




Speech By
Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2018

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

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (7.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills. This is a budget that is delivering for Queenslanders and investing heavily in the Gold Coast. It is a budget that delivers now and delivers for the future, with record investments in Health and Education, and it invests in the services in infrastructure that our growing city needs. The Gold Coast is Australia's sixth biggest city and Queensland's second biggest city. We are a fast-growing region going from strength to strength after hosting an incredibly successful Commonwealth Games. We need to build congestion-busting infrastructure for our city and I am pleased to see that this budget is delivering on just that.

The Palaszczuk government went to the election promising that M1 upgrades would commence as soon as the games were over, and that is exactly what we are doing, with heavy works starting at Mudgeeraba to Varsity Lakes and the Gateway merge. I am a big believer in public transport which is why I am pleased to see that this budget allocates \$2 million of new funding for stage 3 of the Gold Coast Light Rail and funding for Cross River Rail which will reduce travel time for Gold Coast commuters travelling to Brisbane by 15 minutes and add over 3,000 additional seats during peak times. We want to keep Queenslanders moving which is why we are investing \$680 million in infrastructure on the Gold Coast which is estimated to support around 2,300 jobs. We want to create secure jobs that come with fair pay and safe working conditions to provide families with the confidence they need to spend and invest. That is the foundation of a strong economy. That is not never-never stuff. We are not promising to do; we are doing.

We are restoring the front-line services that were savagely cut under the Newman government. I am proud to say that since 2015 we have added an extra 653 nurses and 186 doctors on the Gold Coast. I am also proud to say that almost \$1.5 billion will be invested in health care on the Gold Coast—a record investment. The Gold Coast has the busiest emergency department in the country and this growth in funding will help our hardworking doctors and nurses meet the increase in demand for services.

Not only are we keeping our Gold Coasters healthy; we are also keeping our community safe by expanding the number of police and emergency workers, giving them the best equipment and every support to combat the scourges of drugs and domestic violence. I am pleased to see that this budget allocates \$2.4 million of an \$11.5 million project to commence construction of a new police hub in Arundel. We are also funding four new domestic and family violence coordinators and building a domestic violence shelter on the northern Gold Coast. This new shelter will be a sanctuary for women and children who make the brave decision to leave violent relationships. It will provide the support those families need to rebuild their lives.

I am also pleased to say that funding of Project Booyah will continue, with a total of \$7.36 million over five years for the award-winning early intervention program that helps steer troubled young people away from a life of crime. I recently spoke with a young man involved in this program which is being

delivered in my community through the Nerang PCYC. This young man has been contributing to our community by working on projects that benefit families in our area at Country Paradise Parklands and I am pleased to say that he has made the decision to go back to school. He, like many other Queenslanders participating in this program, has turned his life around. I was shocked to see that the federal Turnbull government has chosen to discontinue its contribution of funding for this program. I will be writing to the federal minister and federal member for Moncrieff about this issue because Project Booyah gives young people the opportunity, the skills and the self-esteem to make good decisions, but most importantly it gives them hope for the future.

This side of the House has a very proud history of providing for the future, delivering a quality education for all children regardless of their background and postcode. Since 2015 we have employed more than 500 extra teachers and almost 70 extra teacher aides on the Gold Coast. Our educators do a phenomenal job and I want to thank all of the staff at our wonderful schools in the electorate of Gaven for their tireless work in shaping the lives of our future generations. We know that for a child to thrive we need to deliver world-class learning environments and meet enrolment demand.

I am proud to say that we are contributing over \$80 million for maintenance and capital works projects for schools on the Gold Coast. During the election I fought hard for my community and I am pleased to say that those commitments have been honoured in this budget. Schools like Pacific Pines State Primary School, Nerang State High School and William Duncan State School are just a few schools that I lobbied for during the election and I am proud to see the Palaszczuk government is honouring the commitments that were made. I am also pleased to say that on top of these commitments Pacific Pines State High School will also receive over \$1.4 million in this budget of an \$8 million project to commence construction on a new building with six classrooms and three specialist areas.

Even before a child's first day of school, Queensland kids benefit from developing a love of reading. Having worked in the early childhood sector, I know how important it is that children receive the support they need at an early stage. That is why we are investing \$175,000 in this budget to deliver the First 5 Forever family reading initiative through preschool literacy sessions at libraries on the Gold Coast.

