



Speech By  
**David Crisafulli**


**MEMBER FOR BROADWATER**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.16 am): It is a great honour to give this budget reply today, not only on behalf of the opposition but also on behalf of all Queenslanders—those who vote for us and those who do not. Without doubt Queensland is stronger with an opposition that is hungry for detail and eager to hold the government to account. To stay true to this objective the process must strive to be open and transparent. The government has a responsibility to honour this objective, not just in the budget documents themselves but also in its communication to the people of Queensland. In this spirit the budget should not just be about large abstract numbers but rather a demonstration of how it will help honest Queenslanders in their everyday lives.

When I was chosen to lead the opposition I promised Queenslanders I would talk with them about the issues that mattered to them. Since then I have spoken to thousands of Queenslanders across this great state. What has followed is the inundation of my office with the personal stories of Queenslanders impacted by the failure of the government to deliver basic services. A budget should give people hope. It should reassure them they have been listened to and that help is on the way. At the very least it should acknowledge the failures and work to ensure these tragic stories are not visited upon further victims. It is my responsibility as opposition leader to speak for these people and ask where in this budget is the opportunity, where is the reassurance, where is the hope?

Where in this budget is the reassurance for Julie from Redcliffe who joins us today? Julie's mum Gwen waited six hours in February and 12 hours in March for an ambulance after suffering falls. Last month Julie's aunt suffered a medical episode and waited 10 hours for help to arrive. What reassurance and hope does a budget that cuts capital expenditure in health give to Julie? Where in this budget is the hope for Wendy? Wendy has been looking for a rental property on the Gold Coast since November last year. After going to more than 100 inspections without success, what reassurance and hope does a budget that cuts infrastructure spending give to Wendy?

Where in this budget is the opportunity for Rodney from the Sunshine Coast? Rodney runs a compliance and labour supply business for agricultural and horticultural businesses in Queensland. His clients are struggling due to huge labour shortages of fruit pickers and his own business is weighed down by bureaucratic red tape. What reassurance and hope does a budget prefaced on the abolition of a productivity commission give to Rodney?

Where in this budget is the reassurance and hope for Alan, who is watching us today from Townsville? Alan's ute was rammed by thieves when, on his way to work, he stopped to help a woman whose house was broken into. What reassurance and hope does a budget that provides no funding towards the reinstatement of breach of bail as an offence give to Alan? A budget that fails to give answers to those Queenslanders fails all Queenslanders.

The reason that the government cannot provide those answers is they are losing control of the things that matter to Queensland. They are losing control of law and order, they are losing control of housing and they are losing control of the health system.

In this state the Australian Labor Party has a long history of overseeing a continual state of crisis within the health system. Who can forget the extraordinary admission of former premier Bligh when, faced with exceptional failures overseen by her and those who sat around her cabinet table, she was forced to admit that Queensland Health was a basket case.

Sadly, we are back to those bad old days. Ramping levels have hit 40 per cent across the state; it was 30 per cent during the Bligh basket case. Elective surgery waiting lists have reached 55,000; it was 36,000 during the Bligh basket case. Dental waiting lists are now at 150,000 Queenslanders; it was 60,000 during the Bligh basket case. The budget does not provide hope, whether it be downgrades to the promised hospital in Bundaberg, the broken promise on the hospital in the Redlands or the inability to deliver a kidney transplant unit in the north. Labor is losing control of the health system and Queenslanders are paying for it with their physical wellbeing and in some cases tragically their lives.

We have heard ad nauseam about the record health budget—a spend unmatched in all the years that have gone before. We have heard that line rolled out by the health minister, the Treasurer and even the Premier as if it is something new; as if it will be the panacea to the crisis situation that our public health system now finds itself in. In our emergency departments one in four people are not seen within the clinically recommended time based on their need.

A record health budget, particularly an increase that is struggling to keep pace with inflation, is not a health outcome. In fact, it is meaningless to the millions of people who rely on our health system each year. Ask Steve, whose wife died in his arms waiting for an ambulance to arrive, what a record health budget means to him. Ask Patricia, who waited not months but years for a hip replacement to ease her chronic pain. It was a record health budget last year and the year before that and the year before that, but still the horror stories continue to mount.

