




Speech By
Michael Crandon

MEMBER FOR COOMERA

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

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (5.43 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate in relation to the 2018 budget. One would have thought that with debt to increase over the forward estimates to \$83 billion the northern Gold Coast would benefit in some way, shape or form from that expenditure. Once again, not surprisingly, this budget fails to deliver for the people of the northern Gold Coast. It has happened every other year.

I was expecting something different. There was a little bit of noise about the need for the upgrades to exits 41, 45 and 49 coming through, but to no avail. There is nothing there in relation to that. We have reannouncements of the school upgrades which are almost complete. They have reannounced these numbers. By the way, do we need these school upgrades? Absolutely, we do. Why? We are the fastest growing region in Queensland. We are second fastest growing region in Australia.

Government after government over the last decade have seen the need and built 10 new schools in the area. We also have in the budget a new high school commencing in 2020. It was an election promise. Is it any surprise that a new high school is being built? It is absolutely not. Why? We are the fastest growing region in Queensland. We are the second fastest growing region in Australia. We need those schools to accommodate our students.

Over the last five years, from 2013 to 2018, we have seen the population of the schools in the Coomera electorate grow from 10,200 to 15,360 students. Over the last five years there are more than a thousand additional students a year in the Pimpama, Coomera and Ormeau region. There is no doubt we needed those schools. I congratulate the minister for continuing our plan to build those additional schools that are needed for the northern Gold Coast. They were absolutely essential.

Something in the order of 27½ per cent of our population is under 15 years of age. Compare that figure to the figure for the rest of Queensland which is 18.3 per cent. We have 50 per cent more people under 15 years of age than the rest of Queensland and the rest of the Gold Coast, for that matter. Members should consider this. Some 42 per cent of our population is under 25 years of age. Compare that figure to the figure for rest of the state and the rest of the Gold Coast which is 32 per cent. There are a third more people in that age group in my electorate.

What does that tell members? We see young families moving into the area. When these children come into the area they bring their parents with them. The average age on the northern Gold Coast is under 30 years of age. These children are bringing their parents. Their parents bring their cars. In fact, in terms of the Gold Coast population, on the northern Gold Coast we have the highest percentage of cars per family—that is, two or three cars. Why is that? We have to get to work from those suburbs. We have to be able to get down to the Gold Coast and up to Brisbane. We need cars.

Why do we particularly need cars? We have a little bit of a problem. We have this thing called a car parking shortfall at our railway stations. I see further down the coast that there has been a push for additional car parks at railway stations but none for the state seat of Coomera—none for the Ormeau Railway Station and none for the Coomera Railway Station. They are overflowing.

We have people parking on the streets in all manner of ways. There is no security in the overflow car park that has been roughed out of the bush at Ormeau Railway Station. It is dark at 5.30 in the afternoon when people are arriving home. Young people and young women are on their own coming home from work, whether on the Gold Coast or Brisbane. They are having to walk down into an insecure area. There are no lights and no cameras in that area. I did a quick whip around recently. There were over 100 cars parked in a sodden area of ground. All of these people have to park there because this government has not put one dollar towards the additional car park spaces we need.

Instead of driving their car to the station, why don't they catch the bus? That would be a great idea if we had a transport system that was working for people on the northern Gold Coast. It would be wonderful if people could do that. For the majority of railway services from the Ormeau and Coomera railway stations, it would be wonderful if people could catch the very first bus in the morning, go to the station, get on the train, go to Brisbane, do their normal eight-hour shift or 7½-hour shift if they are a government worker, have half an hour for lunch, go back to the railway station and catch a train back to Ormeau. The problem is that they would get off the train, walk out and the last bus would have left half an hour ago or an hour ago depending on which service they need, so they cannot use the public transport system to get to and from work. They have to use their cars. They cannot park their cars at the railway station, so where do they have to go? They go out on to the M1.

Have we discussed the M1 over the last couple of days? A conversation may have occurred. There is a lot of money being spent south of the Pimpama region and the Coomera region. There is a lot of money being spent north. That improves the situation for people in the north and further south. The problem is that when they get to our exits coming home in the afternoon they find themselves ramping back on to the M1. What is the issue there? They have B-doubles ripping past them in the left-hand lane at 100 kilometres an hour and other smaller trucks ripping past them at 110 kilometres an hour while they are ramping on the side of the road, waiting to get off. There is a safety issue. How much is in the budget for those safety issues? There is not one dollar. This government does not have one dollar in this budget for the ramping issue. It is a safety issue and the biggest issue for the people of the northern Gold Coast. There is not one penny in this budget for those issues at exits 41, 45 and 49.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr CRANDON: There is not one dollar for additional transport, Minister. There is not one dollar for exits 41, 45 and 49. Are you saying there is money there?

