



Speech By
Julieanne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

Health and Environment Committee, Report

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.16 pm): It is really pleasing to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government. This is a government that delivers the health, infrastructure, personnel and resources that Queenslanders need. Regardless of where they live in Queensland, the budget handed down last year will support them and their families. In the Mackay region the Palaszczuk government is investing \$493 million into the Mackay HHS, ensuring that our region has the resources to keep pace with our growing community. We are also restoring frontline services cut by those opposite with extra nurses, doctors, teachers and police, but there is always more to be done. The health budget delivers \$21.8 billion of funding which includes a record capital budget to build new hospitals, health facilities and ambulances stations and an infrastructure program that will support over 4,000 construction and health jobs.

The Palaszczuk government delivers for all Queenslanders, including \$1.8 million towards \$17.5 million worth of improved facilities at the Bowen Hospital site which is in the footprint of the Mackay HHS; \$2 million in upgrades to the Cunnamulla Hospital; \$9.9 million towards the now completed \$20.2 million redevelopment of the Blackall Hospital; \$7 million towards a \$10 million upgrade of the Emerald Hospital; and \$21 million towards the \$93.1 million worth of construction projects to improve facilities at the Atherton Hospital site. These are just some of the examples of a long list of how the Palaszczuk government is delivering health services right across Queensland. As a fifth generation Mackay local, I am a proud regional Queenslander. As assistant minister for regional health infrastructure, I am passionate about ensuring that Queenslanders, no matter where they live, have the services that they need.

While I am on my feet it would be remiss of me not to call out the behaviour of those opposite during the estimates process and in particular the shadow minister for health. The member for Mudgeeraba should hang her head in shame. I understand that she goes around putting 'RN' after her name. However, the nurses that I know have compassion and the member for Mudgeeraba's bedside manner leaves a lot to be desired.

Mr Harper: She has none.

Mrs GILBERT: No, that is right. The member for Mudgeeraba's line of questioning on several occasions was very aggressive, but her question in relation to the chief legal counsel of the department was appalling, trying to make out that the person who holds that position was away from their job

through some fault of their own or some sinister reason. The person was away on leave due to a deeply personal matter dealing with a distressing situation for them as they are cared for their gravely unwell parent. Our thoughts are with them in this challenging and difficult time. This was a prime example of how the member for Mudgeeraba never lets the facts get in the way of trying to score a cheap headline. Shame on the shadow minister.

I also read with interest the member for Mirani's statement of reservation regarding the process where he said—

With Government members holding 50 per cent of the Committee's membership, 50 per cent of time during the Inquiry's hearings was lost to such questioning.

This statement is incorrect and misleading and should not go without correction. I am advised that during the hearing around 30 per cent of the time was in government questions, around 53 per cent was in non-government questions, around 22 per cent of the questions were from government members and around 78 per cent were from non-government members. These statistics speak for themselves. The member for Mirani should correct the record.

I would like to commend the committee for its work on the estimates committee and also thank the department and ministerial staff for their work in preparing for estimates.