




Speech By
Michael Hart

MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (5.39 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the budget. As many members have said tonight and the Treasurer said himself, this clearly is a Labor budget. It is because it is full of miscommunication and false finances, and it is trying to lead the people of Queensland astray. It is all smoke and mirrors, quite frankly.

I had a wish list for my electorate. This included more police for the southern Gold Coast, CCTV cameras to deter hooning in my electorate and a bus service for Old Burleigh Town. I have been harping on about this for a number of years. I have talked about this with the Minister for Transport. Funnily enough, the Minister for Transport tells me that buses cannot go into Old Burleigh Town. Yet, at the moment, while the M1 is being upgraded there are B-doubles going through there. A private bus runs through there, but apparently TransLink buses cannot go through there. Maybe if the minister came down and had a look he might figure out that in fact that could happen.

I also wanted to see planning and investment for rock barriers around the ocean view track to prevent future closures. That track is closed all the time. Every time there is heavy rain, cold or a fire, rocks fall down onto the track and destroy it and then it gets closed for a period of time. These problems happen in other parts of the world. This is not that hard to fix. We just need a viable solution and a bit of money spent on it. If the Minister for the Environment could think about that in the future that would be wonderful.

I was wanting more beds and frontline workers, better service delivery to cut hospital wait times and less ambulance ramping. We do not need bigger ramps at our hospitals; we need fewer ambulances waiting to get patients into beds. We have been talking about this for a long time. The Labor Party is terrible at managing the health system, and it is getting worse by the day.

On the wish list was the delivery of the promised classrooms and upgrades at the Palm Beach State School and the Palm Beach Currumbin State High School. I thank the Minister for Education for sending an email today outlining the expenditure in my schools. It is very nice to have a minister who talks to opposition members every now and then. We are getting that funding. Palm Beach State School is getting \$7.9 million out of the \$10.6 million for new classrooms. Palm Beach Currumbin State High School is getting \$5.1 million of the \$10 million for a new hall. I welcome those things. I welcome the \$500,000 in funding for general upgrades at the Burleigh Heads State School. I welcome the \$600,000 for Caningeraba State School's refurbishment of block 5.

I also wanted to see the fast-tracking of the M1 upgrades. Unfortunately, this budget has allocated only \$200 million out of a \$1 billion project. That is only 20 per cent of the upgrades that the people in my electorate can look forward to over the next 12 months. The federal government has contributed its money. Why is the state government not spending its money and bringing these projects forward?

We also see in the glossy brochure for the Gold Coast that a satellite hospital is going to be built somewhere on the Gold Coast, but we have no idea where it is going to be built. The last I saw, there was a pin on the Treasury website that showed this satellite hospital in the middle of where a brand new church has been built in Burleigh—the biggest church in Burleigh. I can tell members that the Catholic parish was not very happy at all that the government was telling them that it was going to build a hospital on the site of their brand new \$20 million church.

Light Rail stage 3—what a debacle. We see another \$113.8 million allocated to this project in this budget. That takes the total funding the state government has contributed to this project so far to \$191 million. The project has blown out to over \$1.044 billion because of the grubby deal this government has done with the CFMEU, the ETU and the plumbers union. The contract has not yet been signed with John Holland.

Would people not think that this government would reopen the tender given that the project has blown out by 50 per cent—a \$300 million blowout—because of the best practice industrial conditions the government has imposed on this particular project. They have not put it back out to tender. They are instead dealing with the one tenderer that is now in the position to say, 'I am going to get an extra \$330 million for this project. Great; bring it on.' In fact, it is a foreign tenderer. Unfortunately, the federal government fell for the plan that the state government put forward and gave \$126 million to this project without considering where its money was going to go. Its money is quite clearly going to go to the CFMEU, the ETU and the plumbers union.

I thought I would try to find a bit more out about these best practice industrial conditions. I put in a number of RTIs to the department of transport and the department of housing, which has responsibility for procurement. I wanted to see what sort of communication the Minister for Transport may have had with the Minister for Housing and what sort of communication Transport and Main Roads might have had with the ETU, the CFMEU and the plumbers union. I table the responses I received from the RTI section of TMR.

Tabled paper: Bundles of letters from the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Department of Energy and Public Works, to the member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, in regards to right to information applications [902](#).

They tell me that I cannot see any communication, emails, correspondence or memos between the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the ETU, the CFMEU and the plumbers union because that is cabinet in confidence. Since when do emails and correspondence between a department of government and the ETU, the CFMEU and the plumbers union end up as cabinet in confidence? This is the government that told us in the Governor's speech in 2015 that it would be open, transparent and accountable. It is far from that. We only have to look at this RTI situation. I am being denied information about this.