We believe in giving Queenslanders the skills and training they need to get into the workforce which is why we are making record education and training investment and redeveloping TAFE facilities on the Gold Coast. I am also pleased to see that the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program that helps jobseekers gain the skills and training they need to enter the workforce is continuing. I have had the privilege of attending two Skilling Queenslanders for Work graduation ceremonies at Country Paradise Parklands and Nerang and the benefits of this program are far reaching. Participants not only gain a qualification; they work on projects to assist families in our suburbs and create meaningful relationships with community members and potential employers.

At the heart of any Labor budget is education, and we are delivering in spades. It is for our children that we are building the economy of the future. Before 2015 renewable energy was a futuristic suggestion. We are now building the biggest solar energy plants in the world. Jets are flying on biofuels. Between July 2016 and April 2018 \$5.8 million worth of grants were awarded to 88 applicants to drive innovation, build on our natural advantages and help raise the Gold Coast's profile as an attractive investment destination. We have invested \$650 million in our Advance Queensland fund, backing our own people to turn more of their ideas into new realities.

The Palaszczuk government recognises the important role small businesses play in their communities and in creating jobs. My parents owned a small business and I myself have worked in a number of small businesses, so I am pleased to see that this budget includes an extra \$40 million for the Business Development Fund for two years and an extension of the 50 per cent payroll tax rebate to June 2019 for apprentices and trainees.

Following the success of the Commonwealth Games, we have an opportunity to stamp our authority as a truly global city. More than 1.5 billion people from around the world watched on as the Gold Coast had its time in the spotlight and we know that this event will leave a long-lasting legacy for the tourism industry and the Gold Coast community decades into the future. To make the most of the games, the Gold Coast needs to keep reinventing itself to appeal to a younger, more discerning international travel market.

We are investing significantly in this space to make sure that we capitalise on the games in the next decade. Importantly, the Palaszczuk government will invest \$180 million to attract more direct flights, creating new attractions and promoting ecotourism opportunities in our key visitor destinations. We need to partner with tourism operators to make sure that what we are offering on the Gold Coast is new and current. The time is now for the Gold Coast and, as the assistant minister for tourism industry development, I look forward to working with the industry to deliver what the coast needs to ride the wave

of success following the Commonwealth Games. Our local screen industry will also continue to flourish, with a commitment of \$50 million to help attract job-creating film and television projects to Queensland via the Production Attracting Strategy. These are exciting times to live in our state.

Although the future is bright in Queensland, we certainly acknowledge that there are still many residents and communities like some in my electorate who do it tough. That is why the Palaszczuk government has committed more than \$5.5 billion to help Queenslanders with their household budgets. The Palaszczuk government is investing a record \$312 million to fund a range of energy rebates and concessions, of which \$212 million is specifically to assist vulnerable Queenslanders and \$100 million has been allocated to help all households through our electricity asset ownership dividend. We have been able to implement many of these initiatives because we have kept our income-generating assets in public hands. I will continue to work with my communities so that residents take advantage of these concessions and rebates to assist them with day-to-day cost-of-living pressures.

I am a strong believer in the concept that society should be judged by how it treats its most vulnerable. That is why I am proud to see that this budget has allocated \$7.7 million to deliver specialist homelessness services and \$38.4 million to expand and improve social housing on the Gold Coast. This program's benefits extend far beyond housing for people in need. The Housing Construction Jobs Program is also creating a pipeline of opportunities for the construction industry, securing hundreds of quality jobs.

People in my community and on the wider Gold Coast want politicians who simply get on with the job. They do not want to waste time on congested roads, they want their children educated in good schools, they want to be looked after when they are sick and they want to be able to turn on a light without taking out another mortgage and they want to do that without destroying the planet. We are delivering on these things in a methodical, ordered and well-planned way. The Gold Coast has enormous potential and, like any growing city, there will always be more work to do. I promise my electorate that I will continue to fight for my amazing community.

I would like to conclude by thanking the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, the Hon. Jackie Trad, for delivering a good Labor budget that delivers for the Gold Coast. She has been a fierce advocate for congestion-busting infrastructure and I look forward to working with her in the future to deliver for the Gold Coast. I commend these bills to the House.