



Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 13 June 2019

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

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.53 am): Those opposite are delusional—delusional. This is a budget that raises taxes, debt is up, jobs are down and infrastructure spending is down. That just goes to prove that you cannot trust Labor. On Tuesday the Treasurer handed down a budget that is big on borrowing and short on deliveries with no plans to address Queensland's spiralling debt. For the first time in our state's history we are expected to reach a debt level of \$90 billion—\$90 billion. That is a \$67,000 debt for the typical Queensland family. Without proper planning, combined with wasteful spending, what did Labor expect would happen? Plain and simple, this could have been avoided.

As many of my colleagues have mentioned, this budget is disappointing for the Gold Coast. In the Burleigh electorate not a single dollar of new funding was announced for primary schools despite schools like Palm Beach State School being at 92 per cent capacity and about to run out of room. There is little or nothing to address the hospital and police crisis, and there is not one cent for the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3A to Burleigh after the federal government contributed \$112 million and council said they would maintain their funding up to \$98 million.

I initially thought that this might have been because all of the money had been siphoned off to Cross River Rail. Then I came across page 104 of Budget Paper No. 3, the Capital Statement, where it tells us that there will be \$1.479 billion worth of investment in Cross River Rail this year. Funnily enough, private finance contributions are \$1.479 billion. We have private financing contributions of \$1.479 billion, yet in this budget the government is going to invest \$1,479,707 million. This fully funded Cross River Rail project, which the Queensland government goes on and on about, actually has only \$700,000 worth of investment from the Queensland government. Where has the money gone? You would have to ask the question, wouldn't you? Where has the money gone?

There is \$45 million out of over a billion dollars worth of investment for widening the M1 from Varsity Lakes to Tugun. If only some of the members opposite would come down to the Gold Coast and get out of their limousines, their ministerial cars, and have a look around, they would see the issues that we have down there and maybe they would do something seriously to fix our issues.

I want to move on to the portfolio that I shadow in this House—Housing and Public Works. In the Deputy Premier's budget speech she mentioned construction once—once only. That has to give you an indication of what they think about manufacturing and construction in this state. The member for Springwood has stuffed up a number of pretty straightforward projects that should be happening in this state.

While they have allocated \$511 million in social housing in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, what they have not done is negotiated in good faith with the federal government in the national partnerships agreement. We have mentioned that over and over again in this House. The Northern Territory government negotiated in good faith and got \$550 million, yet the minister and the

Deputy Premier stand in here and constantly tell us that they cannot get a solution with the federal government. Maybe they ought to try going down to Canberra and actually talking to the federal government and negotiating in good faith. That would really help.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Stop the clock. Members, it is very late. We are all getting to a point in the early hours of the morning. Let's try to move forward with a little less frivolous activity.

Mr HART: We are revved up, Mr Deputy Speaker. We have seen a complete waste of money in ICT, with projects \$447 million over budget. Now the minister comes in here and tells us that he is going to rework the whole dashboard: 'Quite frankly, it is not telling us what we need to know, so we will change all the colours. We will wash out the data and make up something completely different.'

Mr Last: They are going to wash the data.

Mr HART: They are going to wash the data. We have seen the stalling of phase 2 project bank accounts for the private sector after the government told us that these would be instigated on 1 January this year. Then it was 1 March this year. In today's paper it says—

A Queensland Government spokesperson said a review into its 12-month trial of project bank accounts on government projects between \$1m and \$10m was expected soon with the private sector roll out at some point after that.

So it is off in the never-never; here we go again. We have Stadiums Queensland with a capital outlay of \$56.3 million. That is just \$36 million worth of refurbishment at The Gabba, and we have seen how much they are spending in other states on their stadiums. You just have to wonder. The Townsville stadium deal is now costing \$292 million. It originally started at \$250 million, but the government or the minister has decided that that project needs to support his CFMMEU mates at a cost of \$40 million to the Queensland taxpayer. But never mind, we will just move on from that. We are finding that some of our stadiums cannot even make a dollar as it is, so how is the Townsville stadium ever going to make a dollar when the Cowboys have paid their rent 10 years in advance as part of this? Again you have to wonder.

