



Speech By
Ali King

MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

Health and Environment Committee, Report

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (5.06 pm): I rise to endorse the Health and Environment Committee's 2020-21 budget estimates report. For us on this side of the House, health is a cornerstone issue. There is nothing more important in our communities. This government knows that the basis of all opportunity and all fairness relies on a strong, equitable and accessible public health system. To have a job, you must have your health. To keep a job, you must keep your health. The proof of that has been seen like never before over the past 12 months.

When the crisis hit, we on this side of the House knew instinctively that to have a strong economic recovery we would need, before all else, a strong health response. It is a simple proposition. One would not think it would be a controversial one. Queenslanders backed it and the Palaszczuk government, because we backed them by putting their health first. The Premier stood firm against the critics, especially the irresponsible, relentlessly negative approach of the opposition. Even those opposite admit that Queensland's health response has been the best in the world. It hurts them to admit it, but they know it is true. The jewel in the crown of the Palaszczuk government's 2020-21 health budget is our satellite hospitals program.

Mr Tantari interjected.

Ms KING: I take that interjection from my colleague the member for Hervey Bay. It is indeed a magnificent program. Satellite hospitals are a world-leading, new model that will deliver more health care closer to home in our communities, a public health infrastructure program that will deliver more jobs and better health care. The Palaszczuk government is building not one, not two but seven of them right across South-East Queensland. We are investing \$265 million so that our health system can build back better and we can get Queenslanders back to work.

For our communities in Pumicestone, Labor's satellite hospitals are just what the doctor ordered. For Bribie residents, that means our frail and elderly people not having to travel hundreds of kilometres a week for treatments like renal dialysis or chemotherapy. For those living in Caboolture and surrounds, their new satellite hospital will mean being able to seek care in a calmer and more home-like environment. As much as our community holds Caboolture Hospital dear, some services are simply better delivered in the community and close to home.

I will be working hard every single day with the communities that make up Pumicestone—from Bribie Island to Beachmere, to Caboolture and beyond—as we work through the all-important community consultation and health service planning process for our new satellite hospitals. While the LNP is talking down our satellite hospitals locally, we are getting on with the job of delivering more health care closer to home for the people of Pumicestone, and I could not be prouder.

The contrast could not be greater with those opposite, who have long been missing in action when it comes to Caboolture Hospital—our key healthcare delivery site for the people of Pumicestone and northern Moreton Bay. They famously called our massive redevelopment of Caboolture Hospital a political stunt and said that it was not needed. Shame on them. Just as they are missing in action on Queenslanders' health, those opposite are missing in action on the health of the people in Pumicestone.

It was not enough that they cut the guts from our local health services, marching 932 nurses out the door when they were last in government. It was not enough that they would have continued those cuts had they won. They also wanted to throw open Queensland's borders in the midst of a global pandemic and put our health and our economic recovery at risk.

The work of keeping Queenslanders safe has never been more important. This Palaszczuk government's health response means that we can supercharge job creation and our wonderful Queensland lifestyle can adjust to the new normal. I look forward to seeing my electorate of Pumicestone continue to flourish as we build back better from COVID-19 thanks to the government's health response. I offer my thanks to the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs for their commitment to the estimates process, as well as the secretariat and parliamentary staff and of course my fellow committee members. I commend the 2020-21 estimates report of the Health and Environment Committee to the House.