




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Enoch

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (12.22 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2021-22 appropriation bills, a budget that will deliver great outcomes for the people of Queensland. As a Labor government, we believe that all Queenslanders deserve a safe place to call home. Unfortunately, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in interstate migration have made that more difficult than ever, especially for the most vulnerable in our community. For that reason, this budget's \$2.9 billion total housing investment is the largest concentrated investment in social housing in Queensland's history. It will deliver more homes for vulnerable Queenslanders sooner.

With a \$1.9 billion investment over four years, we are increasing the supply of social and affordable housing by almost 10,000 homes over the life of our Housing Strategy, including 7,400 new builds over the next four years. This is a net increase of 4,323 new social and affordable homes than was originally committed under the Queensland Housing Strategy in 2017. We will achieve this through our new Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025.

Supporting this investment is the establishment of a new \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund. This fund is a first for Queensland and it will deliver returns that will support increased social housing across Queensland and provide the certainty that our industry partners and providers have been calling for. The fund will have its capital value maintained over time, with returns on its investments generating a perpetual source of funding, initially up to \$40 million per annum. This will support the commencement of 3,600 social homes by 30 June 2025 through partnerships with community housing providers, non-government organisations and the private sector. Later this year we will go out to the market to seek partnerships that deliver real housing outcomes for Queenslanders.

As a government we are constructing new social housing to boost our supply of homes for people and families across the state. In fact, of the total state budget funding for housing, \$1.813 billion will be used to boost housing supply. Our four-year action plan puts people first and is focused on increasing housing supply across all parts of Queensland by bringing real investment to the regions as well as South-East Queensland. By doing so, this action plan will help us deliver on our plan for Queensland's economic recovery through the creation of construction jobs as we build new homes.

As I have travelled the state I have met countless Queenslanders whose lives have been changed by having access to housing support. This investment really is about people. It is about providing the dignity of a safe, secure home to those who need it most. With an investment of \$60 million over two years to quickly get more social and affordable housing available for tenants and to prepare a pipeline of construction work for future years, we are moving quickly to address immediate challenges.

Through the action plan we have also introduced the new Queensland Housing Investment Growth Initiative. This initiative will support a quick response to emergent housing needs in priority locations. Complementing the Housing Investment Fund, our new QuickStarts Qld program will bring

forward planned construction and maintenance projects through targeted capital investment. The Helping Hand program will also source private rental properties for supported head leases to meet emergent housing needs. Importantly, we are also working in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities and the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Housing Queensland peak body to respond to the unique housing experiences and aspirations of First Nations people.

On top of the boost to social housing supply and in addition to our annual investment to address homelessness, an extra \$94.9 million over four years has been allocated in this budget to support essential housing and homelessness support services. It includes specific service responses for people experiencing and at risk of homelessness, and women and families experiencing domestic and family violence.

Unfortunately, what we have seen from the opposition's contribution to the budget is that they fully intend to return to the bad old days of the Newman government. Their plan was to get rid of 90 per cent of Queensland's social housing stock. We know that Logan Renewal was just going to be the start and Gold Coast was next on their hit list. The member for Everton was incorrect in his contribution when he said that I supported Logan Renewal back in 2015. I absolutely did not. What I support is strong investment in more social and affordable housing, not the wholesale giveaway of public assets.

The Leader of the Opposition talks about the rate of increase in social housing. We have built more than 3,000 new social homes and started another 448. Let's remember the position we started from. We inherited a situation whereby, under three years of the Newman government, the amount of social and community housing in Queensland decreased by 428 properties, so we had to build back all those properties and then continue to invest. Meanwhile, the Leader of the Opposition has put the same person who was responsible for that decrease back in the shadow housing portfolio. Mark my words: the worst thing that could happen to social housing in Queensland is another LNP government. They cut, they sack and they sell. That is all they know how to do. We can see from past experience and from their words in parliament this week that they would cut social housing yet again.

The Deputy Speaker has reviewed and approved my speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech is incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

Arts

Speaker, arts and culture are also at the centre of the state's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the 2021–2022 Budget, we are backing Queensland's arts sector with more than \$90 million over four years to drive economic recovery, social outcomes and create jobs.

We are injecting new money into the state's live music industry to secure its continued sustainability, investing in major cultural tourism initiatives across Queensland, and providing significant investment in our cultural infrastructure.

This budget acknowledges the significant impact of the pandemic on the arts industry and the importance of investing in the sector to build back better than ever before.

