



Speech By
Linus Power

MEMBER FOR LOGAN

Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Economics and Governance Committee, Report

 **Mr POWER** (Logan—ALP) (12.04 pm): I am proud to say that the committee recommended that the proposed expenditure of the Appropriation Bill be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment. During the committee we saw enthusiastic participation from the fantastic committee members, whom I have already thanked in a previous speech. However, I want to extend thankyou to the secretariat.

Mr Stevens: Hear, hear!

Mr POWER: We hear, 'Hear, hear!' from the member for Mermaid Beach. They do a great job, a very professional job and a very bipartisan job in including all of us. I also note that there was enthusiastic participation from the members for Mirani, Maiwar, Kawana, Broadwater, Toowoomba South, Traeger, South Brisbane, Everton, Bonney and Maroochydore. We welcome participation from all members, but I have to firstly give an apology. In reflecting on my chairing of the committee, I have to apologise to the House and especially to the members of the committee from the government side. We had a long committee—10.33 hours of hard, interrogative questioning of ministers. We aim to give fifty-fifty distribution. It is vital that at the estimates process we hear about the good work that government is doing as well as asking the hard, interrogative questions. Government members ask questions about our local area and about services and facilities. Unfortunately, due to my enthusiasm for being fair to the opposition, of that 10.33 hours only four hours were allocated to government questioning—I apologise to the House for not giving adequate time for government members to ask questions about their local areas in terms of the issues that are important to them during these important COVID times—and I gave 5.29 hours towards non-government questions.

That is a record amount of non-government questioning during which those opposite had the time to utilise as they saw fit. I do not know if it was fair that I gave so much time to the opposition and non-government members, but they had that opportunity. That is why I was, frankly, a little bit hurt and disappointed when in the statement of reservation it was noted that I had not given adequate questioning time to members of the opposition as I had in fact given them record questioning time. I challenge members of the opposition: if they can find a single chair who gave anywhere near 5.29 hours of questioning to the opposition and non-government members, find them for me. I value them so much that I try to give them a fair go. Frankly, I probably gave them too much of a fair go and I apologise to members of the committee from the government side because they had valuable questions that they wanted to ask.

When talking about the appropriations for the Treasurer and the Premier, we need to reflect on the key issues that are part of our government. The first one is that we need to see how jobs are being created during this COVID atmosphere. We know that the nation has given a real vote of support for Queensland, the Queensland economy and the handling of COVID within Queensland as there were over 58,000 new Queenslanders last year. That is well above the population share that we face. Coming from an outer suburban area such as Logan, I know that there are benefits and also challenges of new housing. Again, that is a vote of confidence in the Queensland economy, which has seen 71 per cent growth over the past 12 months, and building approvals are up by 39 per cent.

Residential housing is a start. There is so much more that we need to do to continue that, but the biggest one is to keep our community safe. That is why I am glad to see in the appropriations—the extra appropriations—funding for a quarantine station dedicated to keeping Queenslanders safe, keeping our economy safe and keeping people in work. That is what this government is focused on. Because of that growth, we need to keep funding vaccines and quarantine and we need to keep funding the Mount Lindesay Highway upgrade. I note that the transport minister is in the House. He knows how valuable the Stoney Camp Road through to the Chambers Flat section is. We need the fire station in Yarrabilba, which has just recently been opened, and the ambulance station in Munruben. We need that funding to continue and we do not want to see the cuts, sackings and sell-offs of the LNP.