



Speech By  
**Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe**

**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2019


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.57 am): I welcome the opportunity to endorse the Economics and Governance Committee's report to the parliament on the budget estimates. I want to thank the committee chair, the member for Logan, and all the members who contributed to the scrutiny of the SDS in relation to my ministerial portfolio responsibilities of local government, racing and multicultural affairs.

In the 2019-20 state budget the Palaszczuk government provided a total of \$1.468 billion in grants to local governments, more than double the baseline funding of \$600 million for which the Local Government Association of Queensland advocates. This is an acknowledgement of the vital support that the Palaszczuk government provides to local governments to not only enable service delivery but also provide the essential maintenance upgrades to water and sewer infrastructure. Part of this \$1.468 billion includes, of course, the Palaszczuk government's signature local government grants program, our \$600 million Works for Queensland, which will support, sustain or create more than 21,000 jobs in regional Queensland during its life in those three iterations. The third round of \$200 million funding for 2019 to 2021 has approved more than 501 projects for 65 local governments, supporting more than 4,600 jobs.

During the estimates process I called on the opposition to clarify whether they would continue this hugely popular, jobs-generating Works for Queensland program if they were elected. Everywhere I travel in regional Queensland, every regional council and mayor I speak to asks me whether the LNP will scrap the program. I am afraid I cannot give them an answer. We certainly heard no answers during the estimates committee process. Today I again call on the Leader of the Opposition to make clear whether she supports the program, which has delivered \$13.15 million for the South Burnett Regional Council for 69 projects in her electorate of Nanango—projects such as the very popular \$125,000 Kingaroy Town Hall precinct refurbishment. I call on the member for Warrego to clarify the LNP's position in relation to the important role Works for Queensland plays for those 65 eligible councils across Queensland.

In the multicultural affairs space, I delivered an election commitment to table the next three-year multicultural action plan to implement the multicultural policy. Today I am pleased to table the first progress report on the Palaszczuk government's multicultural policy *Our Story, Our Future*.

*Tabled paper:* Department of Local Government, Racing and Multicultural Affairs: First Progress Report on the Queensland Multicultural Policy [1282](#).

First released in December 2016, in its first three years of operation the Queensland multicultural policy has been an outstanding success, helping deliver people from culturally diverse backgrounds from experiencing domestic and family violence and improving pathways for employment. The policy recognises that Queenslanders from culturally diverse backgrounds make an enormous contribution to the economic, social and cultural development of our state. It also makes a strong statement about the Queensland government's condemnation of racism and its commitment to support refugees and people seeking asylum.

I am proud to share a few significant outcomes achieved across the Queensland government. For instance, the Department of Education's Refugee and Asylum Seeker Early Childhood pilot resulted in 207 enrolments of people from refugee or asylum seeker backgrounds in kindergarten programs. Since the reinstatement of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training assisted over 5,660 participants from culturally diverse backgrounds improve their pathway to employment. These achievements are among a range outlined in the report tabled today. Disappointingly, the opposition spokesperson for multicultural affairs did not ask a question about that matter during the entire estimates hearing, but I can understand why. The LNP's record on multicultural affairs is dismal. In government it halved the funding delivered to multicultural communities, showing its contempt for the importance of celebrating our diverse Queensland.

When I talk about the appalling record of the LNP, it is important to make mention of racing. The lack of matching of a commitment to the Palaszczuk government's \$70.4 million country racing package is relatively important and is in stark contrast to what we did in racing, compared to the 40-year dud deal with UBET achieved by the LNP when in office. I thank the committee for the consideration of the budget and its consideration of my portfolio areas.

*(Time expired)*