




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (4.11 pm): I rise to speak in the debate with respect to the Appropriation Bill and the other bills in cognate. I start by first congratulating our leader, Deb Frecklington, on an incredibly strong response to what is a very disappointing budget. This is a budget that is actually at odds with itself.

On one hand, those on the other side of the House love to brag about growth. They love to talk about how important the growth of the Queensland economy is—the growing population and the record growth numbers. We hear regular accounts of the increases in tourism and the numbers of international students who are coming here and how important that is to the Queensland economy, but what do those on the other side of House do? They introduce policies that discourage growth.

One only needs to look at the South East Queensland Regional Plan, which those on the other side of the House have been working on for the last few years. What are the targets? What are the things that that plan is designed to do? It recognises the need for infill development or brownfield development, as some prefer to call it. Some of those targets are for something in the order of 60 to 70 per cent of infill development.

What will a waste tax do to the cost of infill development? It will rack up the cost. We have heard many accounts in the House over the last day or two about this insidious waste tax—this huge tax on everyday Queenslanders. It is not just mums and dads who will pay for it. We heard about this last night from the member for Hervey Bay. It is not just councils that will have the impost of collecting this grubby tax on behalf of the Labor government but there will be a huge impost on the construction industry as well. It adds to the cost of housing.

For those on the other side of the House who do not understand, infill development means knocking other construction down and removing the rubble so that something else can be built on the site. That involves a waste tax. This is another tax not only on everyday families but on the construction industry. It is a tax on growth in Queensland.

This budget is also disappointing in that we have heard so much from the government about how important education is. What a disappointing contribution we heard from the member for Mansfield last night. She stated—

We have the rollout of Independent Public Schools, with school councils made up of dentists, solicitors and business worthies who would all be experts in education because they went to school.

I find that comment incredibly insulting. I have been involved in P&Fs as a parent. I proudly sent my four sons to Musgrave Hill State School. That school was more than happy to have our family involved. They were more than happy to have my wife involved in the P&F, serving in the tuckshop and as a treasurer at the school. It is the families and parents of the children who go to our schools—I think the member for Mansfield has forgotten this—who have the everyday needs of our kids at heart.

I point out to those on the other side of the House that one of the most successful independent public schools in Queensland—one of the first, in fact—was Southport State High School, which is now in the electorate of Bonney. The member and I share the constituency of that school. Bob Panter has been the chairman of that school for 47 years. He has had 47 years of involvement in that school. He is the proud chairman of that school. It has set up a business innovation network that comes and engages with the school. They have businesspeople coming into the school and talking to the students about careers and opportunities. It is a world-class example of how the independent public school system can work.

I started by saying that I am disappointed with this budget. One of the things that I am disappointed about is that after the LNP's commitment to new roads, new hospitals, improved facilities, new recreational facilities, support for the light rail extension and so much else, what does Southport get this year after five or six years of incredible growth? It gets not much at all.

I have 18 schools in my electorate. It is one of the fastest growing areas of the Gold Coast. What is there for local schools? There is \$1.6 million of repromised money for some classrooms at Southport State High School. We all expected that. What is there for Benowa State School or for Ashmore State School or Bellevue Park State School? There is nothing absolutely. These are all schools that are under enormous pressure in terms of growth.

It would be good for members of the cabinet to actually go down and drive around the electorate sometime because there is this great big thing on the fringe of my electorate—with the boundary changes the member for Bonney and I share it—it is the Commonwealth Games village. We are all waiting to find out what is going to happen there. There are some 1,600 or 2,000 dwellings. At some point in the next six months or year—we are still waiting to hear from the government what is happening—there are going to be people living there. There are going to be families there with children. They are going to need to go to school. Our schools in the electorate are already under pressure. Back in March I asked a question of the Minister for Education. I asked if they could please provide details—

Government members interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking those interjections. I asked the minister for details of the current enrolment numbers and the built capacity of all the schools in my electorate and on the fringe of my electorate, including Southport State High School. I also inquired about Arundel State School, even though that is not in my electorate. It is very close.

I circulated that response to all of the principals in my electorate. I am not going to name any of them because they have concerns about the response. The numbers they have are substantially different to the numbers that were provided by the government. They are very concerned about the ability of those schools to cope.

Then there is my old school, Keebra Park State High School. I am a proud public schoolboy. I went to Keebra Park. It is growing again. It sits right in the middle of one of the oldest housing commission areas of the Gold Coast. The previous minister for housing killed off the program for the reinvigoration of an entire suburb.

What do we get for public housing this year? I think it is a paltry \$12 million for the coast. That is about 24 dwellings. There was an opportunity through that reinvigoration program to work with community housing providers to regenerate an entire suburb adjoining Keebra Park State High School and see an extra 200, 300, 400 or 500 new dwellings in the public housing and affordable housing mix on the Gold Coast.

