



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Enoch**


**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2020

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

**APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (12.02 am): Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, can I acknowledge your elevation to that position and put on record my pride in seeing you there. I think it is properly deadly.

I rise to speak in support of the 2020 appropriation bills. Over the last 12 months Queenslanders have faced unprecedented challenges and we have met those challenges with our characteristic resilience and unique sense of community. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on so many aspects of our lives, but it has also reminded us of all that is important in our lives: access to good health care and education; frontline services that ensure we remain connected to each other; a place to call home; food security; and, of course, the ability to participate in the economy. It is because of this government's strong health response that we can now deliver a strong economic response and a supercharged recovery. This budget supports the Queensland government's road map to ensure Queensland continues to unite and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am very fortunate to represent the incredibly vibrant and diverse electorate of Algester, where we have fantastic schools led by very talented principals and dedicated P&Cs. Over the last five years, the Palaszczuk government has invested over \$40 million in local schools across the Algester electorate. Through this budget we are continuing to invest in our state schools with more than \$11 million in new classrooms and upgrades. This budget includes over \$9 million for new classrooms and an upgraded classroom block at Calamvale Community College. I would like to congratulate the school community—in particular, the school principal, Lisa Starmer, who continues to be a great advocate for the school and Mike Butler and Leesa Mason from the school council executive who displayed great leadership in bringing parents and the school community with us on this journey.

Acacia Ridge State School, led by the principal, Nicole Collins, and the deputy principal, Tara Griffin, will receive \$850,000 for new much needed security fencing and a new playground. Almost \$1.5 million will be provided to Algester State School for upgrades to security fencing and the administration building. Watson Road State School will receive \$50,000 for a new shade cover for the outdoor area. Some \$400,000 has also been secured for the upgrade of the St Bernardine's Catholic Primary School car park. I would like to acknowledge the principal, Nick Gallen, the former P&C president, Kate Thomas, and the current P&C executive for their continuous advocacy for this very important work.

The Palaszczuk government is also supporting the Acacia Ridge sports hub by providing \$500,000 towards delivering Mortimer Road Park sport and recreation precinct. This budget also delivers on the \$30 million upgrade to the intersection of Beaudesert Road, Algester Road and Illaweena Street, which is part of the Queensland government's economic recovery plan announced

before the election. I have been advocating for this much needed upgrade for many years, along with the member for Stretton. I know that many in both of our communities are very much looking forward to work starting in the coming months.

I am also very honoured to take up my new role as Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts. This new department will support Queensland's recovery and play an essential role by delivering frontline services to the most vulnerable in our community, keeping us connected to each other and the economy and supporting Queensland's vibrant arts sector. This year's investment across the communities, housing, arts and digital economy sectors supports Queensland's social recovery as well as the economic recovery by creating jobs, backing our frontline services and helping us tell our stories.

In his response to the budget today the Leader of the Opposition talked a lot about values, but not once in his response did he talk about the importance of having a roof over one's head. He made a lot of motherhood statements, but made very little reference to supporting vulnerable Queenslanders and their needs. I am not surprised given he was part of the Campbell Newman government that removed supports for vulnerable renters like the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service and embarked on the wholesale giveaway of public social housing stock.

I also note the comments of the shadow arts minister in his budget reply speech that our government's support funding for the arts was not enough. I will tell members who has not gone far enough, and that is the federal government. In fact, they are not even out of the blocks with their support funding for the arts sector, which is still waiting in Queensland. The arts are often the first to give their time and talent when times are tough and the lack of support from the federal government is absolutely appalling. The shadow minister for arts often breaches bipartisan support and I hope that that continues. The best way, however, that he could do this is to put in a call to his federal colleagues.

What a spectacular and extraordinary contribution from the member for Everton—the architect of the plan for the largest wholesale privatisation of public housing in this state. His mock outrage for vulnerable Queenslanders was astonishing to say the least, especially given his appalling record. He knows the only reason there were fewer Queenslanders on their list seeking public housing was because under the member for Everton's policy the LNP heartlessly cut people who did not fit their criteria.

However, in this budget, in 2020-21, the Palaszczuk government is investing more than \$1 billion to ensure that vulnerable Queenslanders have access to a safe and affordable home. This budget invests more than \$526 million for our housing and homelessness capital program which includes the Housing Construction Jobs Program, Housing Construction Works for Tradies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing. The capital investment alone will support more than 1,540 full-time equivalent jobs across the construction industry this financial year, as well as many more through the building supply chain.

It will deliver an additional 455 homes to Queensland's social housing portfolio. The total funding will see construction commence on a further 832 new homes, as well as provide essential upgrades to existing homes. It will include the purchase of dwellings suitable to add to our social housing stock, as well as secure land for future construction of social housing. This year's housing and homelessness capital program also includes \$70 million for the \$100 million Works for Tradies stimulus announced in June this year as part of our Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs package.

Works for Tradies will see contracts signed for the commencement of 215 new homes across identified priority regions by the end of 2020-21 and support around 240 jobs. This year's budget commits \$241 million to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing outcomes, including \$142.2 million to improve social housing and deliver housing services in discrete communities.

There is \$42.5 million to improve state owned and managed Indigenous housing across Queensland, including tenancy management, upgrades and maintenance, and \$32.3 million toward the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan, including progressing new housing across 17 local council areas and, importantly, establishing a peak Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander housing body.