The arts are key to delivering our plan for economic recovery, each year contributing \$8.5 billion into the state's economy and supporting more than 92,000 jobs for Queenslanders.

We have amped up investment to Queensland's live music industry with an additional \$7 million in 2021-22 to support the sustainability of the sector.

This vital industry supports strong economic outcomes in Queensland, with Brisbane's music industry alone worth an estimated \$428 million to the Queensland economy.

With this new investment, the government's dedicated Arts and Cultural Recovery Package, implemented last year to quickly address the immediate needs of the sector, will now deliver almost \$30 million in critical support across Queensland's arts and cultural sector. This Package is an important down payment on Creative Together, the Queensland Government's 10-year Roadmap for Arts, Culture and Creativity.

The budget continues to invest in key events that generate cultural tourism and economic outcomes, with \$9 million over three years to support the Queensland Museum Network's delivery of the popular World Science Festival, in regional Queensland as well as Brisbane.

Holding this festival in Queensland bolsters our knowledge economy, shares the latest discoveries and advancements that will impact our lives and continues to engage Queenslanders of all ages with the power of science.

As the only World Science Festival held outside of New York, this event has attracted audiences of more than 800,000 visitors in Brisbane, Toowoomba, Chinchilla, Townville and Mackay since 2016.

And it has generated more than \$32 million in economic impact for the state.

In addition, new Blockbuster funding of \$6 million over three years, from 2022-23, will enable the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art to continue to attract Queensland-exclusive internationally significant exhibitions.

It was blockbuster funding that secured the European Masterpieces from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York which opened last weekend, and I can inform the House that it had more than 5,000 visitors through the doors over its first weekend.

The Queensland Government's blockbuster investment, together with support from Tourism and Events Queensland for exclusive exhibitions through QAGOMA has generated more than \$85 million in economic impact since 2016.

We have also reinforced our commitment to the growth of regional arts with continued support of \$6 million over four years for the Regional Arts Services Network (RASN).

The network's successes include the development of signature cultural tourism projects including Trailblazing the West in Western Queensland and the Savannah Way Art Trail in Far North Queensland.

We are also committing a further \$61.7 million over four years to invest in our cultural infrastructure..

This includes almost \$40 million for critical maintenance and upgrades across the heritage-listed Queensland Cultural Centre, and \$9.1 million for critical maintenance activities for the Queensland Museum Network in Brisbane, Townsville, Toowoomba and Ipswich.

This is a significant investment by our government in the arts sector across the state.

Digital Economy

Speaker, this Budget also invests \$17.3 million over five years to the Digital Archiving Program to ensure the State's culturally and historically significant digital records are safe, secure and accessible to Queenslanders in years to come. Most records are now created digitally, with the number growing exponentially each year.

This funding will boost the Queensland Government's capacity and capability to securely store and provide access to what are known as 'born-digital' records.

This means they will be preserved for future generations.

Additionally, we've allocated \$12 million over three years to continue to improve digital connectivity in Queensland – including mobile coverage in regional areas.

We know that improving digital connectivity improves social inclusion and safety for Queenslanders, increases the productivity of businesses in our state, and enables better access to government services.

Mobile services are essential, particularly during natural disasters when fixed lines may be impacted.

Queensland has co-invested more than \$25 million over the past four years to leverage a package for our state, totalling more than \$104 million from the Commonwealth.

The COVID-19 pandemic proved the value of phone and information services for Queenslanders, particularly for seniors and more vulnerable members of our community.

Smart Service Queensland (SSQ) has been delivering the latest information and services to Queenslanders through the 134-COVID and Community Recovery hotlines, the Check in Qld App, quarantine wellness checks and the dedicated COVID-19 website (COVID19.qld.gov.au).

The State Budget recognises the importance of these services, with funding totalling \$11.3 million in 2021–22.

It also recognises the importance of cyber security measures through an investment of \$11 million over the next two years.

This is in addition to the \$20.3 million already allocated from 2019-20 to 2022-23.

Communities

Speaker, the 2021-22 State Budget is investing in quality community services that support the social and economic inclusion and wellbeing of people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.

This Budget ensures that Queenslanders can continue to access the services and supports they need to thrive.

As a government, we have reiterated our commitment to ensuring the continuation of the Community Transport scheme across Queensland.

