




Speech By
Hon. Mark Bailey

MEMBER FOR MILLER

Record of Proceedings, 3 December 2020

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (1.47 am): This week the Treasurer delivered a solid Labor budget that sets out Queensland's path to economic recovery and implements the Palaszczuk Labor government's election commitments. It is a path we can travel with confidence thanks to Queensland's world-leading health response to the COVID pandemic. Unlike the LNP, the Palaszczuk Labor government listened and acted on health advice to protect Queenslanders' health and Queensland's economy.

It is concerning to read comments in the media today from a Greens party MP who has adopted the LNP's constant political attack on Queensland's world-leading management of the COVID-19 pandemic throughout 2020. The Greens party MP for Maiwar is quoted as saying, 'There had clearly been decisions made on the basis of politics rather than health advice.' That sounds familiar, does it not? I note the Greens party did not question the Palaszczuk Labor government's handling of the pandemic before the election. Yet now they are elected, with LNP preferences in South Brisbane, they are now cooperating with the LNP to undermine confidence in our world-leading health response, which I take the strongest objection to.

The US death toll from COVID-19 is 270,000 people and rising, while tragically Europe's death toll is sadly comparable. We are not out of the woods yet with the virus, as second and third waves overseas show, but the Greens party irresponsibly ignore the hundreds of media conferences and thousands of questions our Chief Health Officer has answered live on air day after day, to try to politicise this crucial public health issue long before this crisis is over, just like the LNP did and still does.

It is sad to see the Greens party has joined the LNP in this squalid exercise in undermining our health response, so I call it out for what it is. It is repulsive and I condemn it as dangerous and irresponsible. It is similar to what happened after the 2017 state election when the Greens party member for Maiwar moved amendments to water down Labor's tough tree-clearing laws only months after the election, only to back down once the tactic was exposed. Do not listen to what the Greens party claim; watch what they do.

While I am talking about irresponsible behaviour during a pandemic that adds risks to our state budget, our economy and people's health, it is impossible to overlook the reckless and arrogant behaviour this year of the new LNP leader, the member for Broadwater. In April this year, at the height of the first and only wave Queensland has experienced to date, the member for Broadwater attacked our Chief Health Officer—attacking her and other health officials as 'punch drunk bureaucrats who are power hungry'. They were his words.

The opposition leader has never apologised or withdrawn this unwarranted political attack at the height of the pandemic on one of the most effective chief health officers in the world. He is no leader. Dr Young has my and this government's 100 per cent support, and this strong budget is only possible

because the Premier had the wisdom to act on Dr Young's advice from day one. He showed in that moment that, while he pretends to be different, he is in fact cut from the same negative, knocking, whinging and whining political style as the member for Nanango, where science and expert advice were attacked regularly for political gain.

The economic challenges we must overcome remain some of the toughest in our state's history, but Queensland's economy is in a stronger position than most others because the Premier was strong on our borders. While work on construction sites across the world wound down and ground to a halt during the pandemic, work on major projects continued without interruption across Queensland, and in some cases accelerated. Thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government's record \$56 billion infrastructure program in the budget, thousands of Queensland workers kept their jobs and will have a job because we believe in them.

The LNP talk infrastructure, yet they have no plan to fund infrastructure and in fact attack us for borrowing the funds to fund that infrastructure, which many governments are doing. We remember the LNP's costings botch-up where they raided regional and Sunshine Coast road funding to pay for their puny second M1 on the Gold Coast.

An honourable member: Puny.

Mr BAILEY: It was puny. It was only six kilometres. We are doing 16 kilometres and we are fully funding it. The LNP were trying to fund it by raiding regional roads and Sunshine Coast roads. That was a disgrace.

This budget is the fifth record transport and roads budget out of six Labor budgets after the cutting, sacking and selling of Campbell Newman and the member for Broadwater when he was the member for Mundingburra. This \$26.9 billion commitment over four years under QTRIP supports more than 23,600 jobs—a majority of them in regional Queensland. I welcome our new regional MPs—the members for Bundaberg, Hervey Bay, Nicklin and Caloundra, as well as the member for Pumicestone. Queenslanders voted very clearly for this government, with a 1.9 per cent swing to it. We will return the faith.

