




Speech By  
**Colin Boyce**

**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

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Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2019

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

 **Mr BOYCE** (Callide—LNP) (10.26 pm): I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill 2019. The first comment that I would like to make is in regard to the following statement of the Treasurer in her budget speech, 'This government was not counting on a federal Labor win at the recent election.' Is the Treasurer serious? This is a total confirmation and display of the arrogance and contempt that the Labor Party shows and has for the people of Queensland. It is plainly obvious that both the Premier and the Treasurer think that they can say anything and expect the people of Queensland to believe them. Not so. In relation to the Carmichael mine, the Premier has said that she is fed up with the process. Really? This is a process that she has implemented. If the Labor Party in Queensland is not interested in the recent federal election result, why the double somersault backflip on the Carmichael coalmine proposal?

Coal pays the bills. Royalties from the resources sector are forecast to rise to \$5.3 billion this financial year. The people of Queensland have spoken loud and clear. They want the coal industry to prosper. They want their jobs in the industry. They want the security this brings. They want reliable, affordable coal-fired power. The Queensland electorate has given two for the Valley to the Labor-Greens policy alliance. Yet the Treasurer and her assistant, the Premier, remain as arrogant as ever. This budget is about tax, tax, tax and more debt. In simple terms, the government is spending more than it is making and that is a recipe for economic disaster.

Without a doubt the big elephant in the budget is the Cross River Rail project—a project the Treasurer is pursuing with the will of the devil. It is a 10.2 kilometre rail line between Dutton Park and Bowen Hills and includes a 5.9 kilometre tunnel under the Brisbane River. There has been \$1.48 billion allocated to this project this financial year. It has been estimated that, when complete and operational, Cross River Rail may be somewhere in the vicinity of a \$15 billion project when we take into account the building of the tunnel, the rolling stock required, the control systems, the rail infrastructure, the train stations and the developments.

It is a public transport system that for any government will be a continuing cost impost—in operations, maintenance and subsidy. I bet the people of the Callide electorate do not know that the South-East Queensland general public transport concessions already amount to \$1.4 billion. That means that every time you get on a train or a bus in South-East Queensland you are subsidised to the tune of \$1,400 million. What pays for this? Coal! The risk is that a one per cent movement in the Australian-US exchange range equates to approximately \$74 million; a one per cent variation in metallurgical and thermal coal volumes would lead to a change in royalty revenue of approximately \$37 million; or a one million tonne production variation would lead to a change in royalty revenue of approximately \$19 million. The point is that to make huge commitments on non-profit infrastructure is a huge risk given the volatility of the resource export market.

This is a budget about Brisbane, tax, tax, tax and more debt and rural and regional Queensland can pay for it. The Callide electorate can pay for it. The Callide electorate resource sector contributes \$1.2 billion to the Queensland economy and yet the Callide electorate barely rates a mention in the

budget. I note that there is a budget allocation of over \$21 million for bikeways in inner city Brisbane yet there is nothing in the budget that goes anything near addressing the forecast \$9 billion shortfall in road maintenance funding. There is a current \$4.2 billion shortfall. Bridge and culvert refurbishment is operating at 19 per cent of its budget need. Road resheeting is operating at 16 per cent of its budget need.

How can the government spruik about its road infrastructure program when it is doing very little to address the maintenance needs of the road assets throughout the state? The \$21 million allocation to bikeways in Brisbane could have gone to the Calliope-Monto Road where a constant stream of logging trucks, 50 a day, have smashed the road to pieces, so much so that recently the school bus had to stop operating because the state of the road is so bad. Incidentally, these logging trucks are carting timber from the Kalpowar plantation forest, a state government asset sold by the Labor government for \$600 million.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Pause the clock. There is too much noise in the chamber. If you want to have a conversation take it outside.

**Mr BOYCE:** This timber is taken to the Gladstone port and is bound for China. The \$21 million Brisbane bikeway allocation could have gone to the sealing of the 15-kilometre section of the Monto Mount Perry Road or the 17-kilometre section of Gayndah Mount Perry Road. There are dozens and dozens of bridges and culverts that need replacing in the Callide electorate, all on state owned roads, and what do we see? Very little in the budget as far as maintenance to these vital arterial and connection roads.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Again there is too much noise in the chamber. Take your conversations outside or I will warn you for disorderly conduct. Member for Gladstone, your interjections are not being taken.

