




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (8.04 pm): I rise in support of the Appropriation Bill 2021. I am proud to stand in this place to support another strong Labor budget. I commend the Treasurer for delivering such a strong budget as we continue to face globally uncertain times due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the Treasurer rightly pointed out, our government can deliver such a strong economic statement due to our health response in this state. By putting the health and safety of Queenslanders first we are now in a position to deliver Queensland's plan for economic recovery. At the heart of this budget is a focus on delivering jobs right across Queensland.

As Minister for Regional Development I am delighted to see the commitments made to job-creating infrastructure projects right across regional Queensland. Whether it is roads, health, schools or infrastructure, every dollar that we spend in regional Queensland delivers good secure local jobs for regional Queenslanders. That highlights an important difference between the Palaszczuk government and those opposite: when we make a promise we deliver and I can tell the House that regional communities certainly appreciate that.

All too often I hear stories of Campbell Newman gutting services and sacking public servants in the regions and of the huge negative impact that had on all regional communities. Of course, Campbell Newman did not do it on his own; he had plenty of support and help as he recklessly slashed jobs in regional Queensland. The former short-lived premier was ably aided by many of those who currently sit on the front bench opposite, including the member for Broadwater and the member for Nanango. The member for Nanango, in particular, claims to be all about regional Queensland yet she stood by—she said and did nothing—as thousands and thousands of jobs were lost under those opposite. Of course, it was not just direct jobs that were impacted; jobs that supported services in the communities were also lost.

Thankfully, those days are well and truly behind us and the Palaszczuk Labor government is delivering jobs in regional Queensland. A big part of the strategy is our government's \$3.34 billion Queensland Jobs Fund. The Queensland Jobs Fund brings together a range of existing funding programs and also delivers a new \$350 million Industry Partnership Program to focus our efforts on job creation right around the state. As we heard from the Treasurer, the Industry Partnership Program will grow and create jobs in priority industries such as advanced manufacturing, hydrogen, biofuels, biomedical, defence, aerospace, space, resource recovery and our Mining Equipment, Technology and Services sector.

If there is anything that the COVID-19 pandemic has shown us it is that we need to be self-reliant when it comes to manufacturing critical products. As the Minister for Manufacturing I welcome the focus on and certainly the investment in this area as part of the Queensland Jobs Fund. I also recognise the

huge potential that the emerging hydrogen industry has for powering our state's advanced manufacturing sector. Hydrogen is already key for a range of industries that provide vital inputs into the manufacturing process. As we grow that industry, more and more opportunities will become available to all of our manufacturers right across Queensland.

Water security is critical for our state's long-term economic growth.

Mr Boyce: How's the Paradise Dam going?

Mr BUTCHER: Do not get me started on Paradise Dam, member for Callide. For regional communities water security is a key component of long-term planning for future population and economic growth. While the Palaszczuk government has committed close to \$1.9 billion to bulk water infrastructure across the state since 2015, we also understand the importance of water security to the water treatment plants, reservoirs and water and sewerage systems of our regional towns and cities. That is why yesterday in this place I was proud to talk about the \$70 million that we are investing in round 6 of the Building our Regions program. By providing financial support to regional councils, the Building our Regions program has a long history of delivering infrastructure improvements, economic opportunities and jobs for our regional communities.

The first five rounds of the program have seen more than \$348 million allocated to 271 projects across 67 councils. Building our Regions has also leveraged more than \$539 million in additional funding from other sources to deliver a capital expenditure of more than \$887 million, supporting more than 2,700 construction jobs in regional Queensland.

Every mayor that I talk to in regional Queensland raves about the positive impacts Building our Regions funding has had in their local communities. Round 6 of Building our Regions to be delivered over three years will focus on delivering maintenance and improvement works to water treatment plants, reservoirs and water and sewerage systems in all of our regional communities.

However, I am not just a proud member of the Palaszczuk government, I am also incredibly privileged to represent the great people of Gladstone. For our region's education sector, there is more than \$14.6 million in upgrades to the schools right across the Gladstone district and even into the electorate of Callide where we are delivering a \$60 million high school which will be complete next year. We are planning for growth in new classrooms at Toolooa High School and \$1.8 million for the amazing team at Rosella Park School who will receive more than \$8.1 million. I am pleased to report that our smaller schools will also benefit in this budget with \$1.1 million going into infrastructure and amenity upgrades at Yarwun, Ambrose and Mount Larcom state schools.

Our local tourism hero, Heron Island, will also increase renewable energy infrastructure and operate with 100 per cent solar energy and nearly \$87,000 of funding will go to install new eco tents.

Everyone knows that the Gladstone region is the greatest place to live, work and fish. Our region's anglers will be pleased to know that we are delivering a \$10.8 million fish hatchery at Awoonga Dam, and you do not need a rod to enjoy the upgrades we are bringing because we are also putting \$1.1 million into continuing community walking trails at Boynedale and Four Mile Scrub. I am pleased to advise that we are constructing a shared path on Tannum Sands Road with \$2.2 million, and an upgrade to Raglan Creek Bridge on the Bruce Highway, as well as fixing up the Toolooa Street pavement between Derby and Agnese streets.

This budget is delivering and providing direct support to Queenslanders and I am particularly proud of the significant investments it is making in our regional communities. I thank the Treasurer and I look forward to seeing these investments deliver real outcomes for all of our communities in regional Queensland.