



Speech By  
**Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe**


**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

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Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2018

## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL**

### **Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (6.52 pm): I welcome the opportunity to reflect on and endorse the committee's report to the parliament on the estimates hearing. I want to thank the committee for their good work in working with myself as minister in relation to the scrutiny of the SDS for the Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs. I want to congratulate the chair, the member for Logan, for his good work in making sure the committee stayed on task and dealt with the issues that were relevant. What I saw during the hearing was, to be blunt, opposition members who could not think on their feet. When they were found wanting in terms of their question, they could not rephrase the question in order to get it up. It was pretty simple to rephrase the question but they chose to move on.

I do not want to focus on that: I want to focus on the good things that were reported on in the estimates committee process and in the report as a consequence of the Palaszczuk government's 2018-19 budget. There was a recurring theme in relation to my portfolio areas, and that is how this government—the Palaszczuk Labor government—is genuinely the government and the party for the bush. It is the party for rural and regional Queensland in so many ways. In relation to the country racing package, which is delivering fantastically for the bush, I want to encourage people to support the Birdsville Races this year. They will be televised, and 50 per cent of the wagering outcome on the event will go to the Drought Appeal, so I encourage people to support that event from wherever they are in Queensland or, indeed, wherever they are across the country.

I want to highlight that one of the key topics during the committee hearing was in relation to the very successful Works for Queensland package: \$200 million committed to delivering for local governments across regional Queensland. There is now a total of \$600 million that is delivering for local governments right across the length and breadth of the state. It is a program, a package, a commitment, that local governments have respected and valued right across regional Queensland. There has been deafening silence from the other side in relation to that, of course, because they proposed to cut it ahead of the last election. That was their plan to support local government across regional Queensland.

Very importantly, in rural and remote Queensland we also have the \$120 million Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program and the State Government Financial Program, which Labor has indexed to deliver for those communities that are the most remote and the most disadvantaged in terms of providing the infrastructure that is important for their communities. A further example is \$20 million for the sea walls, drainage and groins on the five islands of the outer Torres Strait. I want to acknowledge the member for Cook and her advocacy for that. We will be seeking matching funding from the Commonwealth to ensure that that program delivers for those communities. It is the reality that across my three portfolio areas, including the commitment to rural resettlement and the work we are doing under the area of multicultural affairs, we are supporting the bush. We are supporting those communities that need it the most at the moment. Most significantly, as Queensland has always been a very decentralised state, it is important that we support those communities.

I thank the committee for its consideration of the budget. I thank the committee for its consideration of my portfolio areas. I commend its report to the House.