




Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**

**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2018

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

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (10.13 pm): What a fantastic budget for Queensland we saw handed down by the Treasurer on Tuesday. It was fantastic for Queenslanders in rural and regional communities, fantastic for Queenslanders in the south-east corner and particularly fantastic for those who live in the electorate of Ferny Grove. I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor team that is delivering for Queenslanders, especially for people—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Weir): Member for Ferny Grove, there is a bit of chatter from my left and those interjections are not being taken.

**Mr FURNER:** I thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. Not only was this a budget that delivers for Queenslanders today but it is, importantly, a budget that delivers for the next generation of Queenslanders. Firstly, there are the big headline-grabbing announcements that will have a massive impact on the future of those people who live in Ferny Grove. There is \$17.3 billion for health, a record spend that will ensure everyone has access to first-class medical treatment; \$45.8 billion for infrastructure, including more than \$5 billion for Cross River Rail that will cut travel time from Ferny Grove station to the CBD by up to 15 minutes; and \$14.1 billion for education.

I want to focus on education specifically this evening because nothing is more important to the Palaszczuk government than ensuring the next generation of Queenslanders have a great start to their lives and are healthy, safe and ready to be productive members of society. That is why since the election in November I have been advocating hard for our local area, and this budget delivers in spades for educators in Ferny Grove. There is \$18.1 million to build a new three-storey block, complete with state-of-the-art classrooms and science labs at Ferny Grove State High School. I want to pay particular attention and thank the Minister for Education, Minister Grace, and also the Deputy Premier and Treasurer who came out on Monday to make that announcement. There is \$10 million each for school hall improvements at the Mitchelton and Ferny Grove state high schools and a total of more than \$800,000 for works at another 10 schools in the Ferny Grove region.

Other highlights in my electorate include more than a quarter of a million dollars to be spent to progress the Samford Road business case and more than \$3.7 million to build 24 new units of accommodation. Not only does this budget deliver for Ferny Grove; it backs in all of Queensland by investing millions of dollars in rural and regional communities.

In my role as agricultural industry development and fisheries minister, I have travelled extensively around the state, covering more than 22,000 kilometres, visiting more than 30 towns and cities, including your own electorate, Mr Deputy Speaker. What I have heard on the ground from primary producers and industry groups is that the drought and pests are two of the things that have the biggest

impacts on our agricultural industry. This budget will provide relief and support where it is most needed, including \$5 million over two years for wild dog exclusion cluster fencing in Western and Southern Queensland.

With more than half of our state still in drought, the Palaszczuk government will maintain existing drought relief arrangements, with up to \$34.6 million in the whole-of-government drought assistance package, up to \$20 million of which will be available under the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme. We are also continuing efforts to eradicate fire ants and stop any further spread of threats such as Panama TR4 disease with new funding allocated in the biosecurity space.

This portfolio is more than just dealing with issues that our farmers face on a daily basis. It is about growing our industry in domestic and international markets. That is why there is \$10 million over three years for the Rural Economic Development Grants Scheme, which promotes agricultural industry development and jobs in rural communities, and a further \$3 million over three years for the successful Rural Jobs & Skills Alliance and to extend the Queensland Agriculture Workforce Network.

We are planning for the future by providing \$1 million over two years for research, development and extension in pulse storage to support the rapidly expanding chickpea and pulses industry. An amount of \$400,000 has been allocated to tackle fruit flies in Bundaberg through a regional agriculture data collection trial with Bundaberg Fruit & Vegetable Growers. It was a pleasure to catch up tonight with Allan and Bree from that organisation, and I know many of the members in the chamber also attended. I want to pay particular credit to the member for Burnett for organising that along with the previous member for Bundaberg. We will continue to implement the Queensland Sustainable Fisheries Strategy announced last year, which provided additional funding of \$20.9 million over three years to ensure that our fisheries resources are managed in a sustainable and responsible manner that recognises the interests of all Queenslanders.

This is a budget that delivers on our election commitments for the agricultural industry. AgForce and QFF, which I look forward to working with on the Agricultural Ministerial Advisory Council, agreed and said that this budget delivers on our election commitments. So far our budget initiatives have also been supported by Growcom, Canegrowers and the LGAQ. It would come as no surprise that the opposition spokesman for agriculture has been less than complimentary about this wonderful budget. No, I am not talking about the member for Gregory, who is a true advocate for the bush. I am talking about the absent opposition spokesman, the member for Gympie, who instead of talking up our agricultural industry is more focused on getting his name printed in the *Gympie Times*.

Let us have a look at what he said about this budget. The member for Gympie in an article in—where else—the *Gympie Times* said, ‘Labor’s four new taxes were ushered in under the cover of an election campaign.’ We all know there is no greater cover for a party to make a tax announcement than an election campaign. I also found it disappointing that the member for Gympie is looking after the high end of town with his comments about the state budget. He said that struggling families will be impacted by the new taxes, but that is misleading. How many struggling families do we know, colleagues, who own a car worth more than \$100,000? It is time the member for Gympie realised that working families drive Holdens, Toyotas and Fords; not Rolls Royces or Lexuses, like some of those opposite.

The member for Gympie said that this budget is all smoke and mirrors. Well, I say that this budget is straight fire, with a \$481 million agriculture budget—up \$57 million from last year—that not only deals with the pests and diseases that are affecting our farms but is looking forward to develop our industry into the future. I am proud to be part of a Palaszczuk government that delivers on its commitments, delivers for agriculture and delivers for Queenslanders. I commend the appropriation bills to the chamber.