




Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (3.40 pm): The Treasurer said in his statement that this budget delivers some certainty for Queensland in a year when certainty, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, has been in short supply. We have heard those opposite try to play down the COVID-19 pandemic. They even today called it a scare. We know they did that from day one. They called for the borders to be opened in June 64 times. We saw how they ganged up with Prime Minister Morrison and Premier Berejiklian. It was the opposition and their southern backers, 'Team New South Wales Blue'. They attempted to force our borders open.

However, Queenslanders stuck together. Our Premier held strong. We knew we needed first to keep Queenslanders safe. On the other hand, the LNP kept fighting for 'Team Blue New South Wales'. They put up billboards. They said, even in June, that thousands of southerners needed to book their winter holidays on the Gold Coast. If we had buckled under the pressure from the opposition and let thousands of people come here from uncontrolled southern hotspots, we would have had every chance of devastating our whole economy.

The LNP wanted certainty for southerners—certainty for people from Sydney and Melbourne, where COVID was not able to be controlled—but of course they wanted risk and uncertainty for Queenslanders. Honourable members should think about that. They were putting the interests of southern holiday-makers above the interests of Queenslanders. They were putting Queensland workers' jobs at risk, joining the New South Wales Liberal campaign to gang up and coerce Queensland to take risks for Queenslanders' health. The LNP wants to be the backers of 'Team Blue New South Wales'. However, we know that, just like the State of Origin, we are beating New South Wales. Southerners may have written us off, just like they did our Origin team, but Queenslanders are scoring tries on the economic scoreboard. I will share just a few examples. The most recent final demand figure for September was 6.8 per cent.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr POWER: Sorry, I will repeat that for those opposite. The most recent final demand figure for September was 6.8 per cent. We are leading the nation, which was 2.3 per cent lower. We also know that we have lower debt than New South Wales and 11.6 per cent growth in household consumption when Australia as a whole has 7.9 per cent. Of course, Queensland is the only state with an economy larger now than before the crisis. The national economy has contracted by 3.5 per cent. More importantly, we know that more Queenslanders are working now than before COVID-19. We are the only state that can say that. Just like our maroon boys on the field, all Queenslanders are winning on the economic scoreboard.

We learnt the strategy of the LNP when the member for Mermaid Beach told the House that the LNP's gross failure to protect Queenslanders during the COVID-19 pandemic would be a distant memory in a few years. I do not think Queenslanders will forget so quickly. I also know that during the

next few years the Premier, the Deputy Premier and our Treasurer will be on the issues that we faced. Once again they will be smart and strong, will resist outside coercion in order to do the right thing for Queenslanders, and will deliver safety, security and growth for Queenslanders.

During the election I spoke with the Treasurer at the Kingdom Life Centre, the home of the Park Ridge Baptist Church. I said that some have falsely said that we need to choose between the economy and the health of our community. This is not the choice we have. Instead, we cannot have a strong economy with a raging pandemic. Instead, I said to the audience of the Kingdom Life Centre that no-one could have the confidence to invest, to purchase, to take the risk to start a small business, to take the plunge to buy a new home, to take on a new employee—to take on any of these investments—if our health is not controlled.

The Treasurer delivered the certainty of a Palaszczuk budget that delivers a strong health investment. It delivers not just health infrastructure like the Logan Hospital extension and car park but also the health workers—the cleaners, the wardies, the nurses and the doctors—and I want to thank them for all their hard work.

The Treasurer delivers economic certainty for Queensland, and the health minister, the Deputy Premier and the Premier deliver the health certainty we need. We need the confidence and certainty of a government that continues to keep Queenslanders safe. We have had one of the best health responses in the world and we have certainly delivered throughout this period in terms of both our health and our economy.

