



Speech By  
**Deb Frecklington**


**MEMBER FOR NANANGO**

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Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL;**

**PPROPRIATION BILL**

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (10.52 pm): It is always so great to follow a member of the Labor Party like the member for Bundaberg. This new member actually thinks he is supporting his electorate by supporting a budget that has not one red cent to restore the Paradise Dam, not one red cent to support the agriculture industry and not one red cent to support all of those incredible Bundaberg people who were here today. Where was the member for Bundaberg when those fruit and vegetable growers were standing at the end of the Speakers' Hall? They had spent all day with that incredible display, but where was the member for Bundaberg? He was so scared to talk to them that he walked straight past. The member for Bundaberg knows that the people of Bundaberg and the people of the Wide Bay-Burnett region are disgusted with him and his lack of support for Paradise Dam—ripping down Paradise Dam.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): The members for Everton, Bundaberg and Miller will cease all interjections and cross-chamber chatter.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Thank you for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. If I can move on from the—

**Mr Harper:** Oh, please.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I will get back to him. I wish to start tonight, this being the first time I have spoken since the passing of the member for Stretton—

**Mr SMITH:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I ask that correct titles be used in the House. I am not 'him'; I am the member for Bundaberg.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I was talking about the member for Stretton and his passing.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, you have the call.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** As I was saying, this is the first time I have had an opportunity to speak in this House since the very sad passing of Duncan Pegg, the member for Stretton. I know that there will be an opportunity at another time to speak about our memories of Duncan Pegg but, given that this is the budget debate, it would be remiss of me to not recount how much we loved Duncan Pegg in that we called him the financial genius. I know that he loved it. He stood up in every budget debate and gave it to us as best he possibly could, which was great. He did it in debate of private members' motions as well. Anytime there was a financial bill or motion before the House the member for Stretton was on the speaking list. It was always great and I really loved the debate with Peggy. He is sorely missed.

This Appropriation Bill is a bit like the member for Bundaberg: it is just all smoke and mirrors, really.

**Mrs Gerber:** And dribble.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I take that interjection. This budget sets the government's economic and policy agenda for the next year and beyond. Quite frankly, the effects of this budget will be so far reaching. They will go to our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. I cannot go past the fact that two weeks ago in this chamber we debated a bill that the Treasurer put before us—

**Mr Stevens:** Debt reduction.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** The debt reduction bill, supposedly. He said that the lands titles office in Queensland was at an unbelievable value of over \$4 billion when the Victorian and New South Wales offices were below three. Within two weeks, miraculously—I dare say the ratings agencies said, 'Hang on a minute, Treasurer'—the value was doubled, to \$8 billion. That is trickery and a con job, and we all know it.

We know that Labor is losing control. It is completely losing control of the key services that the people of Queensland deserve from their state government. There is no more critical example than the failures of the health system across Queensland. I will give just a couple of examples from my electorate. The first is 17-year-old Jordyn, who suffered a severe cut to her leg and needed surgery in Toowoomba. She is from Kingaroy. After her mum urgently drove her to Toowoomba for surgery, Jordyn went nil by mouth each day for four days awaiting that emergency surgery. Every day for four days she was told, 'Don't eat because you'll get surgery today.'

Then there is Merv from Toogoolawah who needs cataract surgery. His eyesight is deteriorating due to glaucoma. He was referred to Ipswich Hospital in September 2020. By February, when he contacted me, Merv had not heard from the hospital. His referral then went to the PA and he was told he was category 2, meaning he would have to wait another 90 days. It is now June and he has been told by the PA that category 2 now has a wait time of 18 months. That means it will be two years from his original referral before he even has an appointment with a specialist. Merv may be blind by then. That is the concern.

The health system in Queensland is at crisis point, and I know I have said this in this House many times before: I recall when Anna Bligh was the premier of Queensland and the now Premier of Queensland was a cabinet minister who sat around her cabinet table.

**An opposition member:** She nodded her head.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** She nodded her head when the then premier of Queensland, Anna Bligh, stood there and said, 'The health system is a basket case. We've got to split it into two.' Where is Premier Palaszczuk now? It is a worse basket case now than it was under that premier that no-one in this House ever likes to name—that is, former premier Bligh. It is now worse, yet the current Premier was a minister—sat around the cabinet table—when that was said about the health system, and that is one of the reasons I am in this House today. We know that it is only the LNP that can get in and fix the health system in Queensland.

In my portfolio as the shadow minister for water and the construction of dams and regional development and manufacturing, the department of water is another area where the government is losing control. It is a sector that has kept our economy booming and ticking through this pandemic. It is a sector that has ensured that food is on our tables. It is a sector that has made sure that Queenslanders have remained in jobs. What does this sector need? It needs water infrastructure. It does not need the Paradise Dam wall ripped down. It does not need the Callide Dam wall ripped down without an option to put it back up again. It needs investment in water infrastructure.