I wrote to the Minister for Transport on 29 March and asked him to come down to Palm Beach and talk to the people of my electorate about Light Rail stage 4.

Mr Boothman: Has he been yet?

Mr HART: That was on 29 March, member for Theodore. I have not yet been shown the courtesy of a reply. Yet the Minister for Transport has spent all day today trolling my Facebook page to attack me. I have to tell members that it did not end well for him. The people of my electorate absolutely slammed this minister for refusing to come down and talk to them—feigning consultation with the people of my electorate. Apparently, last year they made 500 phone calls to people throughout my electorate to talk about Light Rail stage 4, but I cannot find a person in my electorate who took a phone call from them. That did not happen.

Back to this grubby deal with best practice industry conditions—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Miller, please cease all interjections.

Mr HART:—this has caused a blowout of the Townsville stadium by \$43 million. It has caused a blowout of the Capricornia Correctional Centre, the Cairns Convention Centre and the Gatton correctional centre. I think Cross River Rail is going to get hit pretty severely by this too. I have written to the Auditor-General and I have asked him to have a look at best practice industry conditions—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Excuse me, member for Burleigh, the word 'grubby' is unparliamentary.

Mr HART: I withdraw. I have written to the Auditor-General. I have asked him to look at all best practice industry conditions and to look at how this is going to affect every government contract going forward over the next few years. It has had a 50 per cent effect on Light Rail stage 3. The project is

delayed. There will be nothing extra for the people of my electorate from the \$330 million. I urge the Auditor-General to have a look at this. This is really important. It is going to have a detrimental effect on government projects going forward.

I have no idea what it will mean for Light Rail stage 4. It has blown out Light Rail stage 3 by 50 per cent. I think we can anticipate that it will do the same with Light Rail stage 4. It was already estimated to be over \$2 billion. If it blows out by 50 per cent, that will be another billion dollars. It will just never happen. Quite frankly, it will never happen. I have even written to the Deputy Premier to ask him whether he has conditioned the Gold Coast City Council to look at all the development that is happening along the route because of the possibility of light rail coming in the future. The government has not even thought about these things. That is how incompetent they are.

When it comes to the land titles office, what a farce that is. Last sitting it was valued at \$4.2 billion; now it is valued at \$7.8 billion. If you look at Australian and international accounting standards, you cannot capitalise on something like that unless somebody buys it. Unless somebody pays for it, you cannot capitalise on it. It is against the corporations law, I would suggest. Maybe some of the lawyers in the room—I know there are competent lawyers on our side; I am not sure about the other side—might know about the corporations law—

Mr Russo interjected.

Mr HART: Maybe the member over there could possibly tell us whether this would comply with the corporations law. There is no money changing hands here. It is just capitalising on the land titles office. I had a look to see how much money the land titles office makes—but it is nowhere. There is no money changing hands. They are saying, 'We will put this \$7.8 billion into a fund and we will direct anything it earns towards the completely unfunded Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund, a billion dollars for housing, a couple of billion dollars for health, the Debt Reduction Fund and the \$300 million Path to Treaty action. On page 126 of Budget Paper No. 2 there is a statement that \$1.8 billion of that \$7.8 billion is being set aside for those things.

This is money that the government usually spends on hospitals, schools and more police. All of a sudden this money is being shifted into a fund that is now going to pay for these anonymous renewable energy programs and housing programs that do not exist. The money will not be there. We do not know how much it is. It seems like the Treasurer does not know how much money the land titles office generates.

If you are in business and you want to sell something or you want to put a capital value on something, you look to see how much it earns and then you apply a multiple. It is pretty easy. How can the government have got this so wrong? You apply a multiple of 24 or 30, or whatever it is. You look at how much it makes and multiply it by, let us say, a generous 30 and that is how much it is worth. I cannot imagine how the Treasurer of this state has got this so badly wrong that he could not multiply whatever the titles office earns by 30 and come up with a number.

What I suspect has happened is that they needed an extra \$3.8 billion, so they just decided to value it by \$3.8 billion more. That is like me saying that I use my car for Uber and it earns me \$100 a year and it is worth a billion dollars. So I will take that money to the bank and I will buy a mansion somewhere with that billion dollars worth of equity that has suddenly appeared in my account!

The ratings agencies are not that stupid. They are going to see right through this. We are going to see our credit rating fall through the floor and our interest rates go up. This is smoke and mirrors. This is absolute rubbish. This is Labornomics. This government is messing up this state and it has messed up this budget.

(Time expired)