




Speech By
Jarrold Bleijie

MEMBER FOR KAWANA

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2019

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

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (12.24 pm): This is certainly a Labor budget—higher taxes, record debt and absolutely nothing for the Sunshine Coast. After 4½ years, Labor’s legacy for Queensland is a massive debt bomb of \$90 billion, nine new taxes, one of the worst unemployment rates in the country and a youth jobs crisis all over regional Queensland. This is a budget of higher taxes, more debt, fewer jobs and certainly less infrastructure.

Under Labor’s new tax-everything-that-moves regime, \$1.25 billion will be ripped out of our economy over the next four years. This is, of course, on top of the \$2.2 billion ripped out by the government’s last budget. These new taxes on top of the previous five from the last budget will hit households and businesses in every corner of this state. After 4½ years in office, Labor has no economic plan for Queensland other than to tax Queensland families and businesses. Queenslanders, however, are a smart bunch of good people and they will easily see through the rhetoric of this government.

Members would recall that the 2017 budget was trumpeted as a ‘jobs bonanza’ and then we ended up with the highest unemployment rate in Australia at 6.5 per cent. Still, as at April this year, almost 160,000 Queenslanders were out of a job and looking for work. Last year’s budget was promised as an ‘infrastructure bonanza’ but then, as reported through the media, in 2018-19 Queensland had the second lowest infrastructure spend as a percentage of gross state product at 1.75 per cent, ahead only of the ACT. When the Treasurer comes out crowing that we have had to ‘borrow to build’ in this budget, you would forgive Queenslanders for choking on their Weet-Bix, particularly when the 2019 budget papers show infrastructure investment next year will be more than half a billion dollars less than stated in the 2018 state budget.

Labor always talks big on infrastructure but never delivers it. The Premier likes to talk about infrastructure, but we know that she has invested less in infrastructure than any premier in living memory. We know that Treasurer Trad is the worst Treasurer in Queensland’s recent history—

An opposition member: Ever in history.

Mr BLEIJIE: Worst ever in history. Treasurer Trad is worse than former treasurer Anna Bligh. She is worse than former treasurer Andrew Fraser. Treasurer Trad is the worst Treasurer in Queensland’s history, delivering the biggest debt bomb that Queenslanders have ever seen. That is what you would expect with Queensland’s worst ever Treasurer. It will be forever etched in the history books of Queensland that Treasurer Trad, the member for South Brisbane, is Queensland’s worst ever Treasurer. It will take years for Queensland to recover. It will take years to pay down the debt that Treasurer Trad, the worst Queensland Treasurer ever, has presided over.

The good people on the Sunshine Coast, and in particular my constituents in Kawana, know exactly what this government thinks of them. For years the Labor government has refused to deliver any significant infrastructure project, despite the fact the Sunshine Coast is one of the largest regional

communities and economies in the country and the second highest performing regional economy in our state. Yet past and present Labor governments continue to arrogantly thumb their nose at the residents of the Sunshine Coast.

In contrast, the LNP has a record of delivering for the Sunshine Coast. We funded and we delivered the \$2 billion Sunshine Coast University Hospital after years and years of delay by Labor.

Government members interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: The members squawking over there, particularly the Minister for Main Roads, were not here when Queensland's second worst treasurer Andrew Fraser delayed the Sunshine Coast University Hospital in his budget only months after the election. The Sunshine Coast community fought back, and in 2012 when the LNP were elected the first thing we did was get the deal done and start building the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. We got it finished on time and ahead of budget.

At the most recent state election we committed to delivering the Mooloolah River interchange and the Caloundra Road upgrade—two critical road infrastructure projects to support the hospital, ease congestion on Nicklin Way and better connect Caloundra, Kawana, Mooloolaba and Maroochydore.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I take the interjection from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. The only party that has sold assets in Queensland is the Labor Party. The only time assets have been sold in Queensland was when the member for Inala sat at the cabinet table with Queensland's third-worst treasurer Anna Bligh and did the deal to sell assets. We are not going to cop the member for Miller coming in here and talking about assets when he is part of the only party in Queensland that has sold Queensland's assets. The only party that sold assets was the Labor Party.

