




Speech By
Hon. Yvette D'Ath

MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2018

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, Report

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (2.30 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee's 2018-19 budget estimates report. I thank the committee for not just their consideration of this report and the estimates process but more generally the work they do each and every day.

The estimates hearings were an important opportunity to report on the Palaszczuk government's significant investment in justice and reinforce our ongoing commitment to safer communities and providing the services and support Queenslanders need and deserve. We are investing in justice with important initiatives including: investments in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Director of Child Protection Litigation; strong judicial appointments; and more specialist domestic and family violence courts, with tenders now open for the new facilities to be built in Townsville. Our commitment to the *Not now, not ever* recommendations has led to more victims coming forward, knowing that they will be heard, supported and protected by a range of new services, shelters and laws.

The Palaszczuk government has also restored the Drug and Alcohol Court to tackle the underlying causes of criminal behaviour and to break the cycle of reoffending. This year's budget also included funding to make the Murri courts permanent. Again, this is another important initiative which has the power to change lives, reduce offending and create safer communities.

Australia's toughest and most effective laws to tackle serious and organised crime are having an impact. Our serious and organised crime regime tackles crimes ranging from child exploitation to boiler room fraud, outlaw motorcycle gangs and organised drug rings. To enable this further, we have boosted funding to the Crime and Corruption Commission to enhance its information security platform and deliver digital investigative services. There are now 28 bikie groups declared as identified organisations as we stamp out organised crime—most recently the Mongrel Mob and Satudarah. We are also working to keep our communities safe by tackling alcohol fuelled violence. We will continue to work with industry to ensure we have the most effective measures to keep Queenslanders safe.

I am proud of our record in government and welcomed the opportunity to answer questions about this portfolio. Estimates is an important part of our parliamentary processes. It is a time when non-government members have the opportunity to put questions to the government—questions relevant to the budget.

In saying this, I would like to put to rest the notion that somehow this estimates process gagged those opposite. I am advised that a quick tabulation of the sessions shows that the LNP received more than 64 per cent of the time allocated and asked 39 questions approximately. Over the seven days more than 1,000 questions were asked of ministers. The opposition were able to ask 669 questions over the seven days. That is almost 100 questions a day. More than 61 per cent of the time was allocated to the opposition. That is not the percentage for non-government members. The figure is

greater when the time of non-government members is added. It used to be fifty-fifty, but a larger proportion of the time—two-thirds of the time—was allocated to the opposition. I do not think they really have any credibility when they argue about the time allotted to them.

Ms Jones: Particularly when we look at what they did when they were in government.

Mrs D'ATH: I take that interjection from the minister. We only need to look at what the Newman government did with the estimates process.

In the time I have left I want to briefly touch on the member for Kawana. To my surprise, he asked most of the questions to the Crime and Corruption Commission—as opposed to the shadow Attorney-General, who got tapped on the shoulder to ask one or two questions at the end. I have seen some of the commentary around the member for Kawana's cufflinks, saying that this a trivial matter and that we should concentrate on important issues. Members in this House have heard me say time and time again that we have to be respectful. We have to be professional in the way we act in this place. We have to act like parliamentarians and not feed the cynicism of the public about what we are like as politicians. Whatever the 'F' and 'U' on the cufflinks actually stand for, when someone gets up in the morning, deliberately puts them on and positions their hands so that they are seen by the chair of the Crime and Corruption Commission while they are asking questions of him I think is completely disrespectful.

The member for Toowoomba South briefly said that I took a million dollars off the QFCC but then said that I have allocated millions of dollars for no-card no-start. Again, there is inconsistency in what we have just heard. We have allocated millions to it. We have allocated time to do this properly. Those opposite want to throw stones but they happily did nothing in relation to changing blue cards when they were in government.

(Time expired)