



Speech By
Melissa McMahon

MEMBER FOR MACALISTER

Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Economics and Governance Committee, Report

 **Mrs McMAHON** (Macalister—ALP) (12.35 pm): I rise to make my contribution following the 2021-2022 budget estimates process as a member of the Economics and Governance Committee. On 16 July, the committee sat and took evidence from the Premier and Minister for Trade, the Treasurer and Minister for Investment, and the Minister for Tourism Industry Development and Innovation and Minister for Sport. At the outset, I would like to thank the relevant ministers for attending and thank their staff and the legion of Public Service officials who worked tirelessly to support the estimates process. I know firsthand how all-consuming preparations for these public hearings can be.

During estimates the committee heard from the Premier, who addressed the overarching principle of getting the health priorities right in order to deliver economic outcomes. That could not be made any more evident than by what is happening right now. Queensland is the only eastern seaboard state not in lockdown. In Queensland, our businesses are open, construction continues apace and services continue to be delivered. This is because Queenslanders are largely on board with the directives and compliance needed to suppress the virus and keep our economy flowing.

This health success has allowed Queensland to continue to chart a path out of COVID. The Premier outlined a \$52 billion infrastructure program supporting 46½ thousand jobs across Queensland in this financial year alone. Our population growth is outpacing that of all other states and territories. People want to move here. People want to invest here because they are less likely to have their workforce shut down. This is due to our effective health response during this pandemic.

This has provided an opportunity for Trade and Investment Queensland, which tracks Queensland exports that were valued at over \$57½ billion last financial year, during the height of the global pandemic. That amount is more than New South Wales and Tasmania combined during the same period.

The Treasurer, in addressing the committee, highlighted the positive jobs outlook for Queensland. He reported that the June employment data had Queensland jobs up by 16,700—the highest increase in the nation—and this translated to a decrease in the unemployment rate to 5.1 per

cent in Queensland. The committee had the opportunity to hear from the Acting Under Treasurer, who was asked about the impacts of lockdown. In his evidence to the committee he stated—

What we have experienced in the South-East and in Townsville were short-term lockdowns. When we look to national accounts data and ABS retail data, what we have seen is some very positive recovery from those events, being short-term lockdowns. The economic impacts of short-term lockdowns has been very small.

...

... retail spending bounced back strongly after the restrictions were lifted ...

In terms of aggregate household consumption in Queensland he said—

It was the strongest annual growth of all states.

We have these short, sharp lockdowns because we know that they work from a health perspective and we see that they work from an economic perspective.

The committee heard from the minister for tourism, innovation and sport. The committee was advised of the benefits of the \$860 million that the government had delivered and planned to support the tourism and events sector since the onset of the pandemic. The March 2021 data shows that Queensland outperformed all other states and territories in growth of overnight visitor expenditure.

In the sport portfolio, \$212 million had been spent in infrastructure across the state. The minister advised of the release of the new Active Gameday Projects funding of \$9 million in total. I know that many clubs in my electorate are preparing to submit their applications for these grants. This estimates hearing took place before the Tokyo Olympics started and in anticipation of a positive Olympic announcement. Obviously all members of the House are aware of the outcome. I congratulate the Premier and everyone who was on board with securing that Olympics announcement for Queensland. We know what that announcement will do. Over the next 11 years it will provide a positive pathway for investment in not only infrastructure but also future sporting outcomes for our kids. I urge all of our community clubs to get on board with the grants being offered.