




Speech By
Adrian Tantari

MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (4.33 pm): As this is my first time on my feet since the passing of our comrade Duncan Pegg, the member for Stretton, I wish to add to the comments made by many members and pass on my condolences to his family. Whilst I did not know Duncan for long, I have been moved by the level of love shown in this place and by his community towards him. Vale Duncan.

I rise in support of the Appropriation Bill 2021. This budget continues to deliver the economic recovery that the people of Queensland and the electorate of Hervey Bay voted for last year. At that election, the electorate said they wanted a strong economic recovery coming off the back of a strong health response delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government. On Tuesday we heard that the Queensland economy has bounced back stronger and faster than the rest of the country and is well on its way, with a massive 3¼ per cent increase in state growth over this financial year. That is 13 times faster than was estimated in the last budget. The unemployment rate in Queensland posted the largest fall in the nation, falling to 5.4 per cent. That is now below its pre-COVID level. Employment increased by 32,000 alone in the last month. That is more than a thousand jobs created each and every day. With this budget, the Palaszczuk government has shown that its COVID economic recovery plan is working and it is delivering on its strong plan for growth and recovery by ensuring that our local economies rebound whilst the rest of the world must, unfortunately, still deal with the containment of the COVID virus.

As the honourable Treasurer said in his budget speech, the people of Queensland recognise the important things that matter, like better hospitals, smarter schools, safer roads and creating a pipeline of infrastructure that creates jobs for decades to come. The last budget spent big to keep jobs growth growing in Queensland, and this latest budget continues that trend by providing the funding for the many and varied programs and services needed to move us forward as a community. This budget continues to deliver on the promises made during the election to the people of the Hervey Bay electorate to build back better as we unite and recover.

Growth in jobs, health, education, infrastructure and housing is what this Labor budget is all about. One of the highlights included in this record budget was a record health spend across Queensland. In this there was further funding towards construction projects to improve facilities at the Hervey Bay Hospital, including the adult acute mental health inpatient unit. This new acute mental health inpatient unit is currently underway and will create more than 140 construction and health jobs. This is good news for jobs for our tradies, apprentices and nurses. This is a great outcome for the services needed in Hervey Bay, and I must congratulate the Palaszczuk government for showing the way in growing our local health services.

Sadly, in contrast, the Morrison LNP federal government has slashed the Medicare rebate on over 900 procedures, damaging the health of Hervey Bay residents. Anyone from the LNP in Hervey Bay who supports this ought to hang their heads in shame. The LNP federal budget is going to decimate

Medicare, putting pressure on our local health system and making personal health care in Hervey Bay less affordable, particularly for the most vulnerable in our community like pensioners, seniors and mums and dads. Let us not talk about what the LNP has done in creating doctor shortages across our regions. It is just disgraceful.

At the last election, I said to the people of the Hervey Bay electorate that I would work to make the Hervey Bay electorate the centre of learning and skills excellence in the Wide Bay. In this budget, schools in the Hervey Bay electorate will receive additional and ongoing funding. With education, this budget provides: a further \$150,000 to the Hervey Bay Special School to refurbish the second stage of the trade training centre; continued funding for the new hall facilities being built at the Urangan State High School and the Urangan Point State School; the ongoing build at the Hervey Bay State High School; and a further \$343,000 towards the Urangan State High School canteen upgrade plus \$1 million towards new security fencing. We are keeping our students and teachers safe and their educational outcomes stronger with better facilities.

On top of the continuation of the highly successful free TAFE for those under 25—which, by the way, has an exceptional uptake in Hervey Bay—the Hervey Bay TAFE will receive upgrades to nursing and allied health infrastructure aligned to health and biomedical training, as well as further funding in training investment. This is on the back of the continuation of the highly successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work and Back to Work programs. This funding program provides Hervey Bay businesses with the confidence to employ local jobseekers who have experienced a period of unemployment and helps workers facing disadvantage in the labour market. These programs are giving people the skills they need to be job ready and giving them further pathways back into work.

Again, this is in direct contrast to those opposite who have in the past tried to dismantle and privatise the TAFE system. They just hate a publicly owned and run TAFE system. This was never more evident than in the recent Morrison LNP federal government budget's disgraceful announcement—or, should I say, nonannouncement, because they are saying nothing—that the Morrison government are cutting funding to the TAFE sector, which is shameful. Reducing the funding to TAFE leaves the heavy lifting back on the state again. I suppose we are getting used to this from that mob on the other side.

This proves that those on the other side could not care less about uplifting people into better jobs. They only care about lining their own pockets. As always, we on this side are giving back and those on the other side are taking away.

