




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (1.05 am): On the Queensland Treasury website one will find a whole series of tables and population projections for the regions around Queensland. It may surprise members of the House somewhat to know that the projections for the Gold Coast are, as they have always been for the last three or four decades, that the Gold Coast will continue to grow significantly. In recent media reports we read of a spike in real estate sales. We read stories about the boom that is expected post COVID of southerners migrating to Queensland. Sadly, this is not a budget that takes that into account. In fact, if one looks at the capital expenditure for the Gold Coast—and we have all seen the Capital Statement, Budget Paper No. 3, that has been produced by the Treasurer—one can only be concerned about the lack of infrastructure spending that the Gold Coast will receive in the forthcoming year.

As the fastest growing region in the state, it hardly seems reasonable that the allocation of capital that has been made to the Gold Coast goes anywhere near meeting the needs of a rapidly growing city. In terms of population, the Gold Coast represents about 14½ per cent or 15 per cent of the state's total population. Turning to the table at the beginning of this budget document, specifically to section 2.2 of the budget at page 18, if we look at the total capital expenditure forecast for this year it is some \$13.5 billion across the state—that is, if this government is even capable of delivering more than 50 per cent or 60 per cent of that in the forthcoming year. Sadly, if we go through and add up line by line the commitments that have been made to the Gold Coast, it is less than three per cent of the state's total expenditure. Yet again the Gold Coast will miss out. It will not be getting its fair share of capital expenditure over the next 12 months, certainly not from this government.

Let us take a look at some of the detail in the capital expense budget. Southport in my electorate has 18 schools with some 20,000 young people attending the various schools within my electorate. There is no significant new capital investment or improvements for any of the schools and virtually nothing in terms of arts, culture, sports and recreation. Out of an education capital budget of \$1.78 billion, there is \$68 million committed to the Gold Coast. That is about four per cent of the total budget for a city that has 15 per cent of the state's population. There is nothing in the budget for Benowa State School, nothing in the budget for Southport State School, nothing in the budget for Bellevue Park State School, nothing in the budget for Musgrave Hill State School and nothing in the budget for Keebra Park State High School or Benowa State High School.

To be fair, there is \$1 million for long overdue access improvements for Southport Special School. I am pleased to note that at long last we will see another special school constructed on the Gold Coast in the north of the city in Coomera because the Southport Special School has been under a lot of pressure.

I have been out to all of my schools. I have met with my principals and the members of the P&F and over the years I have compiled an extensive list of fundamental things that the schools need, such as classroom upgrades. One of the fastest growing areas on the Gold Coast, apart from the northern growth corridor, is the suburb of Southport. We are seeing tremendous infill development. We will get the spin-off as the Commonwealth Games Village continues to fill over the next year or two. Every one of my state schools is currently at capacity. In terms of the \$14 million that my principals have identified that needs to be spent within the Southport electorate, there are no commitments in this capital works budget.

In terms of the arts, culture, sport and recreation—there are many great sporting clubs and cultural organisations, not just in Southport but the length and breadth of the Gold Coast—we see a commitment in the capital statement of \$370 million. There is not one cent to any sporting club or cultural group within my electorate from this state government. The member for Gaven is going to have to lift her game if she is going to be a voice for the Gold Coast. We heard her speak today about the \$2.5 million for the Screen Queensland reality television hub, but that will not improve change rooms at sporting fields within Southport, it will not repair the roofs on some of our sporting clubs and it is certainly not going to encourage more young people to get involved in sport. What Southport gets out of this budget is zilch, zip, zero. There is not one cent for HOTA either. HOTA is a wonderful project that was driven by our local mayor on the Gold Coast. It is a great vision for the city.

Let us take a quick look at Health in the budget. There is a \$1.6 billion budget for the state of Queensland and the Gold Coast gets about \$19 million for a new CT scanner for the Robina Hospital and \$700,000 to make over the Gold Coast Ambulance Operations Centre in Southport, but that is it. That is less than one per cent of the total capital budget for the state in a city that represents 15 per cent. No new drug and alcohol treatment facilities, no expansion of facilities at Robina or Gold Coast University hospitals, just some vague promise about some new facility up in Coomera and we are still not quite sure what that is.

Let me turn now to social housing. This is interesting. There is a total capital budget of \$411 million but virtually no detail. There are two pages and every single line item has the word 'various' beside it. We do not know where that capital is going. To be fair, there are some items that are identified as special projects in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities up north and in other parts of the state, but in terms of the breakdown that we would ordinarily expect to see in the budget, in this ill-prepared budget that we have been delivered there is no detail. We have no idea what extra public housing there will be on the Gold Coast from Currumbin to Coomera. I have no idea what is going to be happening in Southport.

