




Speech By
Jennifer Howard

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (4.11 pm): I rise today to give my support to the 2020-21 Queensland budget. I would like to thank the Premier and the Treasurer and his whole team for their hard work on delivering this budget in unprecedented circumstances. This has been a tumultuous year and the Queensland economy has taken a battering. Workers, families and businesses in my electorate of Ipswich have faced major disruption to the way they live and work and, sometimes, untold hardships and loss of livelihoods. I make mention of our local Ipswich Chamber of Commerce and Industry for the great work they have done locally to support our small businesses in particular.

The Palaszczuk government has supported Queenslanders throughout all of this. We responded swiftly by being the first to declare the COVID-19 pandemic a public health emergency. We then focused on safeguarding Queenslanders' health and managing our economic response by delivering the COVID-19 fiscal and economic review and our economic recovery plan earlier this year. The 2020-21 budget builds on that response. We have made it through this crisis together, guided by the strong leadership we have in place. Because of our successful health response, Queenslanders' lives have returned to some semblance of pre-COVID normality which means that we can focus on our economic recovery, something which other countries affected by COVID-19 can only dream of.

The budget handed down on Tuesday by the Palaszczuk government builds on our key objective to unite and recover for Queensland, to create more jobs, support small business, increase local manufacturing, drive infrastructure and build up our frontline services. In Ipswich, my main priority is to support local jobs and back local business investment. I am also focused on making sure Ipswich gets the infrastructure and frontline services we need to manage our rapidly growing population. Furthermore, I am focused on supporting our community and making sure it gets the support it needs to make Ipswich an attractive, vibrant and worthwhile place to live and work. This is a budget that promises to deliver on all the election commitments announced for Ipswich in the lead-up to the state election. It is a confidence boosting program of investments in infrastructure and frontline services that will create local jobs and support local businesses.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation, and as such I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into *Hansard*.

The speech read as follows—

Health

Mr Speaker, COVID-19 highlighted the fact that we cannot have a functioning economy without safeguarding people's health first. In the lead up to the state election we showed that we would invest in the healthcare needs of Ipswich locals through our additional investment of \$46.5 million for Stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion. This \$46.5 million will provide new and expanded hospital and health facilities providing Ipswich people access to top quality health care.

As part of this investment, \$11 million will go towards expanding the Ipswich Hospital's Emergency Department delivering more paediatric treatment spaces and a dedicated mental health area, \$9.3 million will be invested to deliver a dedicated obstetric theatre, and \$1.7 million will be used to expand capacity for renal dialysis and nephrology services.

It will also allocate \$24.5 million for an Alcohol and Other Drug Withdrawal Management and Rehabilitation Service to accommodate the growing demand for rehab services in the Ipswich and West Moreton region.

This facility will deliver 10 withdrawal management beds and 35 residential rehabilitation beds as well as offer a complete suite of evidence-based treatment services for people with severe substance abuse issues.

I also welcome the investment of the \$40 million Satellite Hospital to be built in Ipswich. This is part of a \$265 million commitment by the Palaszczuk Government to deliver seven Satellite Hospitals across South East Queensland to meet the growing demand for healthcare services in our rapidly developing outer-urban areas. The new Satellite Hospital in Ipswich will be tailored to meet the needs of our community and will include ambulatory and low acuity day therapy services such as renal dialysis, chemotherapy, complex wound management, and urgent care for minor injury and illness. For patients who don't live close to a major hospital, it will mean greater access to healthcare services closer to home and will take pressure off our nearby major hospitals.

This suite of health investment is on top of the \$43.2 million of ongoing funding allocated in 2020-21 for Stage 1 of the \$146.5 million Ipswich Hospital Expansion, and \$691 million allocated for West Moreton Hospital and Health Services.

Education and Training

Mr Speaker, since 2015, the Palaszczuk Government has invested around \$28 million in Ipswich electorate state schools to build classrooms, playgrounds, and learning facilities. We have also employed an additional 693 teachers for schools across the Ipswich region. So I'm pleased to see in this Budget \$500,000 invested in Silkstone State School in my electorate so that it can undertake badly needed facility upgrades.

Silkstone State School, established in 1882, is one of the oldest schools in Ipswich and indeed, the state. It has strong links to the Ipswich community and can boast distinguished alumni including Queensland Parliamentarians, Sir Llew Edwards and David Hamill. While one of the great legacies of the Palaszczuk Government is the construction of brand new schools across Queensland eight new schools this year alone—we are also taking care of our older, more established schools.

In the Ipswich region, the Palaszczuk Government is investing \$102.9 million to upgrade and maintain our school classrooms and learning facilities, including maintenance for our older schools' buildings and classrooms to make them more suitable for a modern teaching environment. This investment will ensure that our schools can continue educating Queensland students for many more generations to come.

I would also like to take the opportunity to add that as of this year all Ipswich state schools have had air conditioning installed under the Palaszczuk Government's Cooler Cleaner Schools Program. I'm sure the students and teachers in these schools are very grateful for it during this heatwave.

Investing in skills and training is a crucial building block to supporting economic growth in Queensland and we need a highly skilled and adaptable workforce for our new and emerging industries. I welcome our government's election commitment to invest \$7 million in Ipswich TAFE Campus at Bundamba to build a Metal Trades Expansion and Robotics Centre. This is part of a \$100 million investment over three years to upgrade Queensland TAFE campuses.

Our government is focused on making sure our young people have every opportunity to access quality training so they can gain in-demand skills for future jobs. To ensure that, the Palaszczuk Government will allocate in this Budget \$200 million to invest in delivering programs that will give Queenslanders skills of the future including developing a TAFE Priority Skills Fund, a pre-apprenticeship support program, a Digital Professional Workforce Plan, and a Workforce Transition Support Program.

