperative for freight and businesses across the state—businesses that have again been neglected by the Palaszczuk government in this budget.

There are 4½ thousand small businesses in the Ninderry electorate—small businesses that are the backbone of our economy. If we support small business, they will do the heavy lifting by driving employment and economic growth, but this government has again proven that it has no interest in supporting the mums and dads who make up a large proportion of our small family-run businesses. These families are working hard and making sacrifices to improve their lot, to employ people and to give back to the community. It is these small businesses that will be hit the hardest by the new taxes introduced by this government—taxes such as the waste tax that will cost them and their customers \$1.3 billion over the next four years.

Thirty years ago, Queensland was an economic powerhouse, but now it is battling it out for the wooden spoon. Business confidence is at its lowest level since 2016, productivity is down off the back of 34,000 work days lost to trade union strike action and we have the highest unemployment rate in the country at 6.5 per cent. Local infrastructure investment is an absolute priority for the electorate of Ninderry and the Sunshine Coast. Compared to funding allocated in the LNP's last state budget in 2014, the Sunshine Coast is facing an infrastructure funding cut of \$234 million.

The roundabout at Yandina-Coolum Road and South Coolum Road can no longer accommodate the 8,000-plus residents of Coolum and the thousands more tourists who visit the area. Parents, teachers and kids from Coolum State School need to negotiate that roundabout every day on their way to and from school. The roundabout is not only a bottleneck but also the site of an accident waiting to happen. This roundabout is also the main entry and exit point for the emergency services based on South Coolum Road. Ambulances and police get caught in the inevitable logjam that this roundabout often becomes.

Once again, the local Coolum police have been let down in this budget. Coolum police have worked out of a temporary demountable for 13 years and have continually been promised a more permanent, secure and appropriate facility. In the past 13 years, the surrounding population has exploded and police numbers have grown. The temporary police facility is no longer adequate. The police of my local area work around the clock day and night to keep my community safe. They are often required to detain violent offenders and seize exhibits, including drugs and guns, and they require suitable, modern and up-to-date facilities to properly perform their duty. It is disappointing to see that the promised funds to upgrade this station have again been pushed back to a future date. My local police and my local community deserve better.

The electorate of Ninderry borders the Sunshine Coast airport, which is undergoing a \$350 million expansion. We must leverage off this expansion and improve intra-city connectivity so that businesses operators, visitors and locals can move around safely and with ease. One of the main access routes from the Bruce Highway to the airport is through Bli Bli. The residents of Bli Bli and its surrounding suburbs are daily negotiating dangerous narrow bridges. The single-lane bridge over Caboolture Creek at Yandina-Bli Bli Road has seen its fair share of accidents, as has the narrow bridge on the David Low Way. This bridge was originally built over half a century ago as a cane train bridge and it is now the main arterial for the 8½ thousand residents of Bli Bli and many others who travel to and from the airport. These numbers will continue to grow with the residential expansion continuing in Bli Bli and the planned increased capacity at the new Sunshine Coast airport.

For a fraction of the \$65 million allocated for bike paths in inner-city Brisbane, the residents and families of Eumundi could get a pedestrian bridge they have been begging for for over 20 years. Many families and kids need to cross the North Maroochy River near Sieb Road to get to and from school every day. Currently, they have to run the gauntlet and shimmy across the bridge on Eumundi-Noosa Road, sharing the roadway with cars and trucks travelling at 100 kilometres an hour. This pedestrian bridge has a price tag of only \$400,000, less than one per cent of the transport minister's bike paths in Brisbane and only one hour of interest payments on our state debt.

Mr Hunt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly): Order! Member for Nicklin, if you want to engage in the debate you will need to be in your own seat.

Mr PURDIE: Arguably one of the coast's worse intersections is at Killick Street and Maroochy Road in Kundah Park in the heart of the region's industrial hub. Despite community petitions and TMR's own detailed investigations, the Labor government has once again failed to commit any money to upgrade this dangerous intersection. TMR has already identified a preferred solution for the staged upgrade of this intersection and yet despite the significant community concern about the safety and efficiency of the existing Pike-Killick Street intersection, this is another important local infrastructure project in the Ninderry electorate that has failed to make it into this budget. Only the LNP has the plan, the motivation and the capacity to return our state to the economic powerhouse it once was.