



Speech By  
**Corrine McMillan**


**MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD**

---

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2020

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL**

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (10.32 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker Kelly, I congratulate you on your appointment to the role of Deputy Speaker. We believe that you will do an outstanding job.

I am proud to rise today to speak in support of the appropriation bill delivered by the honourable Treasurer and Minister for Investment, the member for Woodridge. As the days become shorter in the Northern Hemisphere and the winter chill sets in, many counties face a second or even a third wave of the insidious COVID-19 virus—the greatest health pandemic since the Spanish flu, which peaked in the autumn months of 1918. Like the Spanish flu, COVID-19 has claimed many lives worldwide. To be precise, 1.48 million people have lost their lives to date—908 Australians. My love and thoughts remain with my close family members living overseas—Adam, Leah and Azra in New York; Joanne and Alex in London; Loretta and Joe and my many cousins in Ireland—as they face further months of fear, lockdown, deprivation and global isolation.

During this pandemic, referred to by many economists as the ‘COVID crash’, we have seen phenomenal changes. These changes are happening all around us. Our economic resilience or anti-fragility has been tested. Like the 1918 Spanish flu or the September 11 terrorist attacks, after every crisis we see trends, adaptations and about-turns—accelerated trends such as technology, digitisation and ecommerce; adaptations such as corporate travel, the medium for meetings and the way we physically greet each other and interact. Then there are the about-turns—the way we think about austerity, for example. Attitudes towards austerity have changed as witnessed when we analyse government spending all over the world, regardless of their stripe and ideology—the LNP opposition in Queensland being the only exception.

Monetary and fiscal stimulus is the priority. Balancing the government books is seen globally as irresponsible as the world grapples with uncertainties, including development of a vaccine, social inequalities further pronounced by this pandemic, climate change, re-skilling the workforce, the urgency for reliable and accessible health care, market globalisation, government support for the unemployed, trade negotiations and supply chain difficulties, not to mention rogue and ignorant government leaders, and the list goes on. However, change can often create investment opportunities. Today governments must invest, as evidenced by the research of the OECD, the advice of the International Monetary Fund and the Governor of the Reserve Bank of Australia.

Queensland’s health response to this global pandemic has drawn accolades globally. On behalf of my community, I thank the Premier, the former minister for health and Deputy Premier, and Dr Young, our Chief Health Officer, for their courageous and decisive leadership. Our strong health response in Queensland has ensured the foundations for the best possible economic recovery—the opportunity for our government to borrow to invest. The Palaszczuk government’s plan for economic recovery from COVID-19 begins with investing for job creation. The greatest investment any government can make is in the people they serve.

What a great budget it is for the Queensland we serve and for the good people of the Mansfield electorate. This great Labor budget creates jobs, setting out a clear economic plan, attracting investment and building infrastructure—building the economy of the future. It is a budget that delivers the health and education infrastructure investment for the future success of young Queenslanders and for the prosperity of our great state.

When I was elected to this parliament, I vowed that I would strive to ensure that the Mansfield electorate became a hub of educational excellence. I am proud of the 19 schools in my electorate and the quality education that they provide—the reason young families flock to my electorate. More than 100 young families move into my community every month.

I know that a hub of educational excellence requires world-class infrastructure, the resources and funding to inspire learning, as well as the collegial and collaborative support of educators working together across schools and between classrooms; effective teachers and strong educational leaders who apply explicit and precise strategies to improve student learning; and educators who teach their students how to think critically, creatively, to identify future problems and opportunities, who inspire student confidence to apply complex and sophisticated formula and to work together to ensure that the sum of the whole is greater than the sum of them as collective individuals—not applying punitive measures to complex matters such as their big, bold, visionary plan to return our education system to an industrialised bygone era; nor the decluttering of the curriculum to facilitate a back-to-basics approach; nor in their blind pursuit of some self-acclaimed heroic budget surplus neglecting to build one new classroom across Queensland in three years, as happened under the LNP government when they held office.

**Mrs Gerber:** Rubbish!

**Ms McMILLAN:** I did hear some very unparliamentary language. I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Kelly):** You will need to take personal offence.