Queensland Health needs cultural change, money to support the front line and transparency in what it does. But how can a government expect transparency from its departments when its signature \$2 billion Hospital Building Fund has no money allocated to build a single hospital? These issues have been exposed by a campaign led by the shadow minister for health. As a registered nurse she knows what matters on the front line. The numbers are real, the people behind them are real and they will not be silenced.

In the past week we have spoken to honest Queenslanders from across the state who are desperate for a better functioning and more responsive health system. Like the thousands who have reached out to my office in the past six months, they were courageous enough to tell their stories. They are doctors, nurses, paramedics, grandparents, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters. At every session current Queensland Health staff came to give their feedback on how to fix the broken system they labour under. Not one of them sought to blame a clinician and nor should they because we know what an outstanding job those on the front line of our health services do. A light was shone upon the work they carry out day in, day out and we are proud and grateful for them all.

Unfortunately, the government is focused on blame, not solutions. The shadow finance minister predicted the excuses that will follow as the budget unravels and whether it is COVID, Canberra or culture the government has sheeted home the blame for every health failure to everyone but themselves. We hear of our ageing and growing population. Those opposite are happy to identify the problem and attribute blame, but as the government it is incumbent on them to find a solution. We are not seeing that.

Where in this budget is the plan to heal our health system? Where is the plan to fix the Queensland Health crisis? Where are the measures that will see a more seamless experience for the patient, from primary to acute care? Where in this budget is the desire to catch Queenslanders with minor health problems before they become major ones or to share and be open with data to improve patient experience?

The shadow minister for open data, the member for Buderim, is spearheading our plan to provide open and transparent data to assist healthcare professionals. It can be such a powerful tool. With it the patient and clinicians can make informed decisions about the care they receive and provide. On this side of the House we have made some responsible and workable suggestions to improve Queensland's public health system, including making emergency room data available in real time. We know that our hospitals record that information already; it just needs to be released publicly. We have asked the government to improve and better resource triaging practices in our emergency departments and to be

honest and open about bed resourcing in our hospitals so that a chair sitting underneath a shower does not count as a bed. That is the only way we will empower those on the front line to make decisions about getting the most out of resources.

We want to see our regional and remote hospitals and health centres appropriately resourced and the clinicians in those locations able to work to the full scope of their practice. They should not be hamstrung in looking after their patients. The tyranny of distance will always be a challenge in Queensland and, of course, complex procedures may require a patient to travel away from home. The opposition is realistic about that. However, we should look to that as an option of last resort. Let us equip our doctors and nurses in the bush so that they can care for patients in their local communities and ease the pressure on the larger hospitals in major centres. Is it the best outcome and the smartest use of resources to ask young parents in Chinchilla to leave their community to have their baby?

The problems that have beset our public hospital system can be fixed but they will not be if those opposite put their heads in the sand and remain unwilling to do anything differently. No longer can the government hide behind the three words 'record health budget'. Queenslanders are realising that their health outcomes are being compromised by a mismanaged system and Queenslanders will not stand for it. Yes, there might be a record health budget, as there is every year, but sitting on the benches opposite is a government whose record on health is now failing honest Queenslanders. For Queenslanders it is not about the government's record health budget; it is about their health record and on that front they are failing.

This budget delivers no solutions to the crime wave ravishing communities across the state. With big increases in crime rates in many local communities the government is out of ideas, whether it is stubbornness in refusing to reinstate breach of bail as an offence, the ham-fisted attempt to hide crime figures or the failure of ankle bracelets because they are not fit for purpose, it is clear that the government is losing control of crime in this state.

The disappointing feature of the entire debate is that Labor was never truly committed to combatting crime. It was always too hard or the solutions that worked never met the approval of those elements of the party that see the victim as little more than a nuisance. Sure, the debate moved from KitKats to bracelets after the community and a brave commissioner slapped down the minister, but when the crunch came Labor always uttered platitudes about victims and never took the step to ensure that those Queenslanders are safe. Weak laws and poor resources mean officers are being asked to pick up the pieces after criminals have embarked on their lawless outbursts.