An additional \$21 million will be provided to extend Free TAFE and Free apprenticeships to Queenslanders aged under 25, and we will deliver \$45 million to build and upgrade training facilities for at-school training across Queensland.

During these uncertain times, it's more important than ever to give our young people hope that they can look forward to securing a decent job when they finish school or TAFE or University. Giving them innovative and adaptive skills and training increases their chances of securing these jobs.

Frontline Services

Mr Speaker, COVID-19 highlighted the fact that frontline workers played a crucial part in our successful pandemic response here in Queensland. I want to thank all of them for their extraordinary service this year and their efforts keeping Queenslanders safe during the pandemic.

The Treasurer said in his Budget speech on Tuesday that the Federal Government projects a net interstate migration of 86,000 people to Queensland within the next 4 years. Already in the last financial year we have seen 7,005 new residents move into the Ipswich Local Government Area.

That's why our government is committed to delivering service infrastructure and frontline workers to growth suburbs in my electorate such as Ripley, where we will build a new, larger police station to replace the old one at Yamanto, and a brand new \$5 million ambulance station.

Along with the new police station at Ripley, I'm pleased to see our government invest in a new Mobile Police Beat Van for the Ipswich Police District to assist with their operations. This is in addition to the 150 extra police that will be deployed to the Ipswich Police Region.

Crime and anti-social behaviour in the Ipswich CBD is a major issue that many business owners and residents have raised with me, and they want to see more done about the problem so that their businesses can thrive and public safety can be assured. So these police resources will be a welcome addition to our city.

Job building infrastructure

Mr Speaker, this Budget is not only providing Ipswich with essential infrastructure and frontline services, but is helping to provide thousands of jobs to boost the local Ipswich economy after the disruption of COVID-19.

Across the Ipswich region, the Palaszczuk Government will pour \$802 million into productivity-enhancing infrastructure and capital works to support 2,600 jobs.

Some of those jobs will come from major infrastructure works taking place across the Ipswich region such as the \$37.7 million East Ipswich station upgrade currently underway, the \$65.2 million program to improve and expand social housing in Ipswich, the proposed \$10 million East Ipswich Five Ways Intersection upgrade, the \$91 million new Acute Mental Health Unit, and the \$400 million Rocklea to Darra stage of the Ipswich Motorway upgrade.

Transport

Mr Speaker, the population of Ipswich is likely to hit around 500,000 people by 2040 and we need to make sure all these people can be gainfully employed, have access to affordable housing, good schools for their kids, hospitals, and other public amenities such as adequate road and public transport infrastructure.

A productive workforce and economy can only function with a robust transport network in place. As Ipswich reaches 500,000 people in 2040 it is crucial that we have an effective transport system in place that can cope with increased road traffic as well as provide good public transport services.

That is why we are delivering \$400,000 for a study into Ipswich's transport and mobility network. The last study undertaken of Ipswich's transport network was done in 2013, but the city has changed and grown immensely in those seven years, particularly in the Ripley Valley Priority Development Area.

Changing demographics are also seeing larger numbers of older residents living in Ipswich and people with disabilities who need alternative transport options to private vehicles.

This transport and mobility study will take all these factors into account to recommend a suitable transport network option that best suits Ipswich's needs.

Public transport will be a major part of that study. In Ipswich, residents want to see more public transport especially in new suburbs in the Ripley Valley Priority Development Area. Public Transport will help reduce over-reliance on private vehicles and help reduce the social and environmental costs associated with heavy vehicle use such as increased road maintenance, increased levels of congestion on arterial roads into Brisbane, and increased air pollution caused by vehicle emissions.

That is why I welcome the \$1 million investment allocated in this Budget to develop a business case for the Springfield to Ipswich rail line. This will take us one step closer to connecting Ipswich to Springfield by rail, which will bring numerous and long-lasting benefits to the Ipswich region including greater network efficiency and improved productivity gains.

Sports funding

Mr Speaker, our community organisations are the backbone of our city and provide social and recreational services that contribute to our local economy and help to build vital social support networks. Our sporting clubs, for instance, play a major role in Ipswich's identity, and as Member for Ipswich, I'm proud to support them and deliver the sporting facilities they need to boost participation and club membership.

For several years I've advocated on behalf of Raceview Soccer Club to secure funding so that they could build a clubhouse with change facilities onsite.

While the club has built up a membership of over 430 players with strong female participation, they have had no clubhouse or change rooms on the grounds.

So I was pleased to announce before the election our commitment to allocate \$900,000 for Raceview Soccer Club so they can build a new multipurpose community clubhouse with canteen and change rooms. Another sporting club I've long advocated for is the Ipswich BMX Club. They too have been without a clubhouse and canteen facilities, and this has jeopardised their chances of securing state, national, and international BMX competitions.

These competitions would bring in thousands of visitors to Ipswich providing a massive boost to our local economy and creating jobs for locals.

So I was very pleased to announce as an election commitment, \$500,000 for the Ipswich BMX Club so they can build a new clubhouse and canteen.

These clubhouse facilities are not only valuable assets for the sports clubs and the Ipswich community, but will provide work for tradies and local businesses during the construction phase.

Conclusion

Mr Speaker, the funding and investment delivered to Ipswich in this budget shows the level of commitment the Palaszczuk Government has towards creating jobs, supporting businesses, and delivering on vital infrastructure and frontline services.

We are still living in a time of great uncertainty, but the Palaszczuk Government's Budget builds back confidence into our economy. Mr Speaker, I commend the 2020-21 Queensland Budget to the House.