




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 10 September 2020

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Ms SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (4.00 pm): I rise to support both the Appropriation Bill 2020 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2020. Prior to COVID-19 the Palaszczuk government was on track to deliver its fifth consecutive budget surplus. However, 2020 has been a year like no other with governments across the world having to deal with the impacts of COVID-19, leading the federal Treasurer to announce that Australia has plunged into our first recession in nearly three decades. I have been pretty astounded to hear some of the contributions of those opposite who have had nothing constructive to say. They have been nasty and negative every step of the way, with the Leader of the Opposition calling 64 times for the borders to be opened. That would have meant that construction sites and businesses on the Gold Coast could have been shut down had we ended up with a second wave like Victoria. They have their heads in the sand when it comes to this global pandemic and, frankly, it is frightening.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): Order.

An opposition member: I'm not going to sit here and listen to that.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! You do not have to. You can leave if you do not want to listen.

Ms SCANLON: Thankfully, because of the strong leadership of our Premier, the Palaszczuk government has focused on our health response, enabling us to manage the economic response and unite and recover more quickly than other states and countries around the world. In fact, Queensland's expected economic recovery from COVID-19 will be almost twice as strong as the national average.

The bill before the House seeks to provide the supplementary appropriation for the 2019-20 financial year for unforeseen expenditure and also appropriates additional interim supply for the 2020-21 financial year so that we can continue supporting Queenslanders' health, jobs and businesses. It should be noted that ordinarily if a department's expenditure exceeds the amount appropriated for the financial year, the additional expenditure is regarded as 'unforeseen' and then approved by the Governor in Council to be included in the supplementary appropriation bill. However, we have considered it appropriate to seek parliamentary approval to provide transparency to Queenslanders.

As part of our economic recovery plan, we have rolled out more than \$7 billion in initiatives including \$1.2 billion in health measures to double our intensive care capacity, triple emergency department capacity, employ more paramedics, expand fever clinics, fast-track non-urgent surgery and appointments, and expand community screening, contact tracing and 13HEALTH services. This is on top of the investment made by this Palaszczuk government to restore the frontline services that those opposite cut when last in government.

We have rolled out \$950 million in payroll tax relief, and I can report that on the Gold Coast that has assisted over 1,040 taxpayers. We have provided \$400 million for land tax relief and just this week we announced a further \$249 million to extend payroll and land tax measures, something I know is very much welcomed by the business community. We have provided \$360 million to exempt the JobKeeper payments from payroll tax and \$196 million in small business adaptation grants of up to \$10,000. Just on the Gold Coast that has supported 2,800 businesses like EXP Plastics in Nerang, Aromas of India in Highland Park, Mount Nathan Winery through to the Pink Hotel in Coolangatta.

We have provided \$50 million in support for tourism businesses, \$25 million in housing and homelessness support as well as our \$100 million Works for Tradies program to deliver even more social housing. We will also support our regional councils to help them refinance existing debt, allowing them to redirect funding for job-creating capital works programs. Of course, through our Works for Queensland program, we have already provided over \$10 million to the Gold Coast city council to deliver projects like the Pacific Pines Community Hub expansion within my community, not only delivering a great community asset but also creating local jobs for tradies.

Schools across the Gold Coast will also share in nearly \$24 million worth of new projects, minor works and upgrades thanks to the funding boost from the Palaszczuk government including upgrading the amenities at Nerang State High School, making them more comfortable for students. That is something I know the principal, Scott Ison, and the P&C have welcomed. This funding boost is on top of the more than \$100 million being invested on the Gold Coast to deliver much needed facilities such as additional classrooms and refurbishments, as well as a brand new primary school in Pimpama and a new special school in Coomera.

Our \$477 million Cooler Cleaner Schools Program will put air conditioning in every classroom, library and staffroom in every state school in Queensland. That is something for which I campaigned heavily. I remind those opposite that under their leadership Queensland state schools would have needed to wait eight years until students received those much needed air conditioning units.

We have also been rolling out our solar panels on school rooftops to help offset the cost—190,000 in total. Under this government, nearly two million households in Queensland will see another \$50 taken off their electricity bills from this month thanks to Queensland's publicly owned power assets. This is in addition to our COVID household relief package, which provided Queensland households with \$200 off their utility bills and \$500 for small businesses. We can do this because we still own our energy assets—assets that those opposite wanted to sell. Unlike other states, the dividends from our publicly owned companies do not flow to multinational shareholders overseas but to Queensland families across the state. We have also locked in an additional \$50 dividend payment to go to Queensland households next year, in 2021.

Queensland's publicly owned electricity companies will invest more than \$1.76 billion in capital works in the 2020-21 financial year, supporting up to 3,920 jobs. Through measures contained in this bill, we will invest \$500 million in a renewable energy fund that will mean our publicly owned energy corporations can increase public ownership of commercial renewable energy projects and support infrastructure, complementing our recent \$145 million commitment to establish three renewable energy zones. These measures will help Queensland reach our 50 per cent renewable energy target by 2030, a target those opposite wanted to scrap.

On top of our massive M1 upgrades, light rail to Burleigh extension and exit upgrades, we are investing \$400 million in new, accelerated funding for Queensland roads, including the Gold Coast Highway and Toolona Street pedestrian upgrade and the Beaudesert Nerang Road and Maudsland Road intersection upgrade in my electorate. Our infrastructure investment under the Palaszczuk government has increased every year since we were elected. That is in stark contrast to those opposite, who did not spend a single new dollar on the M1 when last in government despite holding every single Gold Coast seat. They also managed to cut capital spending every year when the Leader of the Opposition was Campbell Newman's assistant treasurer.

The Palaszczuk government has an economic recovery plan which delivers \$7 billion in recovery measures, and with \$4 billion announced through the COVID-19 Fiscal and Economic Review, we will deliver a direct COVID stimulus of \$11 billion in total. We are up-front about how we intend to pay for our promises, following the advice of the Reserve Bank Governor and the approach of the Morrison government. In stark contrast, the LNP has made \$23 billion in unfunded election commitments. Of course, the member for Southport attended a Gold Coast Chamber of Commerce event last month. He stated—

The reason that I'm running again is that I've got some unfinished business, as does the LNP. In the two and a half short years that we were in government, we set about a very significant reform agenda for the state of Queensland ...

Let's look at that 'reform agenda' just on the Gold Coast: 68 frontline health jobs cut, including staff in general surgery roles, palliative care and in the cancer care and treatment unit; 16 workers with QBuild cut—

Mr KRAUSE: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order under standing order 118(b), relevance. I do not know how this is relevant to the Appropriation Bill.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Pugh): I am listening to the member for Gaven's contribution, and there is no point of order.

Ms SCANLON: They do not like their track record. Some 16 workers with QBuild were cut, 48 local TAFE workers were cut, 53 workers from road maintenance crews were cut, and funding for the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre and Gold Coast disability advocacy organisations—they assist some of our most vulnerable members—was cut. When the Leader of the Opposition says that she—

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I can barely hear the member on her feet. Member for Glass House, I have called for order. Member for Buderim!

Ms SCANLON: When the Leader of the Opposition says that she will 'get rid of waste', the member for Everton says that their agenda is cutting the waste and the member for Southport says that the LNP have unfinished business, those opposite need to be up-front with Queenslanders about what they will cut, who they will sack and what they will sell. I commend these bills to the House.