As part of our COVID response in the transport sector, we did support essential workers and maintain all services, as well as increased cleaning and sanitisation, which continues. We introduced cashless payments and rear-door boarding to support safer trips for commuters and drivers. This week we confirmed that 105 train services added to the network in August temporarily to support social distancing would become permanent fixtures. We will also extend an extra 175 bus services until mid-2021 to give commuters more travel options around peak travel times. The freezing of public transport fares in 2021 has been well received by the public.

The Palaszczuk Labor government's continued commitment to record transport and roads in Queensland also includes \$4.8 billion in stimulus funding for infrastructure in the roads and transport space after working collaboratively with the federal government. We will build Queensland's biggest rail projects: Cross River Rail, stage 3 of Gold Coast Light Rail and the Sunshine Coast rail duplication. The business case is done and is fully funded under this government, with joint funding from the federal government.

Queensland trains will be built in Maryborough and we will see the supply chain lock in there as well. We were not going to send them overseas like the LNP did. In fact, they even tried to do it again at the last election. In the costings released two days before the election, there were zero dollars to build trains in Queensland. That was two days before the election. Well done, LNP. They are just amazing. You could not make this up. You really could not. The Sunshine Coast rail duplication will support 333 jobs.

The new LNP leader showed in his lightweight budget reply speech that his style has not changed from the member for Nanango. When he was in the cabinet his own party did not even fund a business case for the Sunshine Coast rail duplication, let alone fund it and start construction—which we will next year.

No wonder the LNP lost Caloundra and Nicklin and suffered massive swings against them on the Sunshine Coast—3.8 per cent in Kawana which was double the statewide swing; 4.3 per cent in Ninderry; 5.9 per cent in Caloundra; and, wait for it, the biggest swing on the Sunshine Coast, 6.1 per cent in Buderim. That was more than triple the average swing across the state. What did they do? They promoted the member for Buderim. That is the punchline. They booted the member for Ninderry and the member for Glass House, who had much better results, and they promoted the bloke who made his seat marginal. They are really doing things differently over there.

Today, being the International Day of People with Disability, this Labor budget backs all commuters with \$500 million in accessibility upgrades across South-East Queensland. That is why we established a disability advisory committee to be chaired by Judge Forde. We will also invest nearly

\$21 million in supporting the taxi industry to update its fleet with wheelchair accessible taxis. We will remove barriers at rail crossings as well, with \$241 million for level crossings at Beams Road, Boundary Road and Lindum station.

The \$371 million rollout of smart ticketing will continue, giving Queensland commuters access to the same convenient system of payment across the whole state—using your credit card, your debit card, your smartphone, your smartwatch—whether in Cairns or Coolangatta. Strangely, the Greens party MPs who claim they support public transport bizarrely criticise our smart ticketing program. Wherever it has been put in we have found that it massively boosts public transport patronage and of course it reduces carbon emissions because people do not drive their cars. They take the train or other public transport. Reducing emissions does not seem to be a Greens party priority. We are also running more than 8,400 weekly rail services—the most in 155 years of Queensland Rail.

The M1 is well covered. There are billions of dollars going into the M1 over the forwards, along with the second M1—\$1.5 billion in locked and loaded joint funding between the federal government and us, with construction to start next year. This road was blocked by the LNP when the member for Broadwater was in cabinet. That was well reported at the time. The Leader of the Opposition's wafer thin budget reply speech yesterday won the 'whine of the week' award. He wallowed in whinging about the project that he blocked. We got it going. We gazetted all three sections. We did the public consultation. We landed \$1.5 billion—half of it from the federal government—to get it going, and there he is having a whine and a whinge. He has obviously been having tutorials from the member for Nanango because the style has not changed.

There is \$200 million for the inland freight route. There is funding for the Mount Isa rail line, the Townsville port, the Smithfield bypass and the Cairns Ring Road. We will continue sealing the road to Weipa in Cape York. There is the Townsville Ring Road stage 5, Riverway Drive stage 2, Stuart Drive in Townsville, the Walkerston bypass, Proserpine Shute Harbour Road, the Rockhampton Ring Road, the Gympie bypass, Townsville channel access, new maritime jobs, a new shipping service between Townsville and Brisbane, and more than \$1 billion going to targeted road safety initiatives. What an infrastructure budget that is!

