



Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2019


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Education, Employment and Small Business Committee, Report

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (3.16 pm): I rise to talk on 2019-20 budget estimates for the portfolios examined by the Education, Employment and Small Business Committee. I thank the chair, the deputy chair and members of the committee for the great work they put in. I also thank the secretariat. I thank the departmental staff who put hours into making sure the correct answers are available.

This is the fifth estimates I have been involved in since being elected and nothing much has changed. We are still hearing the same questions from the other side. They are not interested in talking about policy. We are talking about an education budget of over \$13 billion and an education budget that is ensuring great things are being done in the schools in the city of Maryborough and the electorate of Maryborough.

I will go through what the minister was talking about during the estimates committee hearing. St Helens State School in Maryborough has funding of \$200,000 for upgrades and a hall. Maryborough Central State School has funding of \$210,000 to upgrade the school. Maryborough State High School, a great Maryborough school—and we all know that the legendary TJ Ryan taught there—has funding of \$11 million to upgrade that school. That is added to the funding in the last budget of \$4½ million for a performing arts hall. This is absolutely fantastic for the education of future generations in Maryborough.

Yesterday's headline in the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* was 'Mary's making a comeback'. I table the article.

Tabled paper: Extract, dated 21 August 2019, from the Facebook page of the member for Maryborough, Mr Bruce Saunders MP, in relation to article, undated, from the *Fraser Coast Chronicle*, titled 'Mary's making a comeback' [1313](#).

This is the difference that can be made with a great government. Five years ago Maryborough was classified as the next Detroit city in Queensland. There we have yesterday's headline in the *Fraser Coast Chronicle*—'Mary's making a comeback'. That is due to the great efforts of the Palaszczuk Labor government and the money we are spending in education and what we are doing in the community. This is part of what a Labor government does. A Labor government always invests in regional Queensland. We always put money into education because we know how important education is for the future of not only this great state but also this great nation.

I wish to talk about the minister, the member for Waterford, and what is happening in the great space of training and skills development and small business in my electorate. Skilling Queenslanders for Work is a great program. I am hearing so much good news. I was talking to a gentleman in my electorate the other day whose son did a Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. He said to me that it has changed his life. He used to walk around looking at the ground. He never looked up, because he never had the confidence. He did a Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. Not only does he have the confidence now, but guess what he got out of the program? He got a job. That is something we do well on this side of the House: we provide employment. We look after people to make sure that they have a future. They have aspirations to have a house and a family, but they cannot do that without a job. It has been fantastic.

We heard the opposition going on about the Back to Work program. Back to Work has been a very, very successful program instigated by the Palaszczuk Labor government once again. They are two great programs that have made Maryborough a fantastic city again as they have put young people back into work in the Maryborough electorate. That is exactly what we do.

I would like to thank both ministers because they sat there and answered the questions, as did the directors-general and all of the other staff who had to answer questions. They were not put under any pressure. It was like being hit with a wet lettuce leaf. Our ministers handled it very well. I am looking forward to next year's estimates because this Palaszczuk Labor government is going to deliver in spades this year on education and training and skills and small business throughout Queensland and particularly in the Maryborough electorate.

I cannot thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all of the ministers enough because this is a government that is delivering for regional Queensland. It is delivering, as I said earlier, in spades. You can tell because when you talk to people they are engaging with us. They want to talk about education. They want to talk about their children going to Maryborough High and getting a great education so they can compete not only within the state and within Australia but on the world platform. They can go anywhere in this world with their education. That is what a traditional Labor government does. I commend the report to the House.