In Logan this budget funds the testing centres we set up at the Logan Hospital and the Browns Plains Community Health Centre. It also funds the next stage of construction and expansion of the Logan Hospital and completes the funding of the Munruben and Yarrabilba ambulance stations. It has the certainty of delivering education for Logan students, funding the new community TAFE in Yarrabilba, a new primary school in Greenbank-North MacLean opposite Pub Lane. We are building the new Park Ridge State School administration building, which means mums with prams and disabled people will finally be able to visit the office without going up old-fashioned stairs.

We are funding a new classroom in the growing Yarrabilba State School and Logan Reserve State School. We are building the new Hive Community Centre at Yarrabilba between the fantastic Yarrabilba State High School and Sam Damiano. Speaking of Sam Damiano, the Palaszczuk Labor government backs choice in education, supporting through capital investment the construction of Sam Damiano senior college and the current construction of the new library at St Clare's in Yarrabilba. The budget delivers the certainty of world-class learning spaces for Logan families. However, it is worth remembering that during their time in government, the LNP delivered no new state classrooms in the entire electorate of Logan. There were zero new classrooms.

We are investing in extra police and police resources, including a continued commitment to body worn cameras, the QLITE tablets and the new mobile Police Beat vans. I want to recognise the fantastic work of our local police officers, especially those at Browns Plains Police Station, Jimboomba Police Station and the new Yarrabilba-Logan Village station.

We are investing in Logan roads, with the largest investment in the four-laning of the Mount Lindesay Highway from Stoney Camp Road through to Chambers Flat Road and four lanes from Johanna Street to South Street. We have completed the fantastic sections of four-laning between Rosia Road and Stoney Camp Road, which the member for Scenic Rim was pictured at recently. There is also a new, higher northbound bridge and four-laning between Camp Cable Road and Johanna Street in Jimboomba.

These are vital projects that the LNP cut from their roads budgets when they were in government. We also need to remember that during their time in government, the last LNP government delivered no new funding on the Mount Lindesay Highway north of Jimboomba. There is nothing to show for that.

Mr Krause interjected.

Mr POWER: The member for Scenic Rim interjects. He remembers the two turning lanes that were valued at over \$600,000 that no longer exist because of the North MacLean safety project, so there was nothing north of Jimboomba. I thought they would have learnt from that. All they have learnt is that they cannot cut from the Mount Lindesay Highway. That is why I was shocked when, just two days before the election, the member for Everton came out—and that was after the majority of Logan voters and indeed the majority of Scenic Rim voters had already voted—and announced that they were going to cut \$37.5 million in investment and they were going to dump the section of four-laning between Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat road, the project we were jointly funding with the federal government. They were going to cut the funding for the largest section of four-laning construction in the history of the Mount Lindesay Highway.

The Minister for Main Roads has delivered certainty for the future on the Mount Lindesay Highway, but the LNP would deliver uncertainty, risks and cuts. Their desperate, risky push for a surplus was to be paid for by the drivers of Logan. Logan residents know we simply cannot trust the LNP on roads funding. They cut it when in government and now they would secretly cut the funding for a vital four-laning project between Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat Road.

I have to note that the LNP members have made a false assertion in their claim that the debt is greater after the election. They are simply misleading the House. As the chair of the Economics and Governance Committee I can say that this was made absolutely clear in the COVID-19 economic review. It is on page 15. It has already been tabled, so members can easily access that. It was made absolutely clear that it negatively affected the revenues of the states and the Commonwealth alike while at the same time increasing expenses. The fiscal balances on page 15 report on the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

Further, the member for Everton asked directly about the future deficits in 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Treasurer made it absolutely clear that there would be further deficits in this state, as all states' revenues were reduced from the COVID-19 pandemic. I urge members to read pages 15 and 16 of the committee's report and to stop misleading the House. We should not mislead Queenslanders during this period of recovery. Misinformation, whether health or economic, is risky for our economy.

The budget shows that Queensland is economically recovering and that every Queenslander has contributed to the world's best COVID-19 economic response. Now the Palaszczuk government is giving certainty in backing Queenslanders. I want to see Queenslanders lead the world's best COVID-19 economic recovery.