




Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**

**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (4.11 pm): We are having a fascinating debate today.

**Mr Power:** Did you listen to the member for Southern Downs?

**Mr WHITING:** I take that interjection from the member for Logan. I did listen to the member for Southern Downs.

**Dr Miles** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** I know. That is five minutes of my life that I will not get back. I want to take issue with some things that have been said. They are forever talking about the growing army of public servants. I will mention them specifically: the 430 police, the 4,800 teachers, the 1,400 teacher aides, the 6,000 nurses, the 2,000 doctors and the 500 ambos.

The member for Southern Downs said that we should ask people what they think about the outcomes. I ask people about the outcomes that they experience in the hospitals in my area. I can tell the House that the people who have been through the Caboolture Hospital always say how excellent the service is. It has a very busy emergency department and everybody who has been through that system talks about the excellent level of care. If you are going to run down your hospitals, do not do it without talking to the people of Burpengary and Caboolture, because they rely on that hospital and are thankful for the people who work in it to preserve life. Similarly, the Redcliffe Hospital has a very busy emergency department and for people who go through that hospital the level of care is excellent. I point out that, because of the great fiscal and economic management of this government, we can invest \$350 million to upgrade the Caboolture Hospital and \$120 million to upgrade the Redcliffe Hospital. Those opposite could never match that record spend.

We can see many more examples in the appropriation bills that show the financial strength that we have on this side, which helps to grow infrastructure and jobs in Queensland. I remind those opposite of what the Treasurer told us very early on in her speech, if they were listening, although I doubt that they were. She said that we have spent less than we budgeted and we returned that money to the Treasury. That is a very important point. I hope they were listening, but I suspect that, unfortunately, they were not.

I hope that they were also listening when we spoke about the roadworks that have been fast-tracked through this allocation. In particular, I am talking about the \$200 million, including federal funding, that has been fast-tracked for the Gateway Motorway in the Bracken Ridge area. That is a hugely important project for the people in my area. It will mean that they will get to work and home faster. It is absolutely crucial. Other road infrastructure works include the \$150 million highway overpass at Deception Bay which will start very soon. That is another 2018-2020 project that we are really looking forward to. We are putting an extra \$200 million annually into a Bruce Highway fund for our area. We are investing in infrastructure and we can do that because of the fiscal management of this government.

Talking about great fiscal management, we have already heard about the eight new schools that have been opened in Queensland. That is absolutely fantastic and it includes the new Mango Hill State Secondary College. That is an outstanding college and I congratulate the member for Murrumba for his achievement in getting that done. Smaller jobs include a grant of \$350,000 for a landscaping project at Deception Bay North State School. That is really crucial, as some of their playgrounds and landscaping have not been updated for a while. That project will make a huge difference to the school. We can invest in that school because of the fiscal management of this state government. Once again I note that driving Queensland's jobs growth is our capital works and infrastructure program, which is worth \$49.5 billion, supporting tens of thousands of jobs throughout Queensland. In this financial year alone, \$12.5 billion will be spent. I have already talked about how we are investing in Queensland jobs, such as those of the police and ambos who protect our people.

The member for Southern Downs talked about investing in water security and infrastructure. Something that has already been talked about is our \$848 million investment in water security and water infrastructure. There is the start of the \$350 million Rookwood Weir; \$215 million for the Haughton pipeline in Toowoomba; \$170 million for the Fairbairn Dam, which is a crucial project; and \$19.5 million for the Leslie Harrison Dam. That work is happening all over Queensland, but we will never hear any thanks from those on the other side for the work that we are doing to increase water security in our state.

In terms of our financial management, one thing that we have heard about today is the investment that we have been able to make in the new Barrett centre, the Jacaranda Centre, which is absolutely crucial infrastructure. We all know that the original Barrett centre was closed by the LNP. The new Jacaranda Centre is a \$27 million 12-bed facility that will house up to 40 young people each year. It is an absolutely crucial bit of infrastructure that we are investing in.

I come back to the question: how can we afford to build all of this infrastructure? They do not like to hear this, but it is because we have proven to be the better economic managers of this state. That is absolutely without doubt, even though they keep arguing the point. We are on track to having five budget surpluses. Scott Morrison would give his right arm to bring in one and we are delivering five. Our debt is lower than that which the LNP left us. We all heard the Treasurer say that it is \$2 billion lower. The member for Southern Downs talked about us spending money and racking up debt. My goodness! The people who racked up the biggest debt in this state are the people on the other side. I ask: how is it that we have delivered \$2 billion less debt than they did? Do we have geniuses or professors on the other side? I do not know, but I would not want them to teach maths to my children!

Those opposite cannot accept that we have a much better record on economic and financial—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Weir): There are far, far too many interjections. I know there is a little bit of excitement in the room.

**Mr WHITING:** I would not want to be responsible for any incidents over the other side so I better make it quick. Those opposite cannot accept that we have a track record of better economic management which is reflected in these bills that we have before us today. I commend these bills to the House.