**Mr BOYCE:** The Treasurer has allocated \$85.7 million to overhauls and refurbishment of the Callide Power Station at Biloela, a further \$84.6 million to the Kogan Creek Power Station at Chinchilla and \$1.8 million to the Kogan Creek coalmine which supplies the power station—a necessary expense—but there is nothing in the budget to enhance the capacity of our baseload coal-fired generating fleet. The AGL Liddell Power Station in New South Wales is due to close in a few years time. Liddell Power Station provides approximately 30 per cent of New South Wales' baseload power and when this closes who will they look to to provide the energy shortfall? More than likely Queensland.

If Queensland does not increase its baseload generating capacity then the future will bring load sharing and blackouts for Queensland. What will happen to the ageing coal-fired power generator at Gladstone which supplies the alumina smelter at Boyne Island with power? Under a 50 per cent renewable energy target implemented by the Labor-Greens alliance government it is likely they will both close. Renewable energy cannot supply reliable 24/7 baseload power. This has been proven in Victoria and South Australia late last year and early this year. Furthermore, if this scenario played out, Rio Tinto would then likely take its bauxite production to China to be smeltered into aluminium at the cost of thousands of Queensland jobs.

It is too late to fix this foreseeable problem when it happens. We need to look to the future and increase our coal-fired energy production now. The coal industry, the gas industry and the coal-fired power generating industry has been stifled, taxed and shot in the foot by the green Trad budget.

The Callide electorate is a huge agricultural producer and a major employer, but do we see any support in the budget for this vital industry? Precious little. What is being done to address the soaring power and water prices for irrigation farmers? The Callide irrigation scheme at Biloela has seen the largest water increases in the state of \$74 a megalitre. Power prices have increased 130 per cent over the last 10 years. There is no commitment to much needed water infrastructure to provide water security to irrigators in the Callide electorate. The Cooranga Weir on the Boyne River at Mundubbera has been ignored. The weir is a \$30 million project which would provide assurance and security to the \$100 million fruit and berry industry around Mundubbera.

Support for money-making industries has been overlooked in the Callide electorate in favour of things like more green space at South Bank, 10 more bureaucrats in the Premier's office and \$300,000 spent on the fraud Al Gore. This is bordering on criminal economic incompetence and, if I can echo the words of the member for Clayfield in his address, perhaps the Treasurer is looking for a crime led economic recovery.

The health system in the Callide electorate is failing, all at the hands of an incompetent, bumbling health minister, a man who would rather see the renaming of the Lady Cilento hospital to the tune of hundreds of thousands of dollars rather than address the rural birthing crisis at Chinchilla and Theodore

in the Callide electorate. This is a man who has told me he has no power to overrule the decision made by the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Board when the act clearly states he can give a written directive in the public interest, a minister who has implemented burgers and fries on demand rather than making sure rural women get the medical care they need.

This government has implemented nine new taxes and debt is forecast to reach \$90 billion. Tax, tax, tax and more debt. There is no mention of addressing this spiralling debt situation. The financial management of the business of Queensland is nothing short of appalling, led by an incompetent Treasurer and an out-of-touch Labor government. I wonder how long it will be before ACTU boss Sally McManus makes the phone call to the Palaszczuk government and demands the implementation of the death tax. That worked out very well for the 'Biliary' Shorten camp—but of course those opposite are not interested in the federal election result. Bring on 2020 so the quiet Queenslanders can boot the Labor government and install a Frecklington LNP government so we can begin to repair Labor's financial mess.

I finish my contribution by commenting on the statements made by the Assistant Treasurer, the member for Gladstone, in the local newspaper, the *Gladstone Observer*, on 11 June 2019. The member for Gladstone and Assistant Treasurer said that he regards the budget, which is a plan for the state's prosperity, as 'putting your Christmas list out'. Obviously he is a financial child genius who thinks that Santa will fix it! The member for Gladstone has neglected to put in his Christmas list the much needed traffic lights at the intersection of Drynan Drive and the Dawson Highway at Calliope, which is part of the road safety requirements in relation to the new high school being built at Calliope. I cannot wait for him to explain that in his speech to the people of Calliope when he opens the new school later this year. Bring on 2020!