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr CRANDON: Yes, that is right. We funded exit 54 when we were in government. We announced it during the election campaign. Then you came along. That is right; you guys are used to that, aren't you?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Stewart): Direct your comments through the chair.

Mr CRANDON: Those opposite are used to reannouncing things, and they happened to reannounce the \$75 million upgrade to exit 54 that we funded. By the way, before we came along and funded that, those opposite were saying it was a \$150 million spend. Why were they saying it was such a large number? They did that because they wanted to put people off even considering the upgrade. We knew we had to do it, and we did it. We delivered it for the people of the northern Gold Coast, but we have not got one cracker for exits 41, 45 or 49.

I could not help noticing in the budget papers—on page 121, if those opposite are interested—that there is \$17.3 million to extend a three-metre wide cycleway from Birdwood Road, Holland Park, to Gaza Road, Tarragindi, with a total spend of \$45 million. Who is that going to benefit? The minister's constituency is going to benefit from that \$45 million spend. You would think that for \$17.3 million this coming year it must be a fairly long cycleway—not at all. It is not long at all. In fact, it is less than two kilometres. The total spend is \$45 million—\$17.3 million this year for less than two kilometres.

Mr Stevens: It is paved with gold.

Mr CRANDON: It must be paved with gold. That \$45 million would resolve the issues at exit 49, but we are going to spend that \$45 million on a bikeway to benefit his constituency.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Direct your comments through the chair, member for Coomera.

Mr CRANDON: Another announcement for the northern Gold Coast was \$500,000 in 2018-19 for a \$3 million total spend on a new permanent fire and rescue station at Pimpama. We are not going to look a gift horse in the mouth. We are going to take that \$3 million no worries at all, but when it comes to priorities, as I have already outlined, it was not one of the highest priorities for the electorate. In fact, if anything, it is going to create some issues in the area because that particular fire station is just off Yahwalpah Road—one of the most congested roads. Where does it lead? It leads to exit 49—one of the most congested exits anywhere on the M1. That is where the new fire station is going to be built. It is going to add to the congestion. There was no thought about that. We will take the money and maybe we will see some more work going on in that area but, for goodness sake, fix the roads first.

I refer to some comments that were made last year—just before the election was called as a matter of fact—by the Premier in answer to a question without notice from me. I asked the Premier to advise the House why the Gold Coast had 40 fewer police officers at that time—this was back in October last year—than in June the previous year—that is, in June 2016. The numbers had dropped from 886 to 846 over that period of time. The Premier waffled on a little bit in her response because she was looking for the right words. At the end of it all she said that it was a load of rubbish. Interestingly though, on 27 October—just a few days later; in fact, one day later—she announced 44 additional police for the Gold Coast. There was a drop over 12 months of 40 police, and then just one day after that question the Premier announced an additional 44 police. That made up for the 40 that we had lost, plus another four. That was fantastic. Two days later the election was announced. Why did they announce an additional 44 police? Obviously it was going to be an embarrassment.

I have a problem with those numbers though. Guess what? According to an answer to question on notice No. 533 asked on 15 May 2018, the full-time allocation for the Gold Coast police district as at 30 April 2018—remember the figure last year was 846—was 841. We have gone backwards by five full-time police officers on the Gold Coast in that period of time. Just prior to the election, 44 new police officers were announced. We have gone backwards by five, so now we need an extra 49 just to catch up. Where are they going? What other areas are they going to? Maybe they are going to Logan City or perhaps they are going to Ipswich to shore up numbers there. I do not know whether they need them though.

In 2017, in Logan there were 561 police officers for a population of 320,000. That is one police officer for 570 people. In Ipswich there is one police officer for 568 people. Compare that to Gold Coast and we have one police officer for 701 people. We are starved for numbers and the numbers are shrinking on the Gold Coast. The reality is that on the northern Gold Coast we have one police officer for every 2,400 residents. When you look at all of the figures—the population and the different crime statistics—we actually need about 170. We do not want 170 right now; 100 would be good. Take us from 58 to 100 over the next 12 months and we will be happy.