




Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**

**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2019

## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (3.50 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill that is before us today and acknowledge the best Treasurer that we have had in this state who has delivered and delivered big for the regions. Before I start, I would like to acknowledge Minister Enoch, who was on her feet earlier speaking about the Adani approvals. We know that workers in Townsville and the regions welcome that news. All we ask is that Adani delivers on the jobs and makes sure that it hires locals.

My area has received massive funding for infrastructure. Since we have been in government, about \$1 billion worth of infrastructure has been allocated to North Queensland. There have been allocations for the North Queensland Stadium, the Haughton water pipeline, the Powering North Queensland Plan, the port expansion, Riverway Drive and a number of other job-generating projects. To see the Townsville region receive a further allocation of \$930 million in this budget is fantastic news.

There is an allocation of \$36 million to the Townsville Ring Road stage 5 project. It is great that we have in the House at the moment the best Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I call on the newly elected federal member for Herbert, Phil Thompson, to deliver on that project. The federal government should stump up. It has made a commitment to get that job done. I do not want work being done on that project a year or two away; I want shovels in the ground as quickly as possible, because Townsville needs the jobs. That project will deliver over 200 jobs over two years. I welcome that.

Of course, that project is off the back of the Riverway Drive project, which saw \$100 million in investment from developers in opening up new shopping centres. The Townsville Ring Road stage 5 will allow a half a billion dollar residential development to go ahead by getting an interconnection on to the ring-road off Beck Drive. That interconnection will connect people to JCU, Townsville's biggest employer, the Townsville Hospital, and, of course, with Townsville being a garrison city, Lavarack Barracks. My area wants the jobs and that investment means more jobs in construction, retail and hospitality.

I thank Minister Bailey for the allocation of \$5 million to advance the intersection at Woodstock-Giru Road. Members are probably wondering why I am talking about that, because it is not in my electorate. That intersection upgrade also incorporates a rail crossing. That project is integral to two major job-generating proposals. The first one is Imperium 3, which is a battery manufacturing plant that we have already put \$1.3 million into—and I thank the Minister for State Development, Manufacturing, Infrastructure and Planning for that—because we want to see manufacturing brought back to North Queensland and to this state. I look forward to that proposal going ahead. It is supposed to generate over 1,000 jobs.

The second proposal is Drive It North Queensland, a motorsport and driver education precinct. It received \$12 million of federal funding. I am pleased that \$5 million has been allocated to this intersection upgrade as the director of Drive It North Queensland, Pat Driscoll, said in Tuesday's *Townsville Bulletin* that this money was as good as money directly into the project, because we need the intersection upgrade to access both of those proposals. In which electorate is Drive It proposed?

**Mr Whiting:** Tell me which electorate.

**Mr HARPER:** It is in the electorate of the Burdekin. The member for Burdekin should hang his head in shame, because in his time he has not lifted a finger and fought for an allocation of any money for either Imperium 3 or Drive It. It took a Labor member to deliver the allocation of \$5 million. These two proposals are catalysts for the generation of further jobs in the area. I am astounded that the member for Burdekin did not lift a finger for these proposals. He has not said anything. The member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Dametto, said in the paper that we should back Drive It and Imperium 3. That minor party has done nothing but give verbal support. It took a Labor member to get the \$5 million and I took forward to continuing to support both of those proposals.

In terms of education, there is an allocation of \$11 million to nine schools in my electorate of Thuringowa. There is an allocation of \$700,000 for a security fence at the Willows State School. Recently, I have been working with the P&C and the broader school community. I table a nonconforming petition of 45 parents and supporters who have given their support to get this fence to provide a safer environment.

*Tabled paper:* Nonconforming petition regarding Willows School Security Fencing [980](#).

They have had issues with vandalism, particularly over—

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr HARPER:** I have also done Heatley school, Rasmussen school and Heatley secondary school. All the schools in the Upper Ross are now done. They all have them. Again, it takes a Labor member to deliver. I was a Heatley kid and I went to Heatley high school. I table another letter because Minister Grace has announced \$12 million through the Renewing Our Schools program.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 11 June 2019, from the member for Thuringowa, Mr Aaron Harper MP, to the Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations, Hon. Grace Grace, regarding the Renewing Our Schools program [981](#).

The minister confirms that, through that program, Heatley Secondary College—and I have already acknowledged the security fencing—will also get the refurbishment of multiple learning spaces and amenities and new covered walkways. Being a former student of Heatley school, I am pretty proud to see that kind of money being allocated.

It does not stop there. There is \$400,000 to refurbish block 1 at Kelso State School. I say g'day to the principal of Kelso State School, Darrell Sard. That school is located only around the corner from where I live. It is a great little school. There is also \$400,000 to refurbish teaching block 5 at Weir State School, which is Townsville's oldest school. There is almost \$1.1 million for minor works for the nine schools in the Thuringowa electorate.

Brothers Leagues Club has received \$564,000 for new change rooms and amenities and to upgrade existing amenities. Yesterday, I spoke to the CEO, Justin Wilkins. He is very excited about that allocation. My son plays in the under-17s at Brothers and the allocation for these amenities is another investment in junior sport in my area.

Kirwan Ambulance Station is a place where I worked in 1990. Back then it had two officers. It was also my last posting in late 2014 before I was elected to this place where I served as acting officer in charge and it had a staff establishment of 44. That station has well and truly gone past its use-by date. There is an allocation of \$5 million to replace that station. I am very proud to see \$1.6 million in this budget to get that construction underway. I know the paramedics at that station. I thank the health minister for that allocation. The officers at that station will welcome that along with the announcement of 200 paramedics for Queensland. Being a former ambulance officer, I am absolutely rapt to see that.

I would also like to talk about Community Gro, which is a community centre in Rasmussen that services the Upper Ross area. I give a shout-out to Susan Perry and her team. They look after vulnerable people. That organisation received \$128,000 to provide programs to help individuals and community groups and also \$195,000, which they would not have known about, to help individuals and community groups participate positively in their community.

Our Back to Work program is amazing. It has been allocated \$2.194 million to date and has supported over 239 jobs in Thuringowa with the Regional Employment Package. I welcome the investment in our Skilling Queenslanders for Work. I welcome the investment in the budget for the Back

to Work Regional Fund, which we heard the Treasurer talk about. I also welcome the \$1.5 million to FEAT, an organisation that looks after vulnerable and homeless people, and the \$1.5 million for a public housing initiative. This budget delivers more jobs in construction and more jobs for Thuringowa locals. I am fully supportive of this budget. We will keep building. We will keep delivering. There is nearly \$930 million in infrastructure in the budget. We welcome it. Thank you, Treasurer. I endorse the bills.