




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2); APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2)

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.26 pm): I rise to address the cognate debate in relation to the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2019 and the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2019. These are bills that seek to approve the Treasurer's authorisation of unforeseen expenditure of \$639,000 for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service and unforeseen expenditure across various Queensland government departments of more than \$1.397 billion respectively for the financial year 2018-19. As has already been discussed in this debate, the \$639,000 is for IT systems and projects and unforeseen expenditure in relation to staffing expenses. I will keep most of my comments in my contribution today to the \$1.4 billion.

The appropriation bills of the Queensland government go to the very heart of providing the infrastructure, services and economic prosperity that all Queenslanders deserve. Sadly, on this most fundamental principle and as these supplementary appropriation bills show, the Palaszczuk Labor government's budgetary and economic management has been nothing short of an abject failure over the last five years.

In the 2018-19 Queensland state budget—the financial year which is applicable to this Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2019—the Palaszczuk Labor government introduced five new taxes, ripping \$2.2 billion out of the Queensland economy. It was a budget that was all about slugging Queenslanders with more taxes and more debt, with less infrastructure and fewer jobs. Despite the Treasurer's blatant tax grab on hardworking Queenslanders, which now totals some \$3.5 billion in new taxes, fees and charges, the Palaszczuk Labor government has overseen yet another budget blowout to the tune of nearly \$1.4 billion. Whilst the additional funding is being allocated to some important projects, we should not have to be constantly coming back and back again, when the budget was handed down approximately seven months ago—and that is the point. In fact, we are only two months away from the next budget.

This legislation is just the latest example of the shameful history of the Palaszczuk Labor government's failure to adequately plan and manage the state's finances. Again, it should be budgeted for in the appropriate way at the appropriate time. In seeking the Queensland parliament's approval of more than \$1.397 billion for 2018-19, the Palaszczuk Labor government has now, over the life of its time in government, overseen more than \$4.1 billion in unforeseen expenditure and budget blowouts.

It is not just the Liberal National Party which has significant concerns over this Labor government's budget management. Indeed, the recent independent Auditor-General's report, titled *Queensland government state finances: 2018-19 results of financial audits*, which was tabled last week, made a scathing assessment of our state's financial position under the leadership of the Labor government. As revealed in the report, in the 2018-19 financial year Queensland's total state sector will have a net operating deficit of \$1.1 billion.

In fact, since 2016-17 the Queensland government's expenses have increased by \$7.3 billion, or 11 per cent, while total revenue has only increased by \$4 billion, or six per cent. Most ominously, as the Auditor-General, Mr Brendan Worrill, stated in his report—

Unless the Queensland Government can increase its revenue or constrain the recent growth in its expenses, it risks not being able to meet the costs of its activities from the revenue it earns going forward.

It is simply a fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government cannot manage our state's finances and it is seemingly more than comfortable with burdening future generations of Queenslanders with ever-increasing debt. This will be intergenerational debt and it will be a shameful legacy. Our children and grandchildren will certainly have to come up with innovative ways to deal with a significant intergenerational debt problem.

In October 2018 following the government's 2018-19 state budget I addressed the parliament's Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and concluded my speech by stating—

We know that by 2021-22 there will be an \$83 billion level of debt. That is not good enough for Queensland. This is a government of tax, debt and unemployment.

If we fast-forward a little over a year and a half to today, Queenslanders must now face the stark reality of a state Labor government that will have burdened this state's future with debt of \$91.8 billion by 2022-23. This is a woeful economic and budgetary management failure which will have devastating consequences right across this state, including the western suburbs of Brisbane, in particular the electorate of Moggill.

This Appropriation Bill (No. 2) includes additional unforeseen expenditure of close to \$700 million for the Department of Transport and Main Roads and more than \$262.5 million for the Department of Education. That is close to a billion dollars alone, yet in my electorate of Moggill residents continue to feel the devastating impacts of Labor's infrastructure investment neglect. It is now more than five years since Labor promised constituents an integrated road and public transport plan and comprehensive solutions for the electorate of Moggill. For five years local residents have had to sit idle in congested traffic on Moggill Road and join the ever-increasing traffic congestion on the Centenary Motorway as Labor all but ignores motorists, public transport users and cyclists of the western suburbs of Brisbane.

Speaking of local cyclists, it is now more than 2½ years since the Minister for Transport and Main Roads announced a Moggill Road corridor planning study to examine options for improving connectivity and local cyclist safety. Despite the best intentions and participation of dedicated stakeholders—and I take this opportunity to acknowledge the Brisbane West Bicycle User Group in particular for their work and advocacy—the Palaszczuk Labor government is yet to release the findings and outcome of this study. The safety of the public and cyclists in this locale demand that this Labor government release this study as a matter of high priority. Despite such a deliberate act of ignorance and neglect, I will continue to pursue the Palaszczuk Labor government for the integrated road and public transport plan that was promised in order to get the relief that road and public transport users demand in the western suburbs of Brisbane.

Similarly, in the area of education, local families and school communities in the electorate of Moggill must contend with education infrastructure and resources that are failing to keep pace with our local community's expectations. As an example, it is not an unreasonable expectation of students, parents and staff at a school the size of Kenmore State High School—the only high school in the electorate of Moggill—that the Queensland Labor government plans for and delivers appropriate infrastructure investment in the school's infrastructure master plan, yet on this measure the Queensland Labor government has totally failed the Kenmore State High School community. The Kenmore State High School hall is grossly outdated and fails to meet even the most basic standards of the high school community, with school events constantly having to be held separately at different times as the hall fails to hold the entire 2,000-plus student cohort.

Yesterday I had the great pleasure of attending the Kenmore State High School senior and junior secondary school leaders induction ceremonies and present this year's school captains and leaders with their relevant badges. It is a wonderful and inspiring occasion to attend on an annual basis and one which deserves a far better and more accommodating school venue than the substandard and unbearably hot school hall that this Labor government insists is good enough for the Kenmore State High School community.

Despite the Palaszczuk Labor government's woeful budget management and ongoing blowouts, I will continue to fight for all school communities in the electorate of Moggill such as Kenmore State High School to ensure that our students, teachers and staff receive the vital infrastructure and resources they not only need but also deserve. All Queenslanders deserve better. All residents of the western suburbs deserve better. Our state, once a proud economic powerhouse across Australia, is being

trashed by the Palaszczuk Labor government. The Palaszczuk Labor government has seen fit to completely trash this record in pursuit of a reckless and rarely defined agenda. It is only the Liberal National Party which has a plan for a stronger economy, one which will truly create jobs, improve our health and education services, and invest in the vital road and public transport infrastructure that we deserve.

Whilst I acknowledge the expenditure that is proposed in these bills will go to projects across Queensland—and some of those projects are vital—I would again say to the Palaszczuk Labor government that they need to invest money into the western suburbs of Brisbane. They need to deal with traffic congestion not only in the electorate of Moggill but right across the western suburbs of Brisbane. They need to look at school infrastructure and make sure that it is fair and reasonable. Students in the electorate of Moggill and across the western suburbs of Brisbane need that investment. That is the right, the fair and the decent thing to do. Labor talks about decency. Labor always talks about a fair go for all residents across Queensland, for all Queenslanders. It is time that they acted for those residents in the western suburbs of Brisbane.