




Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (8.54 pm): As enjoyable as it has been listening to Labor's revisionist history of Queensland, I rise to address this irresponsible and ill-conceived state budget. It is a budget delivered by Anna Bligh's apprentice Jackie Trad and it shows. It is a budget of waste and mismanagement. It is a budget of higher taxes, more debt and less jobs. It is a budget that shifts the responsibility for paying down Queensland's massive state debt to the next generation, or the one after that. It is a budget that shows that when Labor run out of money they come after yours. It is a deceptive budget that gives with one hand and takes with the other.

The most concerning aspect of this budget is the government's addiction to more debt and taxes. There will be nine new taxes in this term alone, despite a promise not to introduce any new taxes. As I said, this is a budget that gives with one hand and takes with the other. The government's land tax changes are a case in point. In many cases, the beneficiaries of the government's changes to payroll tax are the exact same entities that will be hit with a higher land tax impost. The tourism industry is the perfect example. Many of those investing in new accommodation capacity in Queensland will be hit hard by the increases in land tax. Given that the Treasurer tried to paint this budget as a jobs budget, it seems a little curious why she would choose to impose a punitive, job-destroying tax on the very businesses that will create the jobs that this budget supposedly champions. It is perverse logic.

The biggest concern for residents within my electorate is the crippling cost of living. It is a concern for residents because they have to live within their means. Families and retirees are breaking under the weight of escalating electricity, water, food, fuel and housing costs. Despite that, Sunshine Coast residents have been slugged with even more new taxes under this Labor state government. Those opposite will contend that the taxes they have imposed will not impact families and retirees, but the facts do not support their argument. Chris Mountford of the Property Council said—

It is simply not accurate to suggest these taxes won't be paid by Queenslanders, or won't affect job creating investment in the state.

Almost all of the properties that will be impacted by this tax hike are home to businesses employing thousands of Queenslanders in industries like manufacturing, tourism, logistics and trade.

Under this government, Queensland families now owe \$67,000 each. That is their share of this Labor government's skyrocketing debt. That is their reward for working hard and supporting this 'good' Labor budget. The government contends that the increase in debt is required to fund investment in infrastructure. However, the facts tell a different story. Across the forward estimates, the budget delivers \$23 million less infrastructure spending compared to last year's budget.

We all know that Labor is fond of blaming the federal government for all of their failings. They say that the Feds do not care about Queensland and that they cannot work with them. Clearly Queensland voters think otherwise given their recent condemnation at the federal election. Let us look at what the facts say. The facts show that Queensland has the second lowest infrastructure spending as a

percentage of gross state product in the country. The facts say that the New South Wales state government contributes 93 per cent of all infrastructure spending, with the Feds picking up only the remaining seven per cent, while this Queensland Labor state government contributes only 79 per cent of infrastructure spending, with the federal government committing 21 per cent. The Feds are pulling their weight; it is time for Queensland Labor to pull theirs.

In delivering this budget, the Treasurer has even abandoned any pretence of trying to stabilise and pay down debt. Treasurer Jackie Trad has given up on trying to restore Queensland's AAA credit rating, which her master Anna Bligh lost. Contrast this with the measured and considered approach articulated by the leader of the LNP, Deb Frecklington, in her budget reply today.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Member for Buderim, I would counsel you to keep on referring to people by their correct titles. I know you have done that, but I would again remind you to do that.

Mr MICKELBERG: Our objective of regaining the state's AAA credit rating is what is required. By ensuring that we maintain a fiscal balance over the economic cycle, we will stabilise Labor's debt and begin repaying it. We know this will take time, but we will achieve this without divesting assets and without forced redundancies. It is responsible management for the people of Queensland. It is the plan that Queensland needs and it is the plan that Queensland deserves.

Since Jackie Trad became Treasurer, Queenslanders have seen expenditure growth outstrip revenue by 3.9 per cent.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. You have given the member very generous guidance and he has in fact done the exact opposite to the guidance you have just given when he corrected himself.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: As I said—

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Can I have silence, please. Can I remind members to address people by their titles or by electorates. There is no need to add in their name. We are very direct about that and everybody knows that rule. I counsel everyone to adhere to the standing orders.