At a time when interest rates are at an all-time low, one would think that the government would be spending some of that extra borrowing that it is doing on infrastructure, but instead it has ripped the heart out of the infrastructure budget in this state. There is no extra money—none, zero, zilch—for the extra water projects that we need, whether it is projects in the Callide electorate or whether it is projects in my electorate with the Barlil Weir. The member for Callide is always talking about Nathan Dam, and there are other dams. There is the Urannah Dam. All of these projects are waiting for investment and support by the Palaszczuk government, yet what do we see in this budget? Absolutely nothing. However, what we do see is an absolute con job with the Townsville Regional Action Plan. The highlights on that glossy brochure say that Townsville will get \$195 million—

**Mr Harper:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** That goes to show how clueless the member for Thuringowa is. I will take that interjection, because it is obvious that the member for Thuringowa—

**Mr HARPER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence and ask her to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Lui): Member for Nanango, the member for Thuringowa takes personal offence. Do you withdraw?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw and, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would take offence too if the Treasurer of Queensland who was on my side fed me an absolute pup and said, 'I'm going to give you \$195 million,' but in the Capital Statement, member for Thuringowa, it is \$85 million. No wonder you are offended. I understand his problem because it is the member for Thuringowa who is under the pump because crime is out of control under his watch. It is obvious that the member for Thuringowa is so precious—

**Mr HARPER:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I again take personal offence and ask the member to withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Nanango, the member for Thuringowa—

**Mr Mickelberg** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Buderim, cease your interjections. Member for Nanango, the member for Thuringowa takes personal offence. Do you withdraw?

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw, but I would like to take—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** No.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** I withdraw. I would like to take the interjection from the member for Buderim, because it was very good. In the manufacturing space Labor is quick to boast building two new manufacturing hubs. Where are those hubs? They are apparently on the Gold Coast and Mackay, but once again the devil is always in the detail. When it comes to a Labor budget, we know that those opposite have not picked up the papers—sorry, they have probably picked up the papers that the ministers have fed them, and that was pretty obvious from my neighbouring colleague the member for Ipswich West. It was pretty obvious that the education minister just said, 'Member for Ipswich West, just read this.' Seriously, this is a budget that is a con job. It is full of trickery, it is full of glossy paper and deception—

**An opposition member:** Smoke and mirrors.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It is smoke and mirrors; I take that interjection. It is no wonder that this budget completely fails to address so many issues that are hurting regional Queensland, whether it is electricity prices, whether it is water infrastructure projects, whether it is the incredible project in the Lockyer and the Somerset providing water for another incredible agricultural and horticultural region that is amazing. Imagine how good it would be if we could just add water, and that is what we want to do in the Lockyer and the Somerset regions. That is what the member for Bundaberg should be looking at in relation to Paradise Dam.

In relation to the Nanango electorate, there is nothing more disappointing in this budget than the lack of road funding. This is what we have missed out on: Kilkivan Tansey Road, a single-lane bridge on the New England Highway at Cooyar, the 11-kilometre single-lane section of Mundubbera-Durong Road, seven kilometres of the unsealed section of Memerambi Gordonbrook Road, Running Creek Bridge on Woolooga Road, and the Brisbane Valley Highway single lane at Tanduringie bridge. It was the Tanduringie bridge that those opposite said they would look at after a school bus full of kids nearly went over it. I have been advocating for it. It is not even listed anywhere in the budget—no planning, nothing. There is a backlog of maintenance. When it comes to a bus load full of schoolkids—I have spoken in this House about this issue twice—one would think that the minister for roads would think, 'Maybe we should fix up that bridge,' but no. It is like the sealing of the Bunya Mountains Road. You think, 'Great, it's in there,' but not until after 2024-25. It is an absolute rot.

**An opposition member:** They've kicked it down the road.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** Those opposite have kicked it down the road. I commend the great P&C and the principal of the Kilcoy State School for around seven years of advocating with me for the new school hall. We are so pleased to be able to see that, eventually after six years, the Palaszczuk government has decided to fund that and for Toogoolawah school. I do thank the Minister for Education in relation to those schools. However, what the South Burnett needs more than anything—

**Ms McMillan:** Is a new member.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:**—is a paediatrician for South Burnett families. I get the arrogance and the hubris of the member opposite.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** They do not care. They think a new member will help them, but what the South Burnett needs is an understanding from those inner-city people like the member for Mansfield that the people of the bush deserve to have the services. They do not deserve—

**An honourable member** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** It was the member for Mansfield who thought she was funny.

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** She should know better because she is a former principal. It is the principals of my local schools who are asking for this. They want the paediatrician based there. They do not want the health minister to say, 'We've got it fixed because they can go to Toowoomba.' I will tell members this: if you are a family that lives on the other side of Proston and your kids are at Tingoora State School, you cannot afford to get your kids over to Toowoomba. That is the reality of living in regional Queensland. It is not like just heading off to the royal children's hospital or the Lady Cilento. You just cannot do that if you are in the bush, and that is why we need a paediatrician for the South Burnett.

I have touched on the water infrastructure that we need in the wonderful area of the South Burnett, but I say in closing that this budget is a complete fail. It is a fail for the people of Queensland. It is a fail for the people who support us by putting food on our tables. It fails the people who want water security in Queensland. It fails the manufacturing industry. It fails the mums and dads who are just trying to get ahead to get a home and raise their families in Queensland. It is unacceptable that this con job is actually a state budget.