



Speech By
Joseph Kelly

MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

Health and Environment Committee, Report

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (5.21 pm): I start by saying what a great pleasure it is to speak in support of this committee report. I acknowledge and thank the committee for the great work it has done on this report, as it does with all of the bills and reports that it brings to this parliament.

Before I get into talking about the substance of it I would like to rebut some of the myths and nonsense that has been peddled by those opposite. Some of what they are saying, as I will get to, is quite dangerous. The member for Southport repeatedly talked about the fact that we had a rushed estimates process. The last time I checked, the number of days that we sat in estimates mirrored every other year that I have been here as a member of parliament so there was no rushing of the estimates process. Perhaps he needs to look back to the time when those opposite were in government and they crammed the entire estimates process into just two days. It takes a great degree of hubris and arrogance to accuse us of rushing an estimates process when that is their track record.

The member for Southport, as many opposite like to do, comes in and tells us what a fantastic team they are and how brilliant they would be if they were every running Queensland, yet it seems they are unable to prepare for an estimates process even though they have done it many, many times from opposition.

Many members have come in here and continued to peddle the economic nonsense that was peddled by those opposite during the election process which was rightfully rejected by the people of Queensland: no taxes, no borrowings, no service cuts, no staff cuts, balancing the budget, growing everything, building the new Bradfield scheme and the gold plated Bruce Highway but not today or in 100 days, or in a year's time or even 10 years—in 15 years time! We are looking at an economic school that does not resemble that of JK Galbraith, it resembles that of JK Rowling, the economic school of magic.

I do want to turn to a serious matter and that is the notion peddled by the member for Mudgeeraba. She gives comfort to the anti-vaccination movement when she comes into this place and peddles the line that there will be inequity in access to COVID-19 vaccines, after being told repeatedly by the health minister today that we will be rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine equitably across this state. This gives succour to those in the anti-vaccination movement. Many people are vaccination hesitant. We know that. When one destroys confidence in the vaccination process one is doing great damage to

the people of Queensland. As the Chief Health Officer has clearly said, the only way that this vaccine will work is if every single person gets it. Anybody who destroys that confidence is being irresponsible. If they are a health professional it is doubly, triply, quadruply irresponsible.

In the small time I have left I will turn to the estimates process. When I look at the highlights from the budget, we should rename last year the year of the CHO. It was the year of the Chief Health Officer of this state stepping forward and leading. The fever clinics we stood up, the additional ventilators we stood up, the additional investments that we have made into our public health capacity, the money put forward towards addressing surgical backlogs created by the actions we had to take and, importantly, the money put into mental health to deal with the long-term effects of COVID-19, are outstanding examples of why we are in government. We know how to use the health budget to keep Queenslanders safe. That is exactly what we did in 2020. I feel really sorry and sad for those countries around the world that were not able to pull this together. We saw health system after health system after health system around the world collapsing. We are still seeing that. When we see those health systems collapse we see people dying and, in particular, health workers dying.

The fact that we were able to create so many more ventilators was incredible. That we were able to put in place procedures to make sure that we had the capacity to ventilate people if we needed was incredible. The fact that we are able to roll out a vaccine less than 12 months after this disease has been identified is a modern miracle of medicine. We have kept Queenslanders safe. This is a great budget.