Mr de Brenni interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: That is what it sounds like, member for Springwood. I take that interjection from the member for Springwood. As the former minister, his commitment was to actually build less public housing. He made a \$1.8 billion commitment over 10 years, which was \$180 million a year, and that is exactly the amount that is in the capital works budget with the word 'various' beside it. I would like to know, and I think the House deserves to know, exactly where that money is going to be spent over the next couple of years.

Perhaps the Treasurer, who has committed to an extra \$28 billion of debt, might like to have a chat to his counterpart in Victoria and ask him a little bit about their big housing build. They have just committed \$5.3 billion to fund and construct 12,000 new dwellings, which is a significant investment. I am not suggesting that that is perhaps the scale that we need to go to, but certainly I think Queenslanders deserve more than \$180 million worth of social and public housing in the year ahead. I would like to know where that is going to go. In terms of the total budget for housing, which is \$411 million, what does the Gold Coast get? I guess that is a surprise. So much for the *Not now, not ever* commitments that we heard from that side of the House about three years ago.

Government members interjected.

A government member: It is on the front page!

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mrs Gerber): Cease your interjections, members.

Mr MOLHOEK: There is a figure on the front page, but show us the detail, because that is just a glossy brochure. There is no detail in here or breakdown about public housing.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Through the chair, member for Southport.

Mr MOLHOEK: There is no commitment in there to crisis accommodation for women in response to the *Not now, not ever* report.

Government members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Cease your interjections.

Mr MOLHOEK: Just like the previous minister's promises, this is a little bit like a Christmas bauble: shiny on the outside, empty on the inside. I could go through in detail the budget for justice and public safety, but there is no money for the Gold Coast in terms of the Southport watch house. I am intrigued to know just where all these new police are going to come from that have been committed in the budget because in Queensland we now have fewer police than we had five years ago. It surprises me that given we have put an extra 30,000 or 40,000 public servants on in the last four or five years under this government, not one member of cabinet had the courage or the temerity to suggest that maybe a thousand of those 30,000 extra public servants could be police. Maybe we could actually have some extra police across the state rather than just another promise to deliver some 2,000 police over the next couple of years.

In terms of the energy networks, there is not a lot of money being spent on the Gold Coast. There is a little bit of money for maintenance. In terms of water, we get \$3 million to replace osmosis membranes at the Tugun desalination plant. The one that really concerns me is the transport budget. Yes, there is a commitment for \$194 million. It is all money that has been dressed up, re-promised and recommitted, but the total budget for transport in this state is \$6.2 billion and the Gold Coast gets just four per cent of that. With a city that has 15 per cent of the state's population we get four per cent of it.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Cease your interjections, please, Minister.

Mr MOLHOEK: Minister, I am not taking your interjections. This is my opportunity to talk about the budget. We have heard so many promises, but we have not seen too much delivered on the Gold Coast. There is \$12 million for the Coomera Connector. They will be planning that for another 10 years at the rate these people move. Fourteen years ago the former member for Southport released a glossy brochure promising to upgrade the Southport-Nerang Road between Wardoo Street and Queen Street. That is not even in QTRIP. It is nowhere in these documents. It is not even a consideration and yet it is a state controlled road and a priority road.

Government members interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I hear the interjections from the other side: 'You guys were in here for two years and you could have done all of this.' We were so busy cleaning up the mess that we inherited and trying to sort out the debacle and the disasters that were left by those on the other side. That is exactly what is going to happen in four years from now when Queenslanders have to face a debt escalation of another \$28 billion. Those members opposite have form in previous elections.

Previously their form was to say, 'We won't sell assets' and then have the biggest asset sale in the history of Queensland. They went to the last election promising Queenslanders that the debt would go up by only \$4 billion as a result of COVID, but in the first sitting back they say, 'Sorry about that and what a surprise: there will be another \$28 billion of debt!' It is a little bit like the housing budget. I will be very keen to see exactly the commitments to projects to be built and undertaken on the Gold Coast.

In summary, this year Labor's total commitment to the Gold Coast, if it is delivered, is a commitment to spend \$386 million on various infrastructure projects across the city. Out of a total budget of \$13.5 billion the Gold Coast, with a population that represents 15 per cent of the Queensland state, gets 2.8 per cent.