The need for better facilities has been raised on countless occasions with us. Police in Townsville are going to have to wait at least another 12 months for a new station in Kirwan with only minor money for planning allocated in this financial year. The irony that this outdated facility was the location for a group of hoons to conduct burnouts in a car park with a stolen vehicle, goading police to chase them, will not be lost on the North.

The seemingly intractable problem that is occurring today is that offences are being committed by a cohort of criminals who see crime as a recreational activity—a game, a joke. They refuse to take responsibility for their actions and believe that society should simply carry the burden of their existence. Lines in a budget alone will not fix this. It needs changing laws and the knowledge of those who wear a blue uniform that the government has got their backs.

The member for Burdekin, the shadow minister for police and emergency services, has campaigned not only in Townsville but also from the Gold Coast to the Far North for policies that will curb criminal activity. He has highlighted Labor's hands-off approach to criminal activity. He has supported the efforts of the police as they seek to grapple with the elements with one hand tied behind their back. He has led the charge for reforms to the Bail Act to ensure those who breach their bail undertakings can be arrested and charged and, most importantly, separated from the law-abiding citizens they harass and intimidate. Breach of bail legislation is not the cure-all for crime in this state, but it will give police and the justice system a powerful weapon to protect those who are unable to protect themselves and their property.

The stark reality of Labor's failures can be seen in the bungled introduction of GPS tracking devices. They were trumpeted as the solution to the crime problem. It now appears they do not function properly; the technology is not fit for purpose.

The budget represents a lost opportunity, an opportunity to chart a new course in an effort to defeat crime, an opportunity to put the interests of citizens first, and an opportunity to support those protecting Queenslanders. In the last six years, the government has failed the first test of government on so many occasions. It has failed the test of community safety. The government went to an election promising to keep Queenslanders safe and strong. It sure does not feel that way to Phil from Sunnybank Hills who was broken into five times.

Congestion is another area where Queenslanders have reached out to the opposition with stories that demonstrate a government that is losing control of another basic responsibility. The inability to deliver projects on time and on budget will be an albatross on the growth and prosperity of Queenslanders for a generation.

I want to acknowledge the shadow transport minister and member for Chatsworth who has been working hard to keep this government honest when it comes to the state's biggest infrastructure project, Cross River Rail. How many times have we heard those opposite say that it was a \$5.4 billion project? While this budget has many flaws, at least it provides a clearer picture on the current cost of Cross River Rail, now hitting \$6.9 billion, and counting!

It is not just the project budget that is in trouble. We do not know if they have ordered enough trains and if those on order will be ready once the project opens in 2025. That is right—2025. The 2024 opening—well, that is another broken promise. That is Labor's infrastructure record.

**Mr Bailey:** You cut it, mate!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It has been embarrassing—

**Mr SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Minister for Transport and Main Roads, you are warned under the standing orders. I am offering the same courtesy to the Leader of the Opposition as was offered to the Treasurer on Tuesday, and you are also not putting your comments through the chair.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** It has been embarrassing watching the Treasurer twist himself in knots trying to explain how an infrastructure spend reduction from \$56 billion to \$52 billion is not a cut. The constant message I get from commuters is that they are sick of spending time behind the wheel of their car instead of spending time with families—people like Brad from the Gold Coast who commutes daily to Brisbane. Brad tells me the 50-minute trip now runs well past an hour, forcing him to scramble to make arrangements for his kids and forcing him to lose precious time with them. Around the world, we have seen families torn apart by the pandemic. It makes us realise how we must treasure every minute we get to spend with our loved ones.

For business, time is money. Any small business owner will tell you that if you are sitting in a traffic jam, you are not making a dollar. Traffic congestion makes it harder to service their customers' needs. It makes it harder to deliver and receive goods. It means phone calls from their employees who are late to work because they, too, are the victims of a congested network.

Ask commuters on the Centenary Highway how they feel about the ever increasing gridlock, and ask what they think of the start of construction of the bridge duplication blowing out from 2021 to 2022—another broken promise to mums and dads who just want a few extra precious minutes with their kids. That is Labor's infrastructure record.

On the Gold Coast, we were told before the election that the construction of stage 3 of light rail was imminent. What did we find out after the election? The contract was not signed and a massive \$334 million cost blowout was revealed. A project that was originally meant to be completed in 2023 is now reportedly targeting a late 2024 or maybe 2025 date. Another project, another delay, another cost blowout—that is Labor's infrastructure record. It is worth noting that this project would be in serious strife if it was not for the federal government which agreed to provide additional funding to bail out the state's inability to meet its commitments.

