




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mrs GERBER** (Currumbin—LNP) (3.26 pm): Before I proceed to make my contribution to the budget debate I put on the record that I intend to talk about an election commitment that Labor made to the people of Currumbin Valley to acquire 148 hectares of parkland and turn it into ecotourism. I declare that, like a number of my constituents, my husband is an employee of a company that is associated with the entity that owns that land.

Promises have been made by this government and then those promises have been broken. To begin with, allow me to mention the positives for my community in this budget. That will take a whole of two seconds. In my budget reply speech last year I said that I aspire to be the kind of representative who acknowledges when the government commits to something that my community has called for. That is what government should do. It is the very minimum that this government should do. It is in that spirit that I want to express my delight that \$452,000 has been allocated out of the maintenance fund for the Elanora State High School to refurbish their home economics centre. This is fantastic. They have been patiently waiting on a waiting list for this money for over a decade. Sadly, this is the only bit of new money in this year's budget for Currumbin electorate schools. The little of what is funded in this budget was, in fact, promised in last year's budget and is only now being delivered. I am grateful for the promises that are actually being funded because there are a lot of promises that have no funding in this budget.

The promises that are actually being funded, such as the outside hours school care facility for the Currumbin State School, the upgrade to the toilet block for Elanora State School and the upgrade to the administration block for Tallebudgera State School, are all investments that these schools have been crying out for for a long time now. I am grateful that they are now receiving it. The commitment of \$2 million to the Currumbin Beach Vikings Surf Life Saving Club to build a new nippers club is another commitment I am happy about. As a teenager I earned my bronze medallion at the Vikings. They needed a new nippers club then. I was delighted that last year the LNP committed \$2 million to upgrade the Vikings junior nippers club and Labor matched it and now they are getting that funding. I am very grateful that is happening.

Why, do members ask, am I so grateful for the promises that are actually being funded? Because there are so many promises this Labor government has made to my Currumbin community that are not being funded. In the 2020 election, Labor unequivocally promised that 'a re-elected Palaszczuk government will deliver a local satellite hospital for Tugun.' They plastered it all over promotional material. I table a document stating that the Premier came down and announced it. I also table another document stating that there will be a satellite hospital for Tugun. It was all in an attempt to win Currumbin in the state campaign.

Tabled paper: Bundle of extracts from the Facebook page of Kaylee for Currumbin, in relation to the Premier and health services [916](#).

Tugun needs that satellite hospital. They need the investment and they need the 924 jobs that will be created. That is why it is so disappointing to see this state Labor government unable to provide any detail around where the satellite hospital will be located. Following last year's budget I expressed my dismay that the Labor government is shying away from that promise.

Mr Krause: 'Dismay'?

Mrs GERBER: I know: 'dismay' is conservative. I was absolutely disgusted and six months on I am still facing this dilemma. In last year's budget papers not only was the project renamed—no longer was it called the Tugun satellite hospital; it was called the southern Gold Coast satellite hospital—the project's location pin was dropped in Burleigh. In this year's budget there is no project location pin at all and once again the name has been changed. Now it is being referred to as the Gold Coast satellite hospital. If they plan on making good on their promise to build a satellite hospital in Tugun, why all the smoke and mirrors around the name?

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Bush): Pause the clock. Member for Currumbin, I apologise. Members on both sides, the noise is getting a bit much. Be mindful that I would appreciate hearing this speech in as much silence as possible.

Mrs GERBER: Thank you for your protection, Madam Deputy Speaker. Do members want to know why there is all that smoke and mirrors around the name when the locations of all the other satellite hospitals are known? I can tell members why. It is because this deceitful Labor government is trying to wriggle out of its promise because it no longer benefits it to build a hospital in Currumbin. My community want that promise kept. They want this government to know how much the commitment to a satellite hospital in Tugun means to them. I want to see this seedy state Labor government deliver on that promise.

The second major commitment that the government made to my Currumbin community and that they are hoping my constituents will forget about is their election promise to acquire 148 hectares of land in Currumbin Valley and turn it into an ecotourism park. Labor said they would buy that land. Labor said they would ensure the site would remain out of the urban footprint. They said they would transform all 148 hectares of Martha's Vineyard into one of the largest ecotourism parks in Australia. They called it an 'eco win' for Currumbin, and I table that article.

Tabled paper: Media article, undated, titled 'Eco win in Currumbin' [917](#).

Do members know how much money they have allocated to that project in the budget this year?

Mr Krause: How much?

Mrs GERBER: Zero! They plan to acquire a parcel of land for zero dollars. During the state campaign it became clear that the Labor candidate had plucked that commitment out of the air. The Labor candidate had not even consulted with the landowners before making that announcement.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, I have spoken previously about the general noise level. I will start issuing warnings. There are a couple of people I am monitoring. You are cautioned.

Mrs GERBER: The land was purchased by the current landowner in 2019 for \$15.25 million. In last year's budget a measly \$500,000 was allocated for negotiations and in this year's budget there are zero dollars allocated. Even this out-of-touch Treasurer should know that \$500,000 is a far cry from the \$15.25 million that the land was valued at over two years ago. However, we all know that valuations are not this Treasurer's strong point. Maybe he thinks he can make the valuation up as he did with the land titles office. I am sorry, Treasurer, but that will not fly in the real world where market valuations matter. How is this deceitful Labor government going to secure the land when they are coming to the negotiation table with zero dollars? It is another Labor promise that this Labor government is set to break for my Currumbin community.