Ms SIMPSON: I rise to a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. Can I just clarify this? If the member mentions the correct title and adds their name that is still correct under the standing orders, as we understand them. I take it your direction is actually that they firstly mention their title?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for that. I have given fairly specific directions on that. I will have some consultations in a moment, but please continue.

Mr MICKELBERG: Since the inept and incompetent member for South Brisbane became the Treasurer, Queenslanders have seen expenditure growth outstrip revenue growth by 3.9 per cent. It is the Labor way—rack up expenditure now and deal with the problem later—but it is not right.

In this budget Labor has failed the Sunshine Coast yet again. The Sunshine Coast is a great place to live, but this Labor state government needs to do more to support the massive population growth we are experiencing. It is time for Labor to put aside the political pointscore and invest the money to solve the problems that affect locals every single day—issues like traffic congestion, community safety and providing better health services.

The Sunshine Coast population is expected to grow by almost 200,000 new residents over the next two decades. Traffic congestion on the Sunshine Coast is getting worse and we need to plan much better for the future. This budget was an opportunity to solve some of those challenges, but yet again the government has dropped the ball.

This is a budget that goes part of the way to addressing some of those issues, but what we have seen announced is simply not enough. Many of the funding commitments contained in the budget are recycled announcements with no new money. Projects like the six-laning of the Bruce Highway between Caloundra and Caboolture and the duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line need to be a priority for Labor, not just the Sunshine Coast community. It is time for the Labor state government to stop playing politics and commit to fully fund these projects, just as a future Deb Frecklington LNP government will.

Traffic congestion and road safety is a massive issue on the Sunshine Coast. Locals tell me they are sick of sitting in the parking lot that is the Bruce Highway. They tell me they are sick of seeing accidents on the dangerous Mooloolah River interchange at Mountain Creek. They tell me that they worry about the safety of their children on local roads at school pick-up times.

At Chancellor State College in Sippy Downs we have Scholars Drive, which is a gridlocked and dangerous mess. Parents, teachers and students have to deal with Scholars Drive every single day, but despite countless calls for the state government to work with the Sunshine Coast council to solve

this issue, the Premier and her ministers continue to ignore the problem. The safety of our kids is paramount and this is sadly being compromised by the current government's lack of funding to address this critical issue.

The Bruce Highway between Caloundra and Caboolture remains a congested and dangerous stretch of road that results in people not getting home to their families at the end of their work day. On a Sunday afternoon locals and tourists alike know that the Bruce Highway will be a crawl all the way back to Caboolture. For those who choose to do battle with the traffic jams, the congestion sometimes doubles the time it should take to drive between the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane. That is not good enough. Tourism operators on the Sunshine Coast tell me that the parlous state of the Bruce Highway results in fewer overnight stays from the drive market, which is so important to our local economy.

More needs to be done to ensure that the Bruce Highway is safe, flood resilient and able to cope with population growth already happening on the Sunshine Coast. The government will say that they are working on upgrading the highway up to the Sunshine Motorway, which is true, but more needs to be done. The problem is there for all to see and so too is the solution. The LNP federal government has already committed to funding the vital works needed to widen the stretch of road between Caloundra and Caboolture to six lanes, but still the Labor state government stalls. All that is left is for them to take the offer that is on the table.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of this budget is the failure to fund the urgently needed upgrades at the Sugar Road-Mooloolaba Road interchange, otherwise known as the Buderim-Mooloolaba interchange. This is an important issue that my community and I have campaigned on since 2017. I recently met with the minister and Transport and Main Roads staff on site and they recognised the problems which need urgent remediation. I am concerned that every day we waste on starting construction of these vital upgrades is another day closer to a motor vehicle accident and a death that could otherwise have been prevented.

I know that funding is projected for some time between 2021 and 2023, but we need action now. After the minister took the time to inspect the site and now obviously understands the issues, I was hopeful that he would make fixing the problem a priority. I ask the minister to work with me to rectify this significant road safety risk in a timely fashion.