On the Sunshine Coast, the Mooloolah River Interchange is one of those projects that has been on the backburner for too long. This is a state road, and responsibility for the upgrade lies with the state government. The local LNP team, both federal and state, knew that continued inaction was not good enough and they recently secured \$160 million from the federal government for this state project. The state government has had half a decade to do the planning for this vital link. The budget papers reveal just \$4 million out of a \$320 million project this financial year—another delay for another vital link.

Too many Queensland roads need urgent maintenance. The government was warned by the Auditor-General in 2017 that not enough money was being spent on maintenance, and safety was being compromised. Four years later and we now face a maintenance backlog approaching \$6 billion. That is Labor's infrastructure record.

As we look towards an Olympic Games in 2032, what do we need? We must spend more on infrastructure for a growing state. We must plan for the population increases that we know are coming, and have the roads and the public transport services in place ready for that growth. The government has not planned. That is Labor's infrastructure record.

We have learned that despite a substantial increase in revenue, funding for the infrastructure needed to regain control of the housing crisis will not provide the relief that our state requires. Unbelievably, the Treasurer has announced a \$1 billion housing building fund which does not have a

single cent allocated in the forwards of this budget. While the Treasurer has made much of the influx of people from interstate, he offers no comfort that the government has any ability to house them without further inflaming the housing shortage. Queensland needs infrastructure built to protect the lifestyles of the people who already live here and infrastructure to deliver jobs for those who are moving here.

Queensland is in the grip of a housing crisis. Years of inaction in providing the needed land supply in supporting road, rail, water and sewerage has led to a severe shortage of dwellings for Queenslanders to buy and rent. This government is losing control of the planning needed to accommodate the thousands of people who are moving to Queensland. But this is not an overnight occurrence; it has been six years in the making. The government's own data shows that in the 2015 March quarter, 7,133 lots were approved across Queensland. A year later that had dropped to 5,285; then 4,899 in the 2017 March quarter; 3,713 in 2018; 3,038 in 2019; and 2,324 in March 2020.

The numbers are starker for the growing south-east corner where the number of approved lots dropped from 6,177 in the March quarter of 2015 to only 1,699 in 2020. This is despite the industry warning over 30,000 additional dwellings are needed to match our growing population. This lack of supply has been driving up the cost of housing to not just buy but also rent. We have all seen the horror stories of hundreds of people turning up to open homes only to find the house is already sold or rented—people like the constituents who told the member for Kawana that, as a double income family with a long-term rental history in the local area, they never thought they would be on the verge of homelessness, and Cassie, whom we had here at parliament, who has had to move cities to put a roof over her kid's head.

What does this mean for Queensland? For the first time in living memory we have a cohort of families with well-paying jobs that cannot find a home. They are the working homeless and it has to stop. It is not just those on solid incomes who are being left behind. The government is also failing those whom they claim to most vehemently want to protect: our most vulnerable Queenslanders, the battlers on the bread line.

Only last week whilst on a visit to the region we heard the shadow housing minister, the member for Everton, talk about the social housing crisis in Cairns—a crisis brought on by six years of underinvestment in those Queenslanders most in need. This underinvestment in social housing has led to a significant rise in the size of the social housing waiting list—a list that now has more than 26,000 Queenslanders on it. What is more, 16,000 of the applications on this list are from Queenslanders who are classified as very high need. That means 61 per cent of all applications are from those in desperation stakes.

This has happened because over the past six years Labor has only increased the number of government owned housing dwellings by less than one per cent. Let me repeat that: less than a per cent over more than a half a decade. That is housing stock for social housing, community housing and Indigenous housing. Now the government want us to praise them for addressing a crisis they have created by establishing a fund they are not funding. We do have to do better than this.