**Ms McMILLAN:** I take personal offence and I ask that it be withdrawn.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I am going to take some advice on that. Member for Currumbin, that language was unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

**Mrs GERBER:** I withdraw.

**Ms McMILLAN:** I have only been in this place three years, but that is the first time—

**Mr Minnikin:** Three is too long if you cannot handle 'rubbish'.

**Ms McMILLAN:**—I have ever heard that level of language in this House.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I had ruled on that, member for Chatsworth. You can stand and withdraw that as well and then I will place you on a warning.

**Mr MINNIKIN:** I withdraw.

**Ms McMILLAN:** A quality education transforms the lives of individuals, families and whole communities. We are delivering a \$13.9 million investment in new modern school facilities in Mansfield. Funding is included in a \$1 billion Great Schools, Great Future education policy to modernise schools and support more than 3,100 local construction jobs right across Queensland. This includes new classrooms at Mackenzie and Rochedale state schools and a new building to replace the classrooms lost in the devastating fire at the Upper Mount Gravatt State School. To cater for continued growth and enrolment the budget also includes \$6.74 million for new classrooms and a canteen at Wishart State School. Mansfield State School is also receiving \$12.41 million to provide a new building of classrooms and a refurbished music block. I am proud to have secured a \$500,000 commitment to begin the priority safety upgrade to Ham Road for Mansfield State Primary School and Mansfield high. We expect that this funding will be matched by the Brisbane City Council under the Local Road Improvement Program.

The Palaszczuk government has a clear vision for education in Queensland. We will employ more than 6,100 new teachers and 1,100 new teacher aides over the next four years. Education is the best investment that we can make for the future of Queenslanders and the future prosperity of our great state.

It is also pleasing to see a strong commitment by the Palaszczuk government to free TAFE for Queenslanders under 25. This is welcomed and will be valued immensely by the young people in my community. Under this re-elected Palaszczuk government, the Mount Gravatt TAFE will receive a further \$3.4 million upgrade to teaching spaces, maintenance and providing state-of-the-art infrastructure. We are keeping Queenslanders safe. The Palaszczuk government will deliver an extra 2,025 police personnel over the next five years. We will deliver seven satellite hospitals worth

\$265 million—one in Brisbane South—to enable our acute hospitals to continue to safely manage patients via alternative models of care. Recently I joined the former minister for health and the Chief Health Officer to announce a \$12 million investment to establish a 24-bed ward at the QEII Hospital.

This is what Labor governments do, and this is exactly what the people of Queensland elected Labor to do. Social isolation and loneliness is a well-documented and researched new world issue identified prior to the pandemic but which has been exacerbated during COVID-19. Since my election in 2017 I have worked closely with the University of Queensland School of Psychology, the Mount Gravatt Community Centre and the Queensland Community Alliance to proactively address this important issue in my community. The employment of social workers locally—known as link workers—as part of our Ways to Wellness program has attracted ongoing funding of a further \$124,000 of \$498,536 by the Palaszczuk government. I am proud of this program, the international interest it has attracted and the significant outcomes achieved to date for our local people. An \$18.9 million investment across Queensland in neighbourhood centres will further enable the Mount Gravatt Community Centre to continue their tremendous work supporting our most vulnerable.

Small businesses play an important role in my community. Our strong health response has meant that we can get back to business as usual. Mr Deputy Speaker, 177 of the small businesses in my electorate have received Palaszczuk government COVID-19 adaptation grants totalling \$1.8 million. A \$950 million payroll tax relief package will assist small to medium sized businesses to create jobs in Queensland. Many small businesses in my electorate have benefited from the interest-free loans and will continue to access these when needed.

The Palaszczuk government's strong health response has put us on the road to economic recovery. My community understands that strong and proven community leadership and a good strong, stable government is what is needed in times of a global economic and health pandemic. I am proud to stand as part of a Queensland Labor government led by our Premier, who has a vision for this great state of Queensland. The 2020-21 state budget ensures that a progressive Queensland will be one more educated, more critical, healthier, more mobile and better prepared for the ongoing economic challenges that lie ahead. This will be the work of one government—a Labor government—and the result of only party: the great Australian Labor Party. I commend this bill to the House.