There is a consistent theme here. The Treasurer promised \$2 billion for the Hospital Building Fund, but when we look to the budget for the money there is nothing there. In reality, for the whole year there is a \$74 million drop in actual expenditure for our hospitals and, of greatest concern to me, \$51 million of that reduction in expenditure affects the Gold Coast. In this budget the Treasurer promised \$1 billion for the Housing Investment Fund. However, if you flip through the budget papers and try to find the money it is not there. The Treasurer promised \$1.5 billion for the Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund, but there is only \$500 million in the budget for that. The budget is missing \$1 billion there. The Treasurer promised \$300 million for the Path to Treaty Fund, but again there is no actual funding in the budget. The truth of the matter is that Queensland and my Currumbin community have received a truckload of nothing from this state Labor government.

This budget does not reflect a government that supports small businesses. Faced with the disastrous impacts of the pandemic, we on the border called for targeted funding to help businesses directly impacted by border closures and restrictions. What we got from this state Labor government was a barely functional yet aptly named disaster hub. That was launched with typos, errors and the same lack of care that Labor has shown our small businesses all along, not to mention the false hope when they closed applications for the Business Basics grants a mere three hours after they opened.

As the shadow assistant minister for the night-time economy I am beyond disappointed in the lack of vision, the lack of planning and the lack of care given by this state government to grow the economy, let alone the night-time economy. It is past time that this government provide support to emerging industries such as that.

Further, the government must step up and do better to support local community groups in Currumbin. As the shadow assistant minister for youth I would love to see some funding provided to the incredible not-for-profit and volunteer-run organisations that service my community. One example of those is the incredible Fight 4 Youth, which is a multicultural youth charity that provides relief to young people in need. Leisa Logan, who founded Fight 4 Youth, is a qualified chaplain. When she is not volunteering her time at Fight 4 Youth to help youth live their best possible lives against disadvantage, against discrimination, against harm and against self-harm, she is working at the Brisbane Youth Detention Centre helping youths in detention. Leisa's whole objective is to reach the kids who need it, to empower them, to strengthen relationships, to inspire respect for themselves and for others, and to keep them out of detention centres. I want to see Fight 4 Youth supported. I am committed to helping Leisa however I can.

Further, as the shadow assistant minister for justice I cannot ignore this state Labor government's clear disregard for my community's safety on the policing front. The Gold Coast is the state's second largest city and accounts for 15 per cent of the population, yet the government has decided that a single increase in police resources on the northern Gold Coast is enough for the whole city. The budget sets aside \$156.1 million for the Queensland Police Service but the Gold Coast receives a mere \$51 million for one project and the Currumbin electorate is completely ignored.

The people of Currumbin and the wider Gold Coast community are also left to wonder if the roof over their head is there to stay and whether they will see any funding for the social housing that they need. Earlier this week, the ABC's Brisbane anchor, Matt Wordsworth, pressed the Premier where it hurt. He asked her about the government's welfare investment, which falls well short of what Queensland needs. He said, 'We've got a housing system on the waitlist', and he is right. The Premier could not stand that pressure. She snapped back, saying that she did not accept that. The Premier stated—

We're putting \$1.9 billion into housing. \$1.9 billion. Tell me which other government around Australia has put \$1.9 billion into social housing?

I can tell her. The Victorian government has! They are investing \$5.3 billion in social housing.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that is not the point. The point is the Gold Coast, which already houses 13 per cent of the state's population, only receives a mere seven per cent of the budgeted money to be spent on the construction of new social housing and only three per cent of the budgeted money to be spent on upgrading social housing. There are 25,000 people on the social housing waiting list. These Gold Coasters cannot wait on the state Labor government any longer.

The last point I want to make is one that is very close to my heart. For the past six months I have been fighting alongside the Gough family to see spinal muscular atrophy included in the newborn bloodspot screening process in Queensland so that another Queensland family does not have to suffer the way the Goughs have, so that another Queensland family does not have to watch while their child deteriorates from SMA when it could have been prevented with early detection at birth. I was hopeful the health minister might listen to the 14,500 petitioners who signed the petition and the 500 people who sent letters to the health minister imploring her to add SMA to the newborn screening process. Even the AMAQ has once again, in their budget submission, implored the health minister to include it in the budget. AMA has estimated this cost to be only \$700,000. Here is their budget submission in which they said—

AMA Queensland wants SMA testing introduced to the newborn heel prick test in Queensland so babies diagnosed with the disease can begin treatment early and have a better quality of life.

I will table that for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Extract from AMA Queensland Budget Submission 2021-22, titled '5. Boost specialist care for regional maternity patients', p. 8 [918](#).

There is no commitment or certainty in this year's budget for testing for SMA. I am devastated by this. We must not let another Queensland family or baby go through what baby Oakley is going through. I know the health minister is still open to considering this, and I hope with all my heart that the government will act on this because it is above politics; this is a matter pertaining to the life and death of children in Queensland. For a test that costs \$10, this is something that this government should be doing. This is why I will not stop fighting for it and it is why we must continue to push this government to move for Oakley and include testing for SMA as part the newborn screening process in Queensland.

I will conclude by saying this budget is one of the worst budgets for my Currumbin community and it is one of the worst budgets for Queenslanders. Not only has it let my Currumbin community down full of lies and deception—

(Time expired)