There are community housing providers who are eager to be involved. Their mission is to ensure honest Queenslanders have a roof over their heads and somewhere safe to sleep. The government can partner with them to give people a shot at a stable home. This is bigger than ideology. Those opposite need to put it to one side. It is about providing a home for Queenslanders. It is too important to get it wrong. We know that a stable, safe home means people are more likely to get a job, more likely to be in better health and, therefore, more likely to break a cycle in which they otherwise could be entrenched for a lifetime. This lack of investment in social housing also impacts the ability of many Queensland women who are suffering at the hands of domestic violence to escape that situation.

I am determined to lead a centre right political movement with conviction and compassion. Today I announce the LNP's social entrepreneurs loan scheme which will be driven by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Federal Treasurer Frydenberg has committed to an unemployment figure starting with a four. Part of this strategy is to push the jobless rate lower than historical averages to generate accelerated wages growth. To achieve this outcome, more long-term unemployed Australians will need to rejoin the workforce.

ABS data reveals that 34 per cent of unemployed women and 26 per cent of unemployed men are dealing with mental illness. The opposition will advocate to make \$20 million available, with loans to be capped at \$500,000 per enterprise. The policy proposed would be based on that enacted by David Cameron in the United Kingdom where a government body provided loans with repayments to commence after two years. The loan appraisals would be assessed by an independent body. The independent body would also provide links to businesses in Queensland that can provide expertise in financial management to allow the businesses to grow. It is also possible that philanthropic sources and

the impact investment market could be leveraged to double this fund and support the creation of hundreds of jobs—jobs for those with a disability, jobs for those with personal struggles and jobs for those who too often fall through the cracks.

We want to break barriers for those Queenslanders who just want the pride that comes with being able to provide. The shadow Treasurer will outline the mechanics of this initiative. We hope the government sees it worthy of adoption. If not, I commit that the first recipients will benefit from the LNP's social entrepreneurs loan scheme in 2025.

There are other failures I will touch briefly on ahead of the contributions to be made by shadow ministers and shadow assistant ministers during this debate. Disappointingly, the Treasurer broke his commitment, at least in spirit, to no new taxes when he refused to guarantee advanced waste levy payments to councils beyond the 2021-22 financial year. He will now be forcing councils to be collection officers of the Premier's wheelie bin tax. Shadow local government minister, the member for Warrego, will detail feedback that she has received from councils throughout Queensland. Needless to say, when ratepayers receive rises in the years ahead, to the tune of around \$80, councils will be in no mood for the recycled excuses that householders will not be impacted.

Whilst on environmental initiatives, the only reduction I can see in the \$500 million Carbon Reduction Fund is of the financial variety, with not one cent in the forward estimates. The government has given up on protected areas, with an increase of 0.01 per cent. In his speech, the shadow environment minister will expose how the government has missed every major environmental target it has set itself in office. In the resource space, the Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund has more money not budgeted than it has funded. In agriculture we again see a reduction in staff, including in the crucial biosecurity space. Research and development is an afterthought for an industry that soldiered on through COVID, despite the challenges of staffing shortages.

With the prospect of water restrictions on the horizon for South-East Queensland families, the lack of future planning for water infrastructure has never been starker. As the shadow water minister, the member for Nanango, has revealed, not intent with ripping down Paradise Dam last term, questions remain unanswered over the government's strategy to deliver water security for our growing population while allowing opportunities for farmers in the Lockyer.

In my shadow portfolio responsibility of tourism, we have seen no major financial injection in their hour of need. In the wake of COVID, the state government has provided amongst the lowest amount of industry support per person of any government in the nation. Now is the time to develop new product to ensure the floodgates open when international travel is safe to return. The flagship ecotourism Wangetti Trail project, backed so strongly by the opposition as a new product for our tourism offering, is mired in delays. The budget papers show only \$430,000 of a \$4.52 million budget has been spent in the 2020-21 financial year. The Outback Tourism Infrastructure Fund has spent \$1,000 of a \$1 million fund. Tourism, events and hospitality are on the cusp of a golden era in this state. In a post-COVID era, the clean and green reputation of the coast and the rainforest and the Dreamtime stories of Western Queensland set us apart from our competitors across the globe. Now is the time to provide the confidence for them to invest.

When asked about a contingency for another outbreak, the Treasurer's response was, 'Heaven forbid there is.' Business is not looking to the sky; they are looking for certainty. Those in hospitality are looking for the comfort to know that if they cannot trade for the greater good and lose thousands of dollars in perishables, a safety net is there to assist. Those in events want to bring business to Queensland in the knowledge that if it is cancelled for worthy health reasons beyond their control, a portion of their costs could be met.

