




Speech By
Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

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

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (4.53 pm): I rise in support of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2019 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2019. The bills seek approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service and government agencies for the 2018-19 financial year. The total supplementary appropriation amounts to about \$1.4 billion, which the Palaszczuk government has offset with \$1.46 billion in savings as noted in the Consolidated Fund Financial Report for 2018-19. As a result, we have returned \$65 million back to Queenslanders.

Supplementary appropriations reflect unforeseen expenditure when a government prioritises the programs and services that Queenslanders need. I reflect back on what the member for Toowoomba North just said: children need to prepare themselves. They need to prepare themselves in schools. The number of schools those opposite shut down and sold does not give those kids an opportunity to prepare themselves for anything.

Accelerating programs and infrastructure development means better transport for Queenslanders going home each day. It means better learning environments for our kids at school and it means safer communities for Queenslanders. I want to talk a little bit about the brand-new high school that was in my electorate: Calliope State High School. Today I acknowledge the minister who set it up five years ago. It is a fantastic opportunity for those kids, with \$66 million going to that community to get those kids into schools. It was a pleasure to be out there to help open it on the first day of school, along with seven other brand-new schools right across Queensland supporting kids so that they can prepare themselves for the future.

Fast-tracking investments during the financial year has seen the faster delivery of projects such as: the Gateway Upgrade North, Deagon to Nundah; the Toowoomba bypass—which I am sure the member for Toowoomba North would be pleased about—the Second Range Crossing is an amazing bit of infrastructure; the Bruce Highway upgrades that I see around my electorate right the way up the Queensland coast; the Pacific Motorway upgrades we have heard so much about; and brand-new schools and extra infrastructure in existing schools. It is not rocket science, you know: when we prioritise and accelerate the infrastructure that Queenslanders need it means more jobs are created in more industries for more Queenslanders.

When it comes to roads and transport rollouts, we are supporting more than 21,000 jobs to get that infrastructure built here in Queensland. This includes 13,500 jobs in regional Queensland, which are so badly needed, and another 6,000 tradies. As a proud trade union member, I support all of the tradies who do that work for us in Queensland because we know they deserve safer and better roads for their families and themselves.

When it comes to education, we have opened eight new schools right across Queensland this year. With our record investment in education in the last budget we have employed 1,000 teachers and 200 new teacher aides in the past year who work for Queensland children to help prepare them for the future. We have done this because Queensland kids deserve the best education and the best start to an adult life they can get.

When it comes to small and medium sized businesses, after the last budget I had the pleasure of going on a roadshow to help sell the payroll tax reform we introduced in Queensland. It was refreshing to talk to a lot of small business owners, particularly in regional Queensland, who receive the benefits. This payroll tax reform will ensure their businesses continue to thrive so they can put on more staff. Just about every one of the businesses that received payroll tax relief is now putting on extra workers because of the Palaszczuk Labor government and the decisions that we made in relation to small business in Queensland.

The Palaszczuk government introduced the largest reform to payroll tax in more than a decade. We lifted the threshold from \$1.1 million to \$1.3 million. In contrast, those opposite promised to increase the threshold to \$1.5 million. Remember those three years under Campbell Newman? They stopped it after just one year—another backflip from the LNP. The reform package we introduced included extending the 50 per cent payroll tax discount for employers of apprentices and trainees and provided a payroll tax rebate of up to \$20,000 for those businesses that hire more full-time employees. Unlike those opposite, who sacked 14,000 full-time workers, we know how critical it is to have a full-time, permanent job in Queensland—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Whiting): Under the provisions of the business program agreed to by the House and the time limit for this stage of the bills having expired, I call the minister to reply to the second reading debate.