Also included in this year's budget is \$18 million to support members of remote communities to achieve home ownership, as well as \$6 million for homelessness responses, including completing construction of crisis shelters. We are also committing \$139 million this year to provide housing and support for vulnerable people, particularly those experiencing domestic and family violence, young people and First Nation people, mainly through investing in specialist homelessness services across Queensland.

Mr Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech on the budget for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech is incorporated in *Hansard*.

*The speech read as follows—*

**Communities**

Mr. Speaker, the Palaszczuk Government and our partner agencies play a vital role in our communities to ensure the vulnerable have access to support when they need it.

The global pandemic created new challenges in supporting Queenslanders but also re-focused our efforts to ensure appropriate support was available when and where it was necessary.

Neighbourhood and Community Centres are at the frontline of their local communities, offering a range of services and support tailored to their respective needs.

This can include domestic and family violence assistance, help with gambling issues, financial counselling, emergency relief, food pantries, homelessness supports and general counselling.

For almost 30 years, Belong has been an important community hub in my electorate.

As the local member I have seen first-hand the fantastic work they do to care for vulnerable locals and I am proud that we are continuing our strong record of supporting community centres like this, across Queensland.

The Communities 2020-21 budget is more than \$143 million and includes an \$18.9 million investment in Neighbourhood and Community Centres.

Of this, we have allocated \$1 million to 60 Neighbourhood and Community Centres for Round Three of the Thriving Queensland Communities Grants.

There is \$1.7 million for Neighbourhood and Community Centres to further mobilise the state's Care Army by engaging 15 Neighbourhood Connect Workers to assist high-needs communities impacted by COVID-19.

This year, the Palaszczuk Government is providing \$4.7 million for additional COVID support for the state's communities.

\$3.6 million of this is for psychosocial support through the Red Cross and \$1.1 million for Uniting Care Queensland Services and Care Army Volunteers.

An allocation of \$3.7 million will be provided to 24 service providers employing approximately 28.7 FTE financial counsellors and resilience workers in 26 locations, with an additional \$6.2 million over two years through a package of emergency support.

We are also committing \$1.16 million per annum to two Good Money Stores, providing improved access to No Interest Loans in Cairns and on the Gold Coast.

**Arts**

Mr Speaker, our arts, cultural and creative sector will play a crucial role in the recovery of our economy, and bringing together our communities, as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The arts help us to understand who we are, where we've been, and to make sense of the significant challenges that we face in an increasingly complex world.

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 the arts, cultural and creative sector contributed around \$12.3 billion direct or indirect contribution to Queensland's economy annually, and directly or indirectly employed more than 92,000 Queenslanders.

That's why the Palaszczuk Government views investment the arts, cultural and creative sectors as being critical for Queensland's future.

With the lifting of necessary COVID-19 restrictions that have helped keep us safe, Queenslanders are looking for opportunities to re-engage with the arts as part of the recovery and to participate in cultural activities in their communities again.

This year the Palaszczuk Government has committed \$290.3 million to the arts portfolio.

This commitment will support Queensland's diverse arts and cultural sector and includes investment in the state's major collecting and cultural institutions, major performing arts companies, small to medium arts sector, and transformative cultural infrastructure.

The Arts Queensland 2020-21 budget includes a \$22.5 million injection in new investment through the two-year, Arts and Cultural Recovery Package, announced in June.

This package is a down-payment on Creative Together, our 10-year Roadmap to renew and transform Queensland through creativity.

It delivers key actions of the Roadmap's first two-year action plan: Sustain 2020-2022.

This funding is already hitting the sector, with \$12.8 million from the recovery package already committed to 242 applicants state-wide and supporting around 9,200 employment opportunities.

The Palaszczuk Government is also building on our proud record of investing in the arts and cultural infrastructure which our communities will need in the decades to come.

In 2020-21 this includes \$2 million of our total \$15 million commitment to the new Rockhampton Museum of Art.

\$21.15 million is to deliver the state-of-the-art 1,500 seat, new performing arts venue for QPAC, supporting more than 100 jobs for Queenslanders.

Mr Speaker, the doors to our museums and galleries have reopened, and our theatre curtains can once again rise to full houses.

Through our investment in Queensland's artists, organisations and in our vibrant cultural experiences for all Queenslanders, the Palaszczuk Government is sending a strong message that we are standing by the arts and cultural sector as it emerges from the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **Digital Economy**

The Palaszczuk Government is investing to ensure that Queenslanders have the skills for jobs now and into the future.

Through our \$200 million Future Skills Fund, we will invest \$8 million through the delivery of a Digital Professional Workforce Plan.

Over four years this will support Queenslanders to access ICT and digital skilling, up-skilling and re-skilling education and training opportunities.

This investment is great news for Queenslanders who are looking for a career in the Digital Economy.

It supports the rapid pace and scale of digital transformation that we have witnessed through industry responses to COVID-19.

The Digital Professional Workforce Plan will be delivered with sector partners, with the aim of supplying an additional 10,000 digital professionals in Queensland by 2024.

## **Conclusion**

The Palaszczuk Government's Budget has a clear plan to Unite and Recover from the impacts of COVID—19.

And we are delivering on Queensland's plan for economic recovery.

Mr Speaker, I congratulate the Treasurer on an excellent Budget, and I commend the Bill to the House.