



Speech By  
**Hon. Leeanne Enoch**

**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 October 2018

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

**Billie Brown Theatre**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts) (9.54 am): Last week I had the pleasure of joining the Treasurer in her electorate of South Brisbane to deliver on an important commitment of the Palaszczuk government when we opened the new Billie Brown Theatre. This is a newly refurbished venue for Queensland Theatre, which was supported by a \$2 million investment from our government. This funding was secured by the Premier while she was arts minister with strong support from the Deputy Premier, who understands the importance of the arts in her community. The new theatre opened with *Nearer the Gods*, the latest work of acclaimed Queensland playwright David Williamson, directed by Queensland Theatre artistic director Sam Strong.

The theatre's expansion will benefit Queensland's performing arts sector and provide an enhanced experience for artists and audiences alike. The refurbishment boosts seating capacity to 351 and delivers improved amenities and disability access. This new, intimate venue was the ideal space to experience David Williamson's wonderful new work about Isaac Newton. The Billie Brown Theatre now includes Brisbane's first corner stage, which creates a unique and intimate audience experience. Last week's opening represents a tribute to two Queensland stage icons, with a new play by one of our most acclaimed playwrights in a venue named to honour the late stage and screen legend, Billie Brown. Industry and public reaction to the new theatre has been enthusiastic, with the *Australian* newspaper's reviewer saying—

The Queensland government put \$2 million into it and it was worth every cent.

The Billie Brown Theatre redevelopment reflects this government's commitment to the arts and ongoing investment in arts infrastructure. This year the Palaszczuk government has committed \$125 million over four years for a new \$150 million theatre at QPAC and \$8 million towards the \$35 million redevelopment of Queensland Ballet's home, the Thomas Dixon Centre. This government strongly supports a diverse and vibrant arts sector for the benefit of all Queenslanders.

Unfortunately, for every dollar Queensland invests in our major performing arts companies the federal government chips in just 77 cents. Meanwhile, south of the border for every dollar the New South Wales government invests the federal government contributes a whopping \$3.90. With changes to the major performing arts funding framework being considered, the Palaszczuk government will stand up to the federal LNP government and demand our fair share of arts funding. I encourage those opposite to do the same and stand up for Queensland.