



Speech By  
**Leanne Linard**


**MEMBER FOR NUDGE**

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Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2018

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Education, Employment and Small Business Committee, Report**

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (6.50 pm): I rise to speak on the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee's report on the 2018-19 budget estimates process. The committee made one recommendation: that the proposed expenditure be agreed to. It was a pleasure to have the opportunity to chair the estimates hearing for the portfolio areas of Education, Employment and Small Business this year—service areas that are so core to this government's jobs and skills agenda and to the prosperity of all Queenslanders.

We were elected in 2015 and again in 2017 with a commitment to make jobs for Queenslanders a priority, and this is a priority that has not changed. Approximately 150,000 jobs have been created since we came to government in January 2015 through investment in essential services and infrastructure. These are numbers, but behind these numbers we are talking about real people who now have a place in our economy and hope for their and their family's future. Included within these numbers are more than 4,700 extra teachers and teacher aides employed since March 2015 who are making a real and lasting difference to student outcomes across Queensland.

This budget commits to employing an additional 3,700 teachers over the next four years. It commits to additional instrumental teachers and musical instruments for schools as part of the world-class education election commitments. It commits to refurbishing and upgrading existing primary and high schools and to building new schools to meet growth.

In addition to a focus on these key commitments, during our committee estimates hearing early childhood education and care was a focus of questioning with regard to the extension of the remote kindergarten pilot in schools and e-kindy options, access to quality early childhood education and care in remote communities, the Queensland Kindergarten Funding Scheme Plus Kindy Support Subsidy and the impacts arising from the loss of federal funding under the Child Care Subsidy scheme.

With respect to Industrial Relations, the delivery of training for health and safety representatives at Queensland workplaces, the new regulations to improve safety in the amusement ride and theme park industries, the introduction and progress of the new labour hire licensing scheme and the government's response to issues of wage theft were the subject of questioning.

From Education and Industrial Relations to Employment, Skills and Small Business, questioning of the minister included the services provided by the Back to Work scheme including the Women Behind the Wheel program and Back to Work Youth Boost Payment, support for social enterprises such as the Community Living Association in my electorate and the Hope Street Cafe in West End, and funding for small businesses under the Small Business Entrepreneur Grants Program and Business Growth Fund.

Improvements to TAFE campuses through the Advancing Our Training Infrastructure investment; the provision of TAFE Queensland scholarships through the Advance Queensland—TAFE Queensland pathway scholarships; and supporting employers to take on apprentices and trainees through incentive schemes, traineeship programs and payroll tax rebates for apprentices and trainees were just some of the many topics canvassed in the Skills and Training hearing, which concluded the day.

I would like to acknowledge and thank ministers Grace Grace and Shannon Fentiman, their directors-general and chief executive officers for the genuine willingness they displayed to answer questions related to their portfolios. I would like to acknowledge and thank our secretariat, particularly Lucy Manderson, for their professionalism along with my fellow committee members and Hansard for their valuable assistance on the day.

In regard to the hearing itself, estimates serves an important role in the operation of this House and accountable government. However, it only works when all parties come to the table with a genuine desire to see the process operate as it should. I have no doubt that as chair of this committee I will be criticised by those opposite during this debate, but I want to say this: as a committee chair I have one job each year during estimates and that is to ensure proper respect for and adherence with the standing orders and rules of this House. I take that role seriously and I respect that process. However, every year many—not all—of the shadow ministers see estimates not as a genuine opportunity to ensure accountability of responsible government but, rather, as a desperate attempt to pull off the elusive gotcha moment.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members.

**Ms LINARD:** They will use whatever means to achieve it and that includes aggressive questioning, constant interruption—like they are displaying now—personal reflections, gimmicks or yelling at and above others.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members.

**Ms LINARD:** I will not give them any attention. In no other workplace, private or public, is it acceptable to treat others in the workplace with such contempt, and I do not think it should be acceptable here either. Both ministers Grace Grace and Shannon Fentiman came to that hearing prepared and with a genuine desire to answer questions about their portfolios. Their public servants did likewise. I commend the report to the House.