This budget delivers nothing—no infrastructure plan or deliverables—for the Sunshine Coast by way of funding critical infrastructure projects to bust congestion on the Sunshine Coast. We also promised to deliver our 50 per cent share of the Sunshine Coast rail duplication which we know the federal government agreed to fund 50 per cent of. Labor's failure to commit their share has meant there is now a \$230 million black hole, putting the whole project at risk. Sunshine Coast commuter advocate Jeff Addison said yesterday in the *Sunshine Coast Daily*—

\$50 million would be lucky to build you 1.5km of a rail line.

He went on to say, 'We're deliberately being strangled with our infrastructure' by this Labor government. 'The people of the Sunshine Coast deserve better.'

Too right we deserve better than the minister that the CCC called a fool, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I am sure we will hear more crowing from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads about an 80-20 funding split, but if that were the case why did federal Labor only commit to matching the Morrison government's 50 per cent funding promise? So it is okay for federal Labor to do it but not state Labor. As Jeff Addison said yesterday, 'Enough of the games. You have no more excuses left in the locker.'

Rather than securing the funding package this government has left a \$230 million black hole, putting a question mark over this project. It is an absolute disgrace, especially considering Labor first promised to build the rail duplication way back when the Premier, Anastacia Palaszczuk, was the transport minister in the Bligh government. We know that the only rail project this Treasurer—the worst treasurer in Queensland's history—ever cares about is Cross River Rail in her own electorate. The worst treasurer in Queensland's history is happy to fund 100 per cent of the rail projects in her backyard, but the people of the Sunshine Coast are not as worthy of that commitment as the people of South Brisbane. The people of the Sunshine Coast and regional Queensland will not forget that from the worst ever Queensland treasurer.

This government has time and time again demonstrated their absolute contempt for the people of the Sunshine Coast. There was no announcement of funding to six-lane the Bruce Highway between Caloundra and Caboolture despite the fact that once again the Morrison government has put the money on the table. There was no money to fast-track stage 3 of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, meaning that more patients will not be seen within clinically recommended times. There is no money for a Sunshine Coast convention centre and no money for the Sunshine Coast stadium revamp. With Elton John coming in March next year, it would have come in handy. They expect 20,000 people at our stadium, and guess how many seats we have in the Sunshine Coast stadium. There are 1,000. We are expecting 20,000 people to turn up to the Elton John concert in March 2020.

Quite clearly this is no infrastructure budget. Quite clearly this is not a budget for jobs. This is not a budget about the cost of living because it increases the cost of living and introduces new taxes to Queenslanders and businesses right across the state. It is a disaster budget for the Sunshine Coast. It is bad news for health, bad news for jobs, bad news for opportunities and bad news for congestion on the Sunshine Coast.

If you look at the Education portfolio that I oversee as the shadow minister for education, it is again failing young Queenslanders. Ten out of 12 NAPLAN targets were missed for all Queenslanders, with just 66.4 per cent of all year 9 students meeting national minimum standards for year 9 writing. Ten out of 12 NAPLAN targets were missed for Indigenous Queenslanders, with just 41.9 per cent reaching the national minimum standards for year 9 writing. Whilst this government and this minister simply try to blame the test, NAPLAN—a test they introduced at a federal level in 2008—the LNP recognises that we need to give more support to our teachers and make learning easier for our kids.

Teachers are under more and more pressure with a crowded curriculum, and student results are suffering as a result. We should be learning from New South Wales and Victoria and giving our teachers the best opportunities to excel. We need to get back to the basics, making sure that our kids know the fundamentals. That is why a future LNP government would ensure a greater focus on language, literacy and numeracy. A future LNP government would partner with teachers, parents and principals to develop more guidance for teachers through the Queensland Curriculum Assessment Authority. Our plan to get back to basics and declutter the curriculum will give our kids a better chance of acquiring the skills they need while taking pressure off teaching staff.

We understand that getting the right education and training foundation will ensure more jobs and greater job security for future generations. Unfortunately for Queenslanders, Labor is not planning for the future schools that Queensland needs and many of our current schools are bursting at the seams. That is because Labor again scrapped the LNP's nation-leading Schools Planning Commission and is ignoring our 20-year demand mapping report which was released in 2013.

