




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR NINDERRY

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr PURDIE** (Ninderry—LNP) (9.50 pm): I rise to speak on the Appropriation Bill 2021. As the Treasurer trumpeted in his speech, the budget has all the hallmarks of a Labor budget, following in lockstep a generation of Labor budgets that have come before it. It is one void of ideas, but full of empty promises and empty buckets of money. In fact, the budget reminds me of one of my kids' favourite reads, *Choose Your Own Adventure*. It relies on a series of chance outcomes and the correct alignment of the stars to hopefully result in a happy ending. Unfortunately there are no happy endings when you combine the Labor government and economic management. They are diametrically opposed and that is clearly apparent again in this budget. No ambitious bold plans to back up their lofty targets, just more creative accounting and subterfuge.

This budget can be likened to a tried and tested recipe. Step 1: cook the books, hoodwink the taxpayers then bunker down. It is Labor's favourite tactic. Fudge the figures, apply some clever accounting and bury the details deep enough so by the time the truth is exposed, you can lay the blame elsewhere, like Canberra or COVID or play the commercial-in-confidence card—just spin the wheel and see where it lands.

Step 2: distract, ideally by replaying their favourite hit list straight from their best-selling album straight out of the Newman era, an administration, mind you, which governed more than six years ago, long before I got here—six long years in which this third-term Labor government has had ample opportunity to lay their own foundations of a new era.

As we know, the hallmarks of a Labor government are not ones that stand the test of time. It does not take a master chef to guess what happens when you take the same dated recipes, stale ingredients and dodgy chefs. It was always going to be a flop, styled to appeal and look tasty, but ridden with holes and hard to digest.

Ms Grace: Cliches, one-liners, no substance.

Mr PURDIE: Thanks, Grace. Come on, Grace. Mr Deputy Speaker, we all know the Treasurer likes to compare himself with the greats. Aspiration is a wonderful thing, provided it is grounded in at least some element of ability and reality. However, the name Charles Ponzi comes to mind when I reflect on what has been arguably the Treasurer's biggest light bulb moment of his career in the delivery of this latest budget. I am talking about the Queensland Titles Registry. No doubt, after learning the ratings agencies were going to downgrade our credit rating, a moment of enlightenment struck while he was eating his peanut butter toast. It probably went something like this: 'Let's beat up the value of this bad boy and move it off our books so debt will look better down the track. No-one will suspect a thing.' As polished as he likes to think he is, this sleight of hand did not go unnoticed and the Queensland Treasurer has been called out.

Unlike a real playmaker, thrilling and suspenseful, he is not. Deceptive and hard to follow would be much more appropriate words to describe this latest attempt to create a distraction from what can only be described as a missed opportunity to deliver a budget that actually delivers for all Queenslanders.

Our state's economy is not a game of *Monopoly* where a 'chance' card can get you out of jail. You have to pass go and pay your dues, the same way that hard-working Queenslanders pay their taxes and expect a fair go in return.

According to the Premier, the Queensland economy is coming back bigger, stronger and faster than ever. However, no amount of creative accounting can make up for the fact that this budget fails to deliver for Queenslanders. Not one constituent in my electorate has contacted my office this week to ask a question about the state budget and it is not because they do not care about their future, their kids' future or the economic health of our state; on the contrary, they just cannot relate to a government that has clearly lost touch with reality and with public sentiment.

The Treasurer's deceptive accounting and quiet musings have no relevance or appeal to the 39,000 people living in my electorate. But I can tell you what they do care about: they care about their health, they care about getting home safely, they care about security for their families and their future, they care about getting a good education and a good job, and they care about the cost of living.

At a time when the Treasurer himself has boasted about the pace of our economic recovery, the questions most Queenslanders are asking are: what does it mean for them; how can they continue to afford paying record high prices for rent and housing; how much longer will they be forced to wait for medical treatment to ease their suffering and pain; when will the long overdue upgrades for our failing road network be completed so they can get home sooner and safer; will their children be forced to leave our region to look for work; and is their own job secure?

We know the Palaszczuk Labor government likes to talk about transparency, so let's reflect on some of the figures that were missing from this third-term Premier's budget. Hospital ramping has peaked and currently sits at 40 per cent. It is the highest it has been in a generation. At some hospitals it is a 50/50 chance whether or not you are seen in clinically recommended time frames. Essentially it is the toss of a coin.

Right now, more than 10 per cent of elective surgeries are not completed on time and there are nearly 55,000 people on the waiting list. In addition, nearly 230,000 Queenslanders are on the waiting list to get on the waiting list. Similarly, there are more than 150,000 people on the dental waiting list. Labor's operational health budget has increased by two per cent, barely above CPI which budget papers forecast at 1.75 per cent. Queensland's health budget only increased by the extra amount that Canberra gave them in this year's federal budget—\$400 million. Labor's record health budget does nothing to improve a public health system which they are losing control of.

Infrastructure spending has been slashed. Of particular concern to residents in my electorate, there is no money to fast-track long overdue road infrastructure, including busting congestion in Coolool or to upgrade major arterial roads like Yandina Coolool Road and Eumundi Noosa Road which are no longer fit for purpose.

There is no money in this year's budget to replace the Bli Bli Bridge which has been the subject of extensive structural investigations for over a year. Truck drivers have been forced to make lengthy detours due to the load limit that has been imposed for the duration of the investigation works. Not only does this add to their time but also it adds to their costs, reduces profit margins and ultimately impacts our local economy. Meanwhile, questions about the bridge's safety and structural integrity go unanswered.

There is still no money budgeted to start construction on the duplication of the Sunshine Motorway which Labor committed to at the last election. This infrastructure project would be a game changer not only for my electorate but also for the entire Sunshine Coast region, particularly high-growth areas north of the Maroochy River. Imagine the number of jobs a construction project of this scale would create. It would also save lives, too many of which have been lost on this dangerous stretch of road which is well past its use-by date.

In 2021, there are still students at Coolool State School sitting in hot, asbestos ridden classrooms and buildings they cannot access when it rains due to flooding. There is no money in this budget for them. Similarly, as I see the minister is still in the House, they are still waiting for their air conditioning which, after years of fundraising—

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr PURDIE: I take that interjection. The Coolum Primary School does not deserve to wait until 2028 for their air conditioning. When the P&C work tirelessly for years to raise over \$400,000—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Walker): Pause the clock. Member for McConnel, if you want to interject can you do it from your seat, thank you.

Mr PURDIE: It is an aircon con by this minister. I take her interjection about Coolum State School having to wait until 2028 for their aircon. The hardworking members for the P&C raised over \$400,000. They have already spent that getting the school's electricity network ready for aircon. Given their hard work, they were promised that they would be one of the first to receive aircon. They were promised it before last year's hot summer. There is still no indication as to when the aircon will be rolled out. I urge the minister to take that on board. It has been promised. They worked hard to fund the electricity upgrade. I call on the minister and this government to do what they said and provide Coolum State School with air conditioning.

With the Sunshine Coast population forecast to grow to over 500,000 by 2041, now is the time to be investing in major projects, not short-changing our region with funding shortfalls and empty buckets of money. The Labor Party has admitted that this is a typical Labor budget—full of promises, short on detail and void of an economic plan and vision to realise our state's potential.

Taxpayers do not care about the Treasurer's musing over his peanut butter toast. They care about the things that affect them directly—things like receiving medical treatment when they need it, having access to housing and a safe community, not falling victim to the state's growing crime crisis, giving their children a quality education and the prospect of them securing a job in the future and getting home safely and not spending hours stuck in traffic. The things that affect them directly are what this budget has failed to deliver.