



Speech By  
**Melissa McMahon**


**MEMBER FOR MACALISTER**

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

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 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (11.00 pm): I rise to speak to the appropriation bills before the House and acknowledge the foundation that they lay for Queensland's economic recovery. As I stand here in the parliament I acknowledge the privilege that I have to be an elected member of this House and the honour I have in representing my local area. If there is one thing I am especially proud of right now, it is being a Queenslander.

Thinking back to that briefing that members of the 56th Parliament received in this House in March about what COVID-19 might mean for Queensland and Australia and then seeing what transpired in overseas countries with the absolute tragic loss of life, I stand here thankful for being a Queenslander. I am thankful that we have a Premier who was and is prepared to make the tough decisions in the interests of Queensland and particularly those who are most vulnerable. I am thankful for her leadership, her decisiveness and her foresight, because Queensland saw this coming. Queensland declared this a public health emergency when everyone was calling us alarmists. We introduced the first industry assistance package within three weeks of declaring the public health emergency and we were calling on a national strategy two months before the federal government finally introduced international border closures and restrictions. Now here we are in Queensland, good to go. Queensland is open for business and on a solid path to fiscal recovery.

In May pubs and clubs opened with stage 1 restrictions and in June we were at stage 2. In July we eased back to stage 3 restrictions. We could do that in Queensland well before the other eastern states because our priority, our No. 1 priority, was always safeguarding the health of Queenslanders, and that was the precondition required to get our economy going again.

I acknowledge the work of the Treasurer and Treasury officials in handing down this budget—I did hear a remark that it was a boring budget—a budget that just gets on with doing what we said it would do and what we committed to doing. We committed to delivering jobs; we committed to growing the economy out of this global pandemic. This budget does this and more. We are the only state to have recovered all the jobs that were lost during COVID-19, and data as recent as this week shows that Queensland is leading the way with the fastest economic growth in the country, and this budget builds on that.

While it is all well and good to look at national league tables on recovery, where my electorate of Macalister really benefits from the Palaszczuk Labor government's budget is in its commitment to not only build the infrastructure that Queensland needs to foster resilience and create jobs needed right now but prepare and ready Queensland for future prosperity. There are a number of road infrastructure projects funded in this budget on which residents will see work get underway. The largest of these is undoubtedly the continuing M1 upgrades, currently working their way through Underwood, Rochedale and Springwood. Now initial planning is underway to extend the busway past Springwood. A dedicated

busway past Daisy Hill through to Loganholme is the key to getting Logan residents out of their cars and off the M1. I had been a busway commuter from Loganholme and Springwood. For many years my husband and I spent twice as long on a bus travelling from Loganholme to Eight Mile Plains than we did from Eight Mile Plains to the city. That is the difference a dedicated busway will make to public transport users in Logan.

Road upgrades that Macalister residents will see undertaken in their local area in the current financial year include the widening of Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road between Bannockburn Road and Mell Street. The design work commenced for the widening of Beaudesert-Beenleigh Road to four lanes between Milne Street and Tallagandra Road, intersection upgrades along Mount Cotton Road at German Church Road and Coorang Road, road safety and intersection upgrades along Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road, the signalisation of Beenleigh-Redland Bay Road and Kruger Road at Carbrook, and planning commences for the Beenleigh Better Roads Project. These are all happening this financial year. With these announcements of vital road upgrades will come roadworks, so I thank residents in advance for their patience for the foreseeable future. We are on the road to prosperity.

Queensland's future prosperity will be closely linked to the development and sustainment of a skilled workforce. I am proud to see this government's investment in our future tradies. Macalister is ground zero for tradies. The 2017 announcement contributing to the establishment of the Beenleigh Trade Training Centre was a perfect fit. Opened last year, it is already at capacity, so I welcomed the government's investment of a further \$20 million. Critically, this investment will establish the Queensland apprenticeship centre in renewable hydrogen energy. This will position Beenleigh to be the home of world-class training facilities in the industry of the future.

I am pleased to see work commencing on our state school upgrades. Work will be completed in the current financial year on the manual arts block upgrade at Beenleigh State High School. Principal Matt O'Hanlon took me on a tour of the current facility a few months back. While the original fit-out of the building from the 1960s was still serviceable, the needs of modern trades will take pride of place in the new layout.

The primary school students of Edens Landing State School will see their new senior outdoor activity area upgraded. Parents at the school told me that the area had not changed since they were students at the school. It is great to see this project, the brainchild of Principal Clint Curran with whom I have worked on this project for over a year, finally come to fruition.

Planning will also start on Beenleigh State High School's modern, new hall—a hall fit for the stunning Paddock to Plate event, with detailed design works to commence. Other design work to commence in our schools will be for the Carbrook State School \$500,000 expanded administration building, Windaroo State School's \$700,000 outdoor learning spaces and Mount Warren Park State School's \$1 million reroofing project. I will also be pleased to sit down with community leaders and stakeholders to advance the identification of a site for the new Bahrs Scrub State School, the first new school in my electorate in almost 30 years.

One of the biggest projects likely to transform the centre of my electorate, Beenleigh, is the identification of a site for a new justice precinct, a new police station needed for the additional police officers who will be coming to the south-east region in the next five years. Identifying the stakeholders to include who would benefit from such a precinct is key to getting this right. Work will begin to commence this process. This is the vision of the Labor government on show in this budget.

What vision did the Leader of the Opposition have for Queensland's future? It looked remarkably like 1957. I believe the Leader of the Opposition aspires to the leadership and success of Frank Nicklin. Considering Frank Nicklin as Leader of the Opposition steered the opposition to election losses in 1944, 1947, 1950, 1953 and 1956, I am impressed by his optimism—optimism to think that his party machine will forgive him not just one loss but five. Just ask the members for Nanango and Clayfield what happens after a loss. Perhaps I am deliberately misconstruing the Leader of the Opposition's statement. Forgive me. It appears to happen; the wilful prevarication is contagious when you sit on this side.

I was curious how great 1957 was. I clearly would not know and not even my mum was born then. The member for Bundamba has lent me his DeLorean. With the help of the yearbook of Australia in 1957 I went back and had a look. In 1957 only 75 members sat in this House, keeping in mind certain non-Europeans were excluded from voting at that time. Papua New Guinea and Nauru were territories under Australia's management. The average weekly wage for males in Queensland was 303 shillings a week. Females were mandated to only have 66 per cent of that pay at 201 shillings a week. The basic wage was 228 shillings a week. I might add that in this socialist utopia that the Leader of the Opposition wants to take us back to, it was mandated that the basic wage must be sufficient to maintain an employee, his wife and three children in an average standard of comfort.

Interestingly enough, on average a worker's rent made up nearly 11 per cent of weekly expenses. Perhaps in this new utopia the Leader of the Opposition will ensure that a Queenslander's rent will cost only 11 per cent of their weekly wage, or perhaps it will be a social housing panacea where we can all have affordable housing. Perhaps he will guarantee us wages so high. Perhaps, but I think perhaps not. Either way, what this budget delivers for Queensland and for my electorate is an absolute game changer. I commend the bills to the House.