These initiatives are not worth tens of millions of dollars. In fact, if we are confident in our health response, they will never be used—but they send a signal of confidence to the private sector to invest in Queensland. If as leaders we can instil confidence in the vaccine rollout amongst our community, the likelihood of lockdowns will diminish in the months ahead.

I said from day one I would be prepared to praise things where they align with the values of our community. With the federal government embarking on an aggressive free trade strategy, international relationships have never been more important. The increased funding for the International Education and Training Strategy is to be applauded. We must be prepared to welcome back students in a safe way in the years ahead. A good education should be the cornerstone of all we do. The government's funding of 10 new schools is welcomed. We intend to work cooperatively to ensure they are delivered by the election and the pipeline to meet growth continues in the decades ahead.

Child safety has been an area of great failure for a generation. The increase in funding for child safety officers is positive. Now the minister must lead the cultural change our most vulnerable deserve.

In my own electorate of Broadwater, there is money for the Jabiru Island bridge—the vital link over Coombabah Creek. Residents will be disappointed that the money is not for the duplication that has been put on the backburner for a generation, but it is attention nonetheless and I welcome it. Coombabah State High gets nearly \$13 million for new classroom facilities. While it technically falls in neighbouring Bonney, it is a vital facility for my local area. I will be again campaigning for Coombabah primary and Biggera Waters to be given similar attention to replace dongas that came on the back of a truck decades ago. I acknowledge the minister's good grace in always discussing schooling matters in my local area.

Transparency and accountability matter. There is a reason I named a shadow minister for integrity. It is because I intend that we conduct ourselves in an open manner. The member for Maroochydore will set that standard in government. Those opposite have no such role and have given up on integrity. The abolition of the Productivity Commission has been done for one reason and one reason alone—it shone a light on the fact that government has no vision and no plan to grow the economy through productivity gains.

Productivity growth is supported by governments when they provide the necessary infrastructure to help business grow and individuals live their lives more efficiently. It is a tradie being able to quote an extra job instead of being stuck at a level crossing on Barrack Road in Cannon Hill. It is a sugarcane farmer in Mirani being able to use new cropping technology made here in Queensland to get better yields on her crops with less water and energy costs. It is a cafe owner in Mitchelton being able to spend more time with his customers rather than filling out forms at a table out the back. It is about a holiday resort in the Whitsundays being able to have access to a labour pool today that can provide basic services to keep their occupancy rates at a maximum; an IT firm in Longreach having access to government data in real time to drive opportunities for the region; or a suburban accounting firm in Cairns being able to find a commerce graduate to head to the Far North, find a house to live in and help the firm take on more clients. That what it is about.

It is about ensuring that our citizen's skills are kept up to date so they can pivot to new careers throughout their life. It is about governments ensuring a supportive culture for emerging industries to provide certainty to venture capitalists that Queensland is a place worth investing in. We know that venture capital from Australian sources is mostly spent either overseas or in southern states. This should not be the case. It is about providing the infrastructure and services so businesses know that Queensland is a place to expand their business rather than expand across the border.

Up until last month Queensland had a Productivity Commission. This independent and free-thinking commission produced landmark reports into electricity prices, service delivery in remote Indigenous communities and improving regulation. In fact, the commission produced a report that demonstrated that we could improve our gross state product by one to two per cent by reducing regulatory burden. There are over 265,000 separate regulatory requirements in Queensland.

The commission recommended that our regulations be reviewed to ensure they are fit for purpose. The commission also produced a report demonstrating how Queensland can build economic resilience into the future and be ready for the next shock when it comes. This commission was too independent for the Treasurer, so he decided to bury it in Treasury with what is the rather Orwellian title of the 'Office of Productivity and Red Tape Reduction'—seen for a fleeting media release and then stripped of any independent thought or power.

When this government closed the Productivity Commission it sent a message to Queenslanders that the days of openness and transparency are over. This is a government that needs all the help it can get when it comes to new ideas and vision. They are in their third term. They are becoming smug. They are closed to new ways of thinking and supporting innovation.