Mr Speaker has reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

Speaker, the 2021 State budget continues to provide funding for the services required for people with a disability. By ensuring on going funding for advocacy services, for NDIS worker screening and funds towards support to assist ineligible NDIS clients. As a father of a son with a lifelong disability, I understand how important it is for NDIS clients and support workers to feel their supported and this budget provides these measures for our most needy group of people.

Another big win for Hervey Bay in this budget is the number of massive road upgrades coming online through this budget.

- \$800 000 towards the construction of the much-needed Maryborough—Hervey Bay Road and Pialba—Burrum Heads Road intersection which the Hervey Bay electorate shares with my learned colleague, the Assistant Minister Bruce Saunders Maryborough electorate—this is a major piece of infrastructure for our respective electorates and one that is needed right now. I thank the Assistant Minister for showing this leadership on this project and ensuring that the safety of our combined residents is put first, over the immature budget games, being played by the Federal Member for Hinkler. Yet again, another LNP member who can't read budget papers, and this time it his own Federal budget!—what a ruse he has tried to pull on the people!
- There is also \$2.5 million is being committed to assist in the construction of the Urraween to Boundary Road connector
- There will be new traffic lights installed at the Boundary Rd and Robert Street, intersection to ensure safety for the many thousands of school and community commuters, that pass through this intersection every day
- And there is many more new active transport, raised priority crossings and shared path along the length and breadth of Hervey Bay.

These new upgrades will make safer and more convenient roads, paths and transport networks, which will allow greater connectivity around the electorate for Hervey Bay's residents.

With Housing, I am proud to be part of a government that has invested in a record budget for spending on housing and homelessness services. \$1.9 billion dollars will be spent in the State over the next 4 years to increase the supply of social housing, upgrade the existing stock of dwellings, and deliver critical housing services to vulnerable people.

Across the Fraser Coast this means 10 units of accommodation will built costing \$2.8 million. The Palaszczuk Labor Government will also establish a \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, with its returns being used to drive new housing supply to support housing needs across the state.

This contrasts with no new funding for social housing being announced at all by the Morrison LNP Federal Government in their budget, which is disgraceful.

The Morrison LNP Federal Government gives nothing, then say that the State Government is to blame for the housing stress being felt by decent hardworking battlers in Hervey Bay! They have not given a cent towards social housing in this year's federal budget, not a cent.

In the area of water safety, I am excited by the great announcement that the Palaszczuk Government is committing \$1 million towards the progress of a replacement water police facility at Hervey Bay.

This vessel will ensure that Police are equipped with the latest in technologies, so they can perform their duties to ensure water safety and compliance is maintained, particularly in our region where boat ownership per capita is one of the highest in the country.

Speaker, the Palaszczuk Government are doing what we promised, and with this budget we continue to build back better and are Keeping the Hervey Bay electorate Safe and Strong.

Speaker, it goes without saying that continuing growth in infrastructure is needed in Hervey Bay as the city grows faster because of the influx of new residents brought on by the move of residents from the big cities, post COVID shutdowns.

This 2021 budget has provided an increased spending in the infrastructure area. Spending in the infrastructure area, goes on to show that this Palaszczuk government, is interested in ensuring that we grow coming off the back of the pandemic and that we on this side will build back better.

We want to make sure that we build the infrastructure that creates the jobs, utilises the skills, grows the apprenticeships that are needed for the future of the Hervey Bay electorate to grow. Small businesses—Back to Work program with \$140 million to provide businesses with the confidence to employ Queenslanders who have experienced a period of unemployment and help workers facing disadvantage in the labour market.

With programs like Works for Queensland and Building our Regions the Palaszczuk Government continues to fund for many projects that go a long way to enhancing the livability of the Hervey Bay electorate.

Our great nature assets like Fraser Island (K'Gari) will receive further support to ensure that our environmental and cultural values are protected and upgrades are completed to support visitors and residents, like \$909 000 out of \$4.2 million for the Central Station day use area and the spending to commence construction of the additional dingo fencing around Orchid Beach township.

Mr Speaker, I said to the people of the Hervey Bay electorate, during the election, that I bring a new vigor and a new focus to our unique regional electorate, I said that the Palaszczuk Labor Government would build the infrastructure, build the programs and the services needed to create the jobs for our and our children's future.

My focused determination to get more jobs and have better infrastructure and to provide enhanced services for the Hervey Bay electorate is what my time in this place is all about.

As I have said in this place previously, I will do my best to ensure the people of the Hervey Bay electorate gets its fair share from our government and with this 2021 budget the Palaszczuk Labor Government has delivered on its promises and commitments made.

and in doing so is keeping the Hervey Bay electorate Safe and Strong.

I support the bill before the House.