The only plan Labor has for new schools is pork-barrelling the education minister and the Deputy Premier's seats. We are going to have a 100 per cent funding commitment for rail in the Deputy Premier's seat and we will have schools delivered in the Deputy Premier's seat. Over one-third of the money for new schools is going towards the education minister and Deputy Premier's electorates in inner-city Brisbane. If only the Deputy Premier had known that the decision on Adani was going to be made yesterday, she would have put money into Toohey or Stretton and not South Brisbane. I think she has chosen the wrong electorate to be pork-barrelling.

The LNP fundamentally believes that through the independent public school program principals, P&Cs, parents and stakeholders are best placed to make decisions about what will provide the best outcomes for their schools and their students. Since the introduction of independent public schools we have seen innovative partnerships between schools, universities and industry groups and expanded music programs through partnerships with nearby schools and primary schools working with kindergartens to ensure school readiness.

More than 250 school communities have seized the opportunity to take more control of their own affairs. In my electorate of Kawana every single state school made the decision to become an independent public school. We know that this Labor government hates the idea of independent public schools because it means less power for their union masters. That is why this government has refused to guarantee independent public schools beyond 2020 and, in doing so, have waged war on these principals, P&Cs, parents, teachers and students of the 250 Queensland independent public schools. We know that the union never supported the policy, which is all about letting local principals, teachers and parents run their schools with more autonomy and less central bureaucracy from Brisbane.

Investing in education and our students is critical to the future of our state. We want our kids to be the smartest in the nation, and that is our goal. We know that cool kids are smart kids. That is why we have made a commitment to air-condition every state school classroom in Queensland. Over the past 12 months I have travelled to many regions in Queensland, visiting schools with students and teachers sweltering their way through 40-degree temperatures in the classroom. As a father of three myself, I cannot recall the number of times my kids have come home complaining about the heat in their classrooms. Labor's announcement of an extra \$100 million of new money to air-condition additional classrooms is nothing more than an 'air-con con'. The Premier stood up and claimed it was new money for regions outside the Cooler Schools Zone, but that is ridiculous. It is not.

If we look at the industrial relations portfolio, we might as well get rid of the title 'industrial relations' and just call it the 'Department of the CFMMEU' because what the CFMMEU wants, the CFMMEU gets. There is currently an investigation by an independent body in Sydney into the minister's industrial relations department and Office of Workplace Health and Safety in terms of influence from the

CFMMEU. That is concerning, because the CFMMEU should be working with business leaders, companies and project managers, not trying to shut their projects down, rip off businesses and send businesses bankrupt.

We know when the pay masters come to town that is what the Labor Party do. They legislate and ensure that their union pay masters are dealt with. I want to table copies with all of these headlines about education. They are negative headlines about how bad the education minister is handling her own portfolio. I table copies of those newspaper articles.

Tabled paper: Article from *ABC News* online, dated 16 October 2018, titled 'Education Minister's office working on school union program weeks before Premier denied it' [1005](#).

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 13 December 2018, titled 'Teachers threaten strike action in bid to ditch independent public school system' [1006](#).

Tabled paper: Article from *Brisbane Times* online, dated 25 October 2018, titled 'Queensland's independent public schools "destined for the scrapheap"' [1007](#).

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 10 June 2019, titled 'School land grab too late: Bleijie' [1008](#).

Tabled paper: Article from *ABC News* online, dated 17 April 2019, titled 'Queensland Education staff embroiled in more than 100 cases of fraud' [1009](#).

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 29 March 2019, titled 'WorkCover claims for teachers abused at school on the rise' [1010](#).

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail* online, dated 29 April 2019, titled 'Queensland schools bursting at seams as student numbers boom' [1011](#).

As I said earlier, this is nothing more than a debt bomb, with the \$90 billion that Queensland taxpayers will be forking out over the next generation. This was all caused by Queensland's worst ever Treasurer, the member for South Brisbane, Jackie Trad. She should be ashamed of her high-taxing, less jobs budget.