



Speech By  
**Bart Mellish**


**MEMBER FOR ASPLEY**

---

Record of Proceedings, 12 May 2021

## MOTION

### Federal Budget

 **Mr MELLISH** (Aspley—ALP) (4.24 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion moved by the Treasurer related to the federal budget. Queensland clearly is the place to be. In 2020 we grew by 30,000 people. Greater Melbourne lost 26,000 people over the same period and Sydney lost 30,000. Australians are voting with their feet and moving to Queensland and away from every other state. Why would they not? It is a fantastic place to live.

There is one group that is not rating Queenslanders highly. Sadly, that is the federal government and those opposite. While New South Wales gets billions of dollars for a new airport and Victoria gets federal funding for a rail project, which does not have a settled route, all Queensland gets is \$1.6 billion over 10 years—a pittance. This federal government does not even pretend anymore that a budget period is four years. They spread it over 10 years and put the bulk of it beyond the forward estimates. We will have to wait more than four years to start receiving nearly half of this funding—with just over \$800 million budgeted for the next four years.

Locally, this means that for projects like Linkfield Road, where in 2018 the Prime Minister and the federal member for Petrie promised to get it done, we are still waiting for the federal money to arrive. It is a smoke and mirrors infrastructure budget for Queensland. Let us not forget that when Labor was in power federally, Wayne Swan, the then federal treasurer, committed to fund Cross River Rail. The money was on the table. That is unlike the current federal government which cut it, leaving the Palaszczuk government to get it done on our own.

As the Premier mentioned this morning, it is beyond disappointing that this confirms that the federal government has completely washed its hands of its quarantine responsibilities. We have tried to be helpful. We have put forward proposals like the Wagners facility but the federal government continues to ignore what is actually their job. Everyone knows that the way out of this health pandemic, from a health as well as an economic perspective, is to make sure everyone gets vaccinated. The ever-changing time frames for the Morrison government's botched vaccine rollout are starting to hold back the economy. The budget forecasts and assumptions are all over the shop. They contradict each other. The budget papers assume that international travel can resume from mid-2022, yet the same budget papers assume that every Australian will be vaccinated by 31 December this year. Something does not add up.

Even more worryingly, the Prime Minister told journalists this morning, 'There are assumptions that go to the rollout. They are not policy settings.' There we go. The assumptions that go into the budget are not worth the paper they are written on. To add even further to the confusion, the budget does not extend the International Freight Assistance Mechanism—IFAM—beyond September this year. This program is a lifeline to Queensland exporters and will be cut off in four months time. These supply chains are crucial. Over 30,000 jobs directly and 120,000 jobs indirectly in Australia are dependent on the IFAM and the federal government have no plans to extend it beyond September.

Just like their lack of infrastructure funding for Queensland, this budget has holes all through it and it is not a good budget for Queensland. Daniel Gschwind of the Queensland Tourism Industry Council has called this a clanger of a budget.