One of the real issues that we need to talk about tonight is the problems that are happening with the building certifiers in this state. I will table some correspondence from the Australian Institute of Building Surveyors which was put out the day before yesterday, now that we have moved on past midnight.

Tabled paper: Australian Institute of Building Surveyors member communique, dated 12 June 2019, titled 'Professional Indemnity Insurance Update' [984](#).

That document is a member communique that was sent out to all of the members in that profession. The first paragraph says—

The situation around Professional Indemnity Insurance has reached crisis point. There is a real possibility that without government intervention in the next two weeks, private building surveyors—

that is certifiers—

may be forced out of work and the construction industry across Australia will be significantly impacted.

AIBS understands that the last remaining provider of exclusion free PI insurance policies will no longer guarantee this coverage from 2 July 2019 ...

That is in the next couple of weeks. As a result, what happens in Queensland in particular is that if these certifiers do not have full insurance cover without any exclusion they will lose their registration. I also table a copy of the Queensland Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce.

Tabled paper: Queensland government report, undated, titled 'Queensland Non-Conforming Building Products Audit Taskforce: Status report' [985](#).

How is that going to work out for the government when the state government has identified 71 government buildings that are at risk of having cladding that may be flammable? One of the recommendations in this document says—

The existing combustible test for materials under Australian Standard 1530.1 is not applicable for products that are coated, faced or laminated.

There are a lot of buildings that the Queensland government owns which have laminated cladding on them. One of those is the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital across the road which this minister spent \$500,000 to change the name of, but he left cladding on the building which apparently is a problem. What is going to happen is that when this cladding is tested it is going to fail the government's own standard. Apparently, 1 William Street has some of this on it as well. That just goes to show that there are going to be a lot of buildings that have this on it.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Minister for Health, you must be in your own seat to interject. If you intend to do so, please move back to your own seat.

Mr HART: This is going to turn into a major issue in the next couple of weeks for this government. From what I have seen so far, they have completely failed to recognise that this is a problem. It is going to completely blow up on them when certifiers are no longer in existence. Councils do not have their own certifiers, and even if they did they would have exactly the same insurance problem. This is going to blow up and the government needs to do something about it. The Australian Institute of Building Surveyors is really worried that the government will allow insurance that has an exclusion in it for the time being. That is not really going to fix the problem. The document I tabled before raises a lot of issues around that and offers some suggestions as to what could be put in place.

In the remaining time that I have I might talk about electricity as well. While this government tells us that electricity prices have fallen, when you go to the IEMO dashboard website and have a look at wholesale electricity prices in this state, in 2015 wholesale electricity prices were \$52.52 a megawatt on average for the year. In 2019 that has risen to \$80.73 a megawatt. Wholesale prices are up by more than 50 per cent. In fact, so far this month the average wholesale electricity price is \$106.94.

The day before yesterday I mentioned in my MPI that the foundry industries in Queensland are really suffering because of this. I have been to the Dalby foundry, the Currumbin foundry, the Innisfail foundry, the Bundaberg foundry and the Maryborough foundry. They are all struggling under 50 per cent increases in electricity prices. They are all worried about the future of their businesses and their employees. What is this government offering in return? The government had Ergon go out and audit these businesses. As a result of that audit Ergon said to them, 'We have nothing to offer you. Unfortunately, we cannot give you a tariff that makes sense to your business, so how about you go out and buy a diesel generator. Do not buy our electricity. Do not buy it from the state. Do not buy from the people of Queensland. Go and buy a diesel generator.' How does that work in with this government's climate change philosophy? If you want to stop people from using good clean energy and they switch over to diesel, you are going to be in a lot of trouble.

I have been travelling through the regions lately and I have taken an extract from a question that the minister was asked in parliament on 26 March in which he said, 'Regional Queensland is doing extremely well under the Palaszczuk Labor government'. I handed that press release to the people in regional Queensland and they fell on the ground laughing at what the minister said.

I am running out of time, but I would also point out that the Powering Queensland Plan called for a 400-megawatt reverse auction and a 150-megawatt solar scheme, and that has disappeared from the service. It has just gone completely. It is never going to happen. We have forgotten that. We have moved on from that. Apparently—

(Time expired)