



Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2018

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

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (8.43 pm): It is great to see so many people have come back to listen to my wonderful speech on behalf of the Queensland government on this year's budget. Thank you all for coming back. I know I interrupted some of your drinks, but it is great to have you all here tonight to listen to my speech. Thank you very much. I thank you, Mark McArdle. This is a budget for all Queenslanders. It is great to see the whole chamber is here to listen to this because it is worth listening to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): One moment. Members, many of you are leaving the chamber. I ask that you leave the chamber in silence.

Mr BUTCHER: This is a budget for the future: delivering the infrastructure, skills and services that will help us to manage growth and ensure that we can all share in future prosperity. I am glad to say that next week I will be heading off as the Assistant Minister for Treasury with the Treasurer and Deputy Premier of Queensland to talk to those people in regional Queensland and Far North Queensland about this budget and also to explain to them how great this is and the opportunities for those people in that part of Queensland.

Our focus is on jobs infrastructure and growing a strong economy in Queensland. Unlike what happened under those opposite, this does not have to come at the cost of the health of our communities or the education of our kids, or our environment. It is quite the opposite. Our government understands that our \$11.6 billion Capital Works Program this coming year will support 38,000 jobs in Queensland. Over 65 per cent of the infrastructure spend in this year's state budget is being delivered in regional Queensland, outside of the south-east, with \$1 billion in infrastructure investment occurring in my electorate and around Central Queensland. That includes building and adding to our hospitals and our schools.

In my electorate of Gladstone \$26.8 million has been allocated in this budget from the total \$42 million for continued construction of the new accident and emergency department at the Gladstone Hospital. The community of Gladstone has been desperate for this infrastructure after previous governments did not support the former Independent member for Gladstone, who held the seat for 21 years. I am glad to say that this government, this Treasurer and this Premier of Queensland are certainly delivering in spades for Gladstone. As I said, we have not seen anything like it for two decades.

In my electorate of Gladstone \$1.7 million has been allocated in this budget, from the total \$4.7 million, to complete the step-up step-down, 10-bed adult mental health facility. This is a much needed support service for those struggling with mental health issues in my community and will help those people get back into everyday living in Gladstone. These are things that are happening now. Right across my electorate honourable members can see infrastructure projects funded by the state government that are supporting jobs. In the past year six brand-new buildings have been constructed in schools across my electorate.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the previous education minister and the new education minister for that support of those infrastructure builds in my schools right across Gladstone. We have invested across the length and breadth of this electorate. The former member for Callide was vehemently opposed to the Calliope State High School and even had a big 'for sale' sign on that land. Not only did we save the land at the last election but we are also now building a brand-new high school on that block at a cost of \$60 million. This year's budget will see \$1.1 million out of the \$4.2 billion to build additional classrooms, I am pleased to say, at one of the biggest high schools in Gladstone, Toolooa State High School, to give this school the space they need to cater for growth. Not only is this government investing in infrastructure in areas of most need, it is looking to the future.

I have said it before: Gladstone is open for business. With this government's investment in Advance Queensland to the tune of \$650 million, including the \$40 million boost to the Industry Attraction Fund, Gladstone has never been more attractive. Gladstone will benefit from this government's commitment to backing our own people to turn new ideas into reality and this government's commitment to attracting more companies to relocate or establish new projects in Queensland, especially in my electorate of Gladstone. We have seen it in my electorate already with the construction and commencement of Southern Oil's advanced biofuels pilot plant on track to be Australia's first commercial scale advanced biofuels production facility.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to attracting and supporting the industries of the future and this is the reason that Southern Oil brought this job-generating project to Queensland, from New South Wales, to my electorate of Gladstone. We have seen it again with the announcement recently that global energy giant Acciona Energy have signed a 30-year lease to build and operate one of the largest solar farms in the Southern Hemisphere in the Gladstone electorate. The half a billion dollar, 900,000-panel farm will be 2½ times larger than any solar farm currently in Australia and generate enough electricity to power 122,000 households. Construction will commence mid next year, bringing with it 240 local jobs, with electricity generation commencing in 2020.

These projects do not just happen; it takes a government with vision and an ability to deliver, to follow through and to invest in attracting and supporting these brand-new industries into Queensland. This is not pie in the sky stuff; this is happening now. Thanks to this commitment, Gladstone really is set to be the energy hub of Queensland. This budget also allocates \$750,000 to support the investigation into producing and supplying hydrogen at a competitive price to alternative energy sources. I have had some very encouraging meetings in my area with potential investors looking to establish pilot projects to develop this brand-new technology.

The potential is massive, and if Gladstone could be part of the hydrogen energy revolution it would be fantastic for the future of the city, the people of Queensland and Australia. We have companies that have already identified Gladstone as a potential location, and this funding will get them over the line to invest here. In 2015 we promised as a government that we would work with people, not fight with them. In 2017 we promised to get on with it, and this 2018-19 budget is doing just that.

Some of the other highlights for the Gladstone region include: \$35.6 million out of \$220.3 million to upgrade and maintain the RG Tanna Coal Terminal at the port of Gladstone; a further \$9.6 million out of a total of \$36 million for safety works on the Bruce Highway; a record investment in the operational budget for the Central Queensland Health and Hospital Service of \$610 million; and \$1 million out of a total of \$11.7 million to develop the next stage of the Clinton Industrial Estate. There is much, much more but I will not go on any further about how much is being delivered to Gladstone.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering on infrastructure, it is delivering on skills and it is delivering on services, because we believe that no-one in this state should be left behind. No matter where people live in this great state, they deserve access to a quality education, they deserve access to quality health care and they deserve access to a secure job. This government and this budget from the Deputy Premier and Treasurer is certainly delivering on that promise.