



Speech By
Melissa McMahon

MEMBER FOR MACALISTER

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

Economics and Governance Committee, Report

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (12.17 pm): As a member of the committee I rise to endorse report No. 3 of the Economics and Governance Committee. During the estimates process we heard from the Premier and Minister for Trade, the Treasurer and Minister for Investment and the Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Sport. Obviously, the flavour of this estimates compared to previous estimates was COVID and the government's COVID response. We can all reflect on the success we have had in Queensland in responding to the coronavirus. It has been detailed many times in this House. We should note that whilst Queensland has been very successful compared to the rest of the world and even interstate, we have had six deaths and there are six Queensland families who have been impacted.

Notwithstanding that, I note that where we are from a budget point of view is very much part of our Queensland economic recovery plan, but the foundation of that was our health response. As the Premier noted, you cannot repair the economic cost of the pandemic if you do not control health impacts first. You cannot have an economic recovery if people are sick and unable to work. Our response to coronavirus has been world-class, and what we are about to embark on now is the economic recovery plan. As a result of the vision outlined by the Premier, Treasurer and various ministers, Queenslanders can be very confident in what we will experience over the next couple of years.

Specifically, the plan is endorsed by a concept of building back better here in Queensland which will instil greater resilience by supporting the industries we have here in Queensland. I note that many of our Queensland industries responded to COVID-19 by improvising, adapting and moving forward. We are seeing some absolute world-class advancements from Queensland manufacturing industries going forward.

We are backing more local manufacturing—and I have seen that in my electorate with some of our plastics manufacturing as well as the contribution by the Beenleigh rum distillery, which must be noted—as well as backing more skills training. This is quite significant in my electorate with the Beenleigh training centre and the hydrogen centre of excellence. There is a \$20 million investment there and we had the soil turning earlier this month. Beenleigh will be the home of trade training for the hydrogen industry and that facility will have the capacity to train 600 apprentices and trainees a year. That is fantastic news for South-East Queensland.

Obviously, it must be said that the amount of infrastructure investment that is being rolled out as part of this budget is a boon for all of Queensland. Certainly, the road and school upgrades in my electorate are very welcome and there is a four-year plan for those road and school upgrades. This budget unashamedly delivers more teachers, doctors, nurses, police and firefighters. We are often lambasted by those opposite about the increase in the Public Service. It was reported during the committee that the Public Service numbers—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Member for Macalister, I am sorry to interrupt, but we are speaking about the Economics and Governance Committee.

Mrs McMAHON: Yes. This is directly from the Premier during the estimates committee process.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Okay. I will listen intently to your contribution.

Mrs McMAHON: I am quoting from the Premier to the estimates committee, where she said—

... the September Public Service numbers have grown since the March quarter. They have grown by 0.68 per cent—less than seven-tenths of one per cent.

The Premier reported to the committee—

Nearly 95 per cent of the increased numbers were in the departments of health and education.

I note the commitments we made going forward, and one that is of keen interest to me in my electorate is the wellbeing professionals that are going to be introduced and rolled out into our schools. The Premier said that, of those increases, nine out of 10 are in the front line or in frontline support. That is something that the Labor government does support. We support our frontline workers but we also acknowledge that for every frontline worker there has to be someone else.

(Time expired)