Much has been made of the Treasurer's definition of 'frontline services' which sees about 91.5 per cent of public servants classified as frontline or frontline support. I will let the Treasurer outline his reasons for this definition. Instead, I will outline what Queenslanders deserve—frontline workers with the resources and trust to serve the public and those in administrative roles with the respect and independence to provide the best policy objectives and to allow the private sector to get the most with every dealing with government. In 2024 there will be a minister for customer service, and the member for Chatsworth will ensure each Queenslanders is respected and served in the best way in this country.

An area of concern for me is the 20 per cent cut to staffing under the Chief Customer and Digital Officer. This is part of a wider drift on digital policy, with most digital projects coming to an end at the end of June. Are we doing enough to guard against cyber attacks on our key government platforms? Are we doing enough to create jobs in the new economy?

The lack of transparency around the budget process is a great disservice to Queenslanders. The amount of trickery and confusion that surrounds the budget has the effect of leaving Queenslanders in the dark. While the more jaded among us may write this off as 'political spin', it is in fact nothing short

of the disenfranchisement of Queensland people. The attempts by the government to sow confusion range from 22 budget releases late on the Friday of the Olympics announcement through to an orchestrated campaign by Labor MPs to prevent scrutiny during the estimates process. We have even seen the Premier hiding her director-general hiring practices on private email.

In this budget we saw several headline programs announced with no funding. The Treasurer sold an asset he already owned to himself at an inflated price to pay down debt. Today I unveil my proposal to pull back the covers on budgetary and costing matters and give Queenslanders a clear view, to put an end to a secretive process which is designed to confuse them, not to serve them.

I give the commitment today that, if elected, I will establish a parliamentary budget office and start the journey towards transparency. Costs to run one vary between jurisdictions in the range of \$1.5 million to \$3.5 million. As you can see, Mr Speaker, this is a small investment in a large shift in the way we respect our democratic process.

The parliamentary budget office will produce an intergenerational report that sets out a long-term strategy for Queensland. It is a vision and a road to get there. It will also put an end to arguments over budget and election costings by offering a policy-costing function. Furthermore, it will ensure Queenslanders know the truth at election time by producing a pre-election economic financial outlook to be delivered six weeks before the start of the election period.

I do not fear having the microscope put over what I say I will do, when I will do it and how much it will cost. Does the third-term Premier value transparency in the same way she did when she sat in this chair over half a decade ago? Crucially, the parliamentary budget office will be run independent of government and come under the authority of this parliament. It will be available to all party leaders in this place.

The parliamentary budget office and my reforms to the estimates process that I announced last year will bring back trust and dignity to the process and finally allow Queenslanders to know the truth. It should not have to wait until 2025. I ask the government to embrace this idea, supported by both sides of politics for over a decade, and implement it ahead of the 2024 election. To borrow a phrase, 'It's time'.

An opposition's role is to hold the government to account. This necessarily involves constructive criticism. I have tempered this with some suggestions for the government on how they could start to address some of the concerns that Queenslanders have outlined to me. I have also set out a blueprint on some accountability measures that will help with transparency around the budget process and lead to better outcomes for honest Queenslanders. Despite the lack of transparency that surrounds this budget, it is clear that it is a deeply flawed document.

At the start of my reply I outlined how a budget should speak to the issues that impact the everyday lives of everyday Queenslanders. This budget fails to deliver on this and as such will set Queenslanders back. I say to Queenslanders: when an ambulance does not arrive in Redcliffe because of a failure to address hospital resourcing, think of this budget; when you are stuck in traffic heading to the capital from the Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast because of cuts and delays to road projects, think of this budget; when your car is stolen in Townsville because of a failure to provide police with the tools they need, think of this budget; when a lack of housing options in Aspley means your children cannot compete and buy their first home because of the government's failure to keep up with infrastructure, think of this budget.

Two days ago the government had the chance to outline a plan to regain control of health, crime, congestion, productivity and housing. Two days ago it had a chance to put money in the funds they trumpeted to fix these problems. Two days ago they had a chance to regain the mantra of transparency they heralded more than half a decade ago. Two days ago the Treasurer delivered this budget and proclaimed it was a typical Labor budget. Mr Speaker, I agree with him.