Then we have our fully funded \$12.6 billion 15-year Bruce Highway investment program. It is not a hoax but a fully funded program. I note the shadow minister for transport and main roads' suggestion that I should go for a drive from start to finish on the Bruce Highway. I thank him for his thoughtfulness, even though he seems to have forgotten that he was copying my Bruce blitz from the 2017 project. It took him three years to get around to it—an election year. He got there eventually.

It must have been quite a sight. Leaving Belmont behind, the member for Chatsworth in his BMW cabriolet has the top down, with his immaculately white BMW Motorsport cap tightly fitted, a shiny coat of 50-plus sunscreen and his cravat flapping in the breeze. If he is really committed, I want to see pictures. He should table some pictures so we can see his convertible beemer on the Bruce. I hope he is generous and I hope he backs us in. There were 33 projects underway on the Bruce under us and four funded by the LNP in the three years the member for Broadwater was there.

In closing, this is a good budget for my local electorate as well. There is an injection of almost \$6 million to improve the learning experiences in our school system; more than \$2 million shared amongst seven different sporting clubs to fund change rooms, including a number of women's change facilities in AFL clubs; as well as field and lighting upgrades. Local hospitals welcome \$20.7 million on the PA Hospital extra and \$7.8 million for child services at the old Yeronga TAFE site, which will be redeveloped. That is welcomed by the local community.

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to inform you that the Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation, and as such I ask that the remainder of my speech is incorporated into *Hansard*. The LNP says I am not generous, but there you go.

The speech read as follows—

Active Transport

Labor will continue to invest in active transport options, like bike riding and walking, supported by \$243 million for infrastructure like cycleways, rail trails and shared paths. That includes projects like:

- the \$5.4 million North Brisbane Bikeway
- the \$12.2 million New England Highway Cycleway between Highfields and Toowoomba
- the \$23.8 million Cairns Southern Access Cycleway
- the \$19.1 million Bundaberg to Gin Gin Rail Trail between Bundaberg and Koolboo Road.

On the Sunshine Coast, construction continues at Bruce Highway upgrades at the Maroochydore and Mons roads interchanges, while we will start six-laning between Caboolture-Bribie Island Road and Steve Irwin Way later this month.

The \$34.1 million Southern Moreton Bay Islands Ferry Terminal upgrades, jointly funded by Redland City Council, will progress, as will the \$72 million Northern Transitway project.

We are continuing with works in the western Brisbane suburbs, finishing the \$400 million Ipswich Motorway upgrade and the \$80 million Summers Road interchange continuing construction, and starting the newly committed \$244 million Centenary Bridge duplication.

\$75 million allocated to upgrade the Mount Lindesay Highway between Stoney Camp Road and Chambers Flat Road; and \$53 million between Johanna and South Street.

Cross River Rail

Cross River Rail continues to ramp up in this budget with station boxes excavation advanced with the pair of 1350 tonne Tunnel Boring Machines soon to be moved into position in Woolloongabba to tunnel 10.2 kilometres of new rail line from Dutton Park to Bowen Hills, 5.9 kilometres of twin tunnels under the Brisbane River and CBD.

This exciting project will revolutionise public transport with the first genuine underground line, with a European Train Control System a world-class train signalling system, as well as new Gold Coast stations at Pimpama, Helensvale North and Merrimac, and upgrades to stations at Salisbury, Rocklea, Moorooka, Yeerongpilly, Yeronga, Fairfield, Dutton Park and Exhibition.

Cross River Rail will support up to 7,700 full-time equivalent jobs and 450 new apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities during construction.

Taxi/Limousine Industry

We delivered a \$23.2 million financial assistance package for the taxi and limousine industry through the economic impacts of COVID-19. Sustainable electric future.

Sustainable electric future

We're enacting its Zero Net Emissions Roadmap, including replacing the bus fleet with cleaner electric models by encouraging local electric vehicle manufacturing and assembly.

Next year will be a big year of testing and trialling different electric bus models across the state including: two electric buses trialled at Yarrabilba; one across Redland Bay; 10 across Logan/Brisbane; five in Cairns and five on the Gold Coast. We'll also trial two bioethanol buses in Mackay next year, powered by locally produced bioethanol.