It is 'Labornomics'. I know they do not like to do things that are progressive, that are entrepreneurial, that make a real difference in people's lives. They would rather buy solar panels from China and put them in paddocks and farmland around the state and call it an incredible jobs program.

I will come back to my commentary around schools. Keebra Park has an incredible sporting heritage, but the concerns that I have—and I have asked—is that the school has no change rooms, no sports centre of excellence, no decent facilities down near the oval. We have heard many times from both sides of the House about the changing nature of sport and the increased participation of both young men and young women in school sport.

Keebra Park is the breeding ground for some of the best Rugby Union players in Australia, some of the best women's netballers and some of the best swimmers. What do they have down on their oval? It is the same as what we had the year I started there in 1973. There is grass but no change rooms and no new facilities. What that school desperately needs is a decent amenities centre and a sports excellence centre, and there is not one cent from those on the other side of the House to support what is one of the great schools in my electorate.

I want to take a minute to talk about roads. We have heard about the congestion-busting initiatives from the government, but there is still no money for the Southport-Nerang Road upgrade. I have beautiful brochures in my office that the previous member for Southport had produced showing the upgrade some 14 years ago. Today, still, there is nothing in the budget for it. In fact, it suddenly disappeared out of the system—I think it is called QTRIP—yet we see terrific pork-barrelling by those on the other side of the House in their own electorates.

I am a proud member of the LNP. I am proud to be part of an opposition that believes in responsible stewardship of our future. What this budget and future budgets are about is just more debt. Let us spend our kids' future! Let us spend my new granddaughter's future! As we have heard from some of the other members on this side of the House, if we repaid \$1 billion a year off the debt, it is still going to take us another 80 to 100 years to make any sort of dent in it. I struggle with the fact that those on the other side of the House do not understand how important it is to have a responsible fiscal plan to reduce debt and to manage the Queensland economy.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Order! Members, there is an increasing amount of noise and disturbance creeping in. Can we keep that in check?

Mr MOLHOEK: I, like so many members in this House, have great dreams for my electorate. I still have a list hanging on the wall in my office of the things that I want to achieve.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members for Gladstone and Greenslopes, I caution you. You have been instructed about this.

Mr MOLHOEK: I do have to acknowledge one good thing that has happened in the budget, but not before time—that is, it is particularly pleasing to see a significant amount of money allocated for the redevelopment of the Gold Coast ambulance centre within my electorate. While I think that is a great initiative, one can only wonder whether it is worth the effort because we may end up with even more ambulances ramping at hospitals. That is what we see under Labor. They go back to their bad old habits. They do not keep their eye on the ball. They do not focus on the discipline of running great hospitals. They let things slip away. Where are we now? We are back to ambulances ramping at Gold Coast University Hospital which, I think, is an absolute disgrace.

There are other things in my electorate that are important. We have the Southport Courthouse, or the Gold Coast courts as they are probably better known as these days. There is no money in the budget for any upgrades or improvements at some of the busiest courts in Queensland. I am very grateful for the extension to the light rail. I do not believe that anyone in the House does not think that the extension to Helensvale was a good idea. I am pleased that we have all worked together for that—the council, the state and our federal colleagues. There is no money, no discussion and no mention of an extension of the light rail to the Gold Coast airport or to Burleigh. There is absolutely nothing in the budget for that.

What is more concerning is that I heard yesterday some comment around the issue of ice addiction and the challenges that we are seeing both in regional Queensland and here in the south-east. It cannot be overstated. It is an absolute war on drugs, but there is not one cent in the budget for the Gold Coast for increased rehabilitation facilities. I have been told that the challenge with rehabilitation for ice addiction is that the time young people or addicts need to spend in rehabilitation is significantly longer than what is required for other substance addictions. There is a desperate need for increased rehabilitation facilities on the Gold Coast.

Likewise, there is a desperate need for an increased focus on crime on the Gold Coast. We saw in the last term, sadly, a significant wind back of the LNP's tough laws on crime. We are seeing some of the gangs coming back. We are seeing the bikies back in town flaunting themselves. I feel that it is absolutely beholden on me to remind everyone in the House that it is so important that we maintain the focus on law and order in one of the most incredible cities in Australia. It is a tourism mecca. We have international students there. One of the questions I get asked all the time is: 'Is this a safe place for me to send my children? Is this a safe place to come?' One of our second biggest exports now is international education. It is critical that we not only protect those who come to visit the Gold Coast for holidays but also protect those many families who send their kids here to study and enjoy the Gold Coast way of life.