The Community Transport scheme provides transport services for people with disability who are not eligible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The service also supports other vulnerable and socially disadvantaged people under the age of 65 who have limited or no access to appropriate and affordable transport.

Speaker, this year's Budget includes a \$7 million annual funding commitment for this service. Speaker, Queenslanders are strong and resilient in the face of the many challenges that come with living in our state.

Through fires, floods, cyclones, hailstorms and drought, and the COVID-19 pandemic, Queenslanders have rallied to rebuild, recover, and boost their resilience for future disasters.

However, we recognise the devastating and ongoing impact that the drought has had on communities right across the state.

That's why we are continuing to invest in our successful Community Drought Support Program.

The 2021-22 State Budget includes \$5.2 million annually for this program, as part of the Queensland Government's overall annual drought support package.

The program provides flexible financial assistance, such as vouchers and food hampers, and support for events and activities including local agricultural shows, rodeos and sporting events.

Under the previous round of this funding, 61 organisations shared in almost \$5 million.

We know that there are many Queenslanders in our communities who have been doing it tough.

The State Budget invests in services and supports that individuals and families need to get back on their feet.

Algerster Electorate

Speaker, I am pleased the State Budget also delivers for the people of the Algerster electorate.

Those who call the Algerster electorate home know the importance of staying connected to each other, especially during COVID-19. That is why the State Budget will deliver \$2.5 million to support the Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity Program which will identify the current and future digital infrastructure requirements.

As well as staying connected digitally, the Algerster electorate will see the benefits of greater transport connectivity.

Speaker, the Greenbank RSL Park n Ride will see \$3.4 million in 2021-22 out of a total \$21 million total spend to upgrade the facility, allowing commuters to get to and from home and work quicker and safer. The Greenbank RSL Park n Ride will host 600 car parks, greater security measures, a bike riding facility, more bus routes and even greater connection to Brisbane city and surrounds. This is a huge achievement for locals and with construction already underway, it won't be long until locals are able to utilise the Park n Ride.

In addition, Speaker, commuters will be thrilled with the \$724, 220 allocation to works for the improvement of Johnson Road and Mt Lindesay Highway on-ramp intersection at Hillcrest.

This improvement project forms part of the Palaszczuk Government's record \$27.5 billion, four-year roads and transport investment plan, which is supporting 24,000 jobs and driving Queensland economic recovery. The improvement works will include a new, staggered pedestrian crossing on the western arm of the intersection to make it safer and easier for people walking in the area, new drop kerbs and older electrical infrastructure, including traffic signal lanterns and pedestrian push buttons, will also be replaced.

\$30,000 will also deliver the final elements of the Griffith arterial Cycleway at Granard Rd from Ipswich Motorway to Balham Road.

Speaker, in an exciting addition to electorates in Brisbane's South, an allocation of \$5.5 million to planning the Salisbury to Beaudesert Rail Line will increase connectivity and ease congestion.

In a huge win for locals, this rail line planning will ensure we are equipped to deliver a rail line that connects locals to Brisbane city and surrounds. Speaker, in addition to connection, the Algerster electorate is an electorate that cares deeply about education. With 6 State schools within the electorate and several others within close proximity, it is only fitting that the State budget will deliver funding across the electorate.

More than \$12.9 million has been allocated in the 2021-22 budget for Algerster State Schools. Acacia Ridge State School will receive \$850,000 to refurbish existing classroom facilities, \$700,000 for a much-needed security fence which I have worked tirelessly with the School to secure.

The 2021-22 budget will also deliver \$80,000 of a total \$150,000 for a new playground area at Acacia Ridge State School – that is \$780,000 worth of shovel ready projects. This means students will learn and play in brand new facilities. Additionally, Algerster State School will receive \$120,000 to remove outdated classrooms as part of the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program; Calamvale Community College will see a whopping \$6.1 million of a total \$7.04 million for the construction of new classrooms to meet the increasing student population.

Calamvale Special School will see \$3.9 million of a total \$12.9 million also for additional classrooms. Watson Road State School will also receive more than \$500,000 for a new school security fence and shade covering for their outdoor area, another shovel ready project.

Speaker, in addition to the funding I've outlined, State Schools in the Algerster electorate will also receive \$625,000 for maintenance and minor works during 2021-22. This funding will support greater learning and playing options for students across the Algerster electorate. This is a budget that knows the importance of delivering on education.

Conclusion

Speaker, I commend the Treasurer on an outstanding budget for the people of Queensland.