



Speech By  
**Hon. Craig Crawford**

**MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER**

---

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2021


## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Community Support and Services Committee, Report**

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (2.41 pm): I might bring the volume down a little bit. As the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships I start by expressing what a privilege it is to represent these three particular groups of Queenslanders. I am proud to stand up for our First Nations peoples who make up the rich tapestry of our cultural heritage and nearly five per cent of Queensland's population, for the almost 900,000 older Queenslanders from whom we inherit a proud legacy and we owe a debt of gratitude, and for the more than 938,000 people in this state who live with disability and the many more who care for them. At the heart of everything we do in government is our sense of humanity, and this portfolio is all about caring, dignity and respect for those who are some of our most resilient and yet vulnerable.

I would like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for presiding over my department's budget estimates for the 2021-22 financial year on Friday the 13th—lucky for some. The committee has recommended that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the Appropriation Bill 2021, be agreed to by the Assembly without amendment.

The estimates hearing gave me the opportunity to share some of the many achievements that have occurred within the portfolio during the reporting period. Of course, estimates is where we are expected to provide a report to the Queensland community about how our budgets are used to deliver on our commitments. We are committed to building age-friendly communities that are accessible to everyone. We continue to provide support for eligible older Queenslanders through discounts and rebates, we have made an annual investment of \$4.8 million to deliver legal and social support and financial protection services, and we provided \$800,000 to continue funding the Elder Abuse Prevention Unit and Elder Abuse Helpline.

We continue to deliver our annual investment of over \$2 billion in the NDIS and significant operational achievements have included the commencement of the full scheme bilateral agreement for the NDIS and the introduction of a new worker screening system to strengthen safeguards for people with disability. We have delivered on the Meriba Omasker Kaziw Kazipa recognition of Torres Strait Islander traditional child-rearing practices with the appointment of the commissioner and the opening of his office, and we have continued to engage as a key partner under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

We are proud to be progressing one of Queensland's strongest reconciliation actions in the state's history in progressing the Path to Treaty. This government's commitment to a \$300 million Path to Treaty Future Fund is the foundation for the treaty-making process in Queensland, and we are working with the Treaty Advancement Committee and Treasury to firm up the arrangements regarding the fund. My department champions change for seniors, people with disability and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The Queensland government is committed to creating strong inclusive communities where everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

We have so many positive achievements to celebrate, but, unfortunately, the opposition was more interested in who sits in what chair within our department. As I advised the committee during the hearing, the appointment of directors-general and associate directors-general is the responsibility of the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The Palaszczuk government's priority is not on who wears what hat but to ensure Queenslanders, of all ages, abilities and cultures, have the opportunity to succeed culturally, socially and economically.

I note that during the hearing an issue was raised from a constituent about the use of the Check In Qld app and challenges for older people or people with disability around phones. I appreciate that not every Queenslander has a smartphone, and it is not just the elderly. I am aware that, as part of the check-in process, businesses must facilitate taking the details of those who do not have the technical capability. For those with disability, NDIS packages also have the capacity to support the provision of technical supports for those whose plan identifies those needs.

I want to thank the committee for its work. We were pushed out a week because of the lockdown. I thank the parliament, committee members and everyone else who managed to put that together. It worked quite well in the Undumbi Room. It was good to be able to complete estimates here. I am sure if we were in some of the southern states that would not have happened. I acknowledge the committee's work and thank the parliament for its work as well.