While on the subject of transport, I was disappointed, but not surprised, to see this Labor state government is still playing politics on duplicating the Sunshine Coast rail line. The 39 kilometres of track that runs between Beerburrum and Nambour is a single track with poor alignment that results in limited services and all too often considerable delays for commuters. The LNP federal government has already committed 50 per cent of the funding for this project so it is appalling that Labor continue to hold Sunshine Coast commuters to ransom by not stumping up its share.

As rail advocate Jeff Addison recently identified, Queensland Labor continues to spite the Sunshine Coast through its failure to fund its fair share for duplication of the Sunshine Coast rail line. This is despite the fact that both the LNP and Labor at a state level have previously committed 100 per cent of the funding for the very same project.

Let us not forget that the amount of money that the state government is arguing about is less than five per cent of the cost of Cross River Rail. Let us also not forget that the state Labor government committed to passenger train services all the way to Caloundra by 2015 and to Maroochydore by 2020. A Labor government document from May 2007 identified—

As the Sunshine Coast grows in popularity and size, so too does the demand for public transport and infrastructure. To meet this growing demand, the Queensland Government is committed to building a new rail line that will service the Sunshine Coast and provide a direct link to Brisbane.

Apparently that commitment was one of those that Labor gives when it does not really mean it. I table that document.

Tabled paper: Document, dated May 07, titled 'Transport Planning on Sunshine Coast—Caloundra South CAMCOS Realignment Study' [982](#).

As the leader of the LNP, Deb Frecklington, observed, the only way Sunshine Coast residents are going to get decent rail services is to up sticks and move to Jackie Trad's electorate of South Brisbane or—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Buderim, I have said this a number of times.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will have silence while I continue to counsel the member for Buderim. I emphasise it is in the standing orders to refer to members by their title or their electorate.

Mr MICKELBERG: Thank you for your counsel, Mr Deputy Speaker. As the leader of the Liberal National Party, Deb Frecklington, identified, the only way Sunshine Coast residents are going to get decent rail services is to up sticks and move to South Brisbane. Alternatively they could vote for an LNP state government in October 2020. We will get the job done, unlike Labor, which is only interested in propping up its jobs in this place.

The one positive light for the Buderim electorate in this budget is in the area of education. This budget acknowledges the need for more schools on the Sunshine Coast. I am pleased that the minister has listened to the community's voice in that respect. I, along with my community, have been calling for new schools in Palmview and the commitment to building a new primary and special school is an important step to support the explosion in student numbers we have seen.

The commitment for these two projects of some \$34 million this financial year is a good start, but the job is only half done. We need a new secondary school sooner rather than later so that existing schools like Chancellor State College are not placed under even more pressure than they currently are.

The allocation of funding for early stage works is not enough. It is time to stop talking about a new secondary school in Palmview and time to start building it. The minister has indicated that a new high school in Palmview is planned to open at the start of 2023. Given this fact, I am concerned that we will have year 6 students graduating from the new Palmview primary school at the end of 2021 who will then need to attend another school for their first year of high school. This may see Palmview students attend three different schools in three years. I know from my own time at school that moving to a new school is challenging and disruptive. With timely investment, the government can ensure that any new Palmview secondary school is ready to open at the start of 2022, ensuring that the first graduates from the Palmview primary school are able to enrol in their first year of high school.

Residents on the Sunshine Coast tell me that they are losing sleep over the increase in youth crime in our suburbs. This state government's first obligation is to ensure the safety of Queenslanders everywhere. Our local police do an amazing job with the resources they have, but more needs to be done. I was hoping to see an increase in funding for local police in this budget, but it is clear that again we have been let down on that front.

I will continue to fight for the Buderim electorate. I am pleased that the community's voice has been heard on some of the local issues that we are facing, but much more needs to be done. I remain committed to working to deliver the investment that is required to support the growing needs of my community and to ensuring that a future LNP government is able to stem the rising tide of debt and mismanagement currently afflicting this great state.