




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

Record of Proceedings, 4 April 2019

MOTION

Federal Budget

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Industrial Relations) (11.58 am): I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier, and why would we not support it? We see those opposite getting up here pontificating about money coming to Queensland not after this election but the election after. We actually have to elect the Morrison government twice before any money flows. It is extraordinary. They get up here and they claim all this money, which is four years away—in the 'onwards' and the never-never, in a land far, far away. They get up and they run off all of this money which is not even due at this election. If they were successful—and we do not know what is going to happen there—we would have to wait for the election after that one, and they pontificate that that is good for Queensland.

Those opposite want to ignore the federal budget. This is supposed to be a trivial motion. This is about money coming to Queensland, money that Queensland taxpayers pay and this state not getting its fair share, yet they claim this is a trivial motion. They must have buried their heads so far in the sand when it comes to the inept Abbott-Turnbull-Morrison government that they cannot see the forest for the trees. That is the problem with those opposite. Let me say what I would have loved to have seen in this budget. We do not ask for much: we just want our fair share.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: Every single one of those members interjecting come to me for money for their schools. They all have their hands out, each and every one of them, and we are spending tens of millions of dollars on their schools.

Do you know what I would like to have seen in the budget, Mr Speaker? I would like to have seen an extra \$14 billion for public schools over the next decade, ensuring that every child in every school is better off and that over the next three years Queensland will receive an extra \$650 million. That is what I would like to have seen. Do you know who has promised that? Labor has promised that! I would also like to have seen the introduction of a new four-year \$1.75 billion national partnership agreement with states that will provide universal access to kindergarten in the year before school and extending access to kindergarten for three-year-olds. Do you know who has promised that \$1.75 billion over four years? Labor!

Do you know what those opposite have promised in the federal LNP budget? They have promised another 12-month extension. That is six years of extensions. They have had six years in government to negotiate with the states on long-term concrete funding for this important education area—early childhood kindergarten—in this state. Do you know what they did instead? They negotiated with a foundation that did not even put in a submission and gave them half a billion dollars. Then they gave another half a billion dollars to a company that had a shack on Kangaroo Island. That equates to \$1 billion. Then they wasted \$185 million on a political stunt to open and close Christmas Island. It is an absolute disgrace!

We have had nothing but chaos and cuts under this government. They take with one hand and give very little—the crumbs—with the other. Lord help us if we have to sustain ourselves further on the cuts and chaos that is happening federally, particularly under this budget. The most heartfelt issue for me is that there is not one extra dollar in education for students with a disability—not one extra dollar. The state public system educates 85 to 90 per cent of all children with a disability in this state, and they did not give us any extra funding for the teachers and parents who do a remarkable job in these schools right throughout Queensland. I would like to have seen \$300 million for that sector, but do you know who has promised that? Labor has promised that, not those opposite. They have cut us short in every kind of way.

When you talk about flat wages in this state, there is nothing about labour hire—doing a measly little thing with that. There are no extra inspectors. They have once again downgraded wage growth in this state. If you want to get the economy working, put money in the pockets of workers. With the changes to penalty rates and what they have taken out of their pockets, the tax cuts are nothing more than bracket creep. That is all it is, and it is not enough. This budget fails on every measure. I support the motion.