



Speech By  
**Christopher Whiting**


**MEMBER FOR BANCROFT**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

 **Mr WHITING** (Bancroft—ALP) (2.51 pm): I rise to speak in favour of the appropriation bills and the budget we have before us. When I sat here earlier today, I listened to the opposition leader's contribution and I did not hear him mention COVID-19 once—not once. He mentioned vaccines 31 minutes in. I may have missed it but not once did he talk about COVID-19. Over 20 minutes in, he mentioned the Olympics very briefly regarding transport. My question is: how can he talk for nearly an hour on a budget and not mention the two biggest impacts on future budgets in Queensland—COVID-19 and the Olympics? It beggars belief.

If you want to talk about how we grow the economy through growing productivity, you have got to talk about these two things that are affecting how we cast our budget. It is absolutely crucial. I am a bit staggered by those oversights but perhaps I should not be so surprised. What did not surprise me was when they used the words 'trickery' and 'confusion', which is code to me for saying, 'We don't understand this budget stuff.' That is a shame but once again—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Mr WHITING:** If I explained it to you, I would have to speak very slowly.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Kelly): Order! Put your comments through the chair.

**Mr Crawford:** Little words, Chris.

**Mr WHITING:** Yes, little words, thank you. The question is: what is their policy? What we are seeing at the moment is that the policy they are bringing forward to the people is to tell them that they are victims. They are not giving people hope; they are appealing to their fear. That is how the LNP harvest votes time after time. They are harvesting votes through amplifying fears. Can I say to all of these people whose stories they have harvested, with the greatest of respect, that the LNP will not help you; they will use you and they will drop you. I have seen that in my area when child safety stories came up I would say to these people that if they ever got into power things would get drastically worse and their problems would certainly not be solved.

When the opposition leader spoke about any problem during his budget reply speech, I found it very hard not to interject and say, 'We're onto it. We're already solving it. There's already a solution on the way.' For example, one policy that they did come up with—and they do have a policy now; let us give them kudos for that because that is good—is the social entrepreneur loan scheme, but the problem is that we already have a Social Enterprise Jobs Fund. We already have one and the applications are already open for it. I am worried that they did not do their homework on this. Not only that, we have Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with \$431 million having been spent in Queensland since 2015 on this program. That money can go to social enterprises to train people and to get people into work and

training. I know in my area that the Deception Bay Community Youth Programs has used some of that funding to support and create a social enterprise that trains people. If this is their only policy, it really is a clanger.

Hang on, there is another one which I nearly forgot—the parliamentary budget office. I have a job for them; they should analyse their Bradfield scheme. How about that for a first job for the parliamentary budget office? That would keep them busy for at least a day or two. After that, they could go to the Bruce Highway. Wow, that would be a great job for the parliamentary budget office. The member for Jordan said yesterday that the LNP had promised to build a Springfield hospital, but when we got down to it and saw the letter, it was a promise to get a briefing on possibly doing a hospital. I would love to see that go to the parliamentary budget office as well.

I spent an hour of my life listening to this budget reply today—as we all did—and I am not illuminated too much more on what is going on in Queensland. What is very clear is that the ALP has taken the mantle as the better economic managers in Queensland. That is absolutely true. Our growth is predicted to reach 3¼ per cent, we have created 337,000 jobs since we came to office, with 32,000 jobs in the last month, and we have an unemployment rate that will be down to about 5.4 per cent. I have said all I need to say. I commend this bill and the budget to the House.