



Speech By
Ray Stevens

MEMBER FOR MERMAID BEACH

Record of Proceedings, 31 August 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill

Economics and Governance Committee, Report

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (11.59 am): I am disappointed to hear the chair of the Economics and Governance Committee ramble on about matters that were irrelevant to the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill relating to the Parliamentary Service, and he waffled on about other matters that were irrelevant to the bill that we are talking about today. I want to congratulate the government on its allocation to the Parliamentary Service of in excess of \$30 million to upgrade the parliamentary precinct, particularly for the staff who have suffered in the anachronistic facilities here—I think 1974 for the Parliamentary Annexe building—because some of the conditions in which they are working have been historically bad. In terms of the allocations to the Parliamentary Service for that particular job—which was raised by the Manager of Opposition Business in the previous year, and very successfully—I am glad it has been taken on board and dealt with.

A disappointment that I had with the moneys dealt with throughout the year was the failure of the IT phone system and the failure to recoup moneys that should have been recouped. Unfortunately, IT is a very difficult area that seems to be costing the taxpayers of Queensland every which way. I look forward to the new IT regime that the Clerk of the Parliament has advised us will be taking place. Again, I was a little disappointed that a couple of hundred thousand dollars was cut from the bill for the appropriation for the Parliamentary Service. In an era when we are needing more in terms of support staff and there is more required in terms of office movements et cetera, cutting the Parliamentary Service's budget by \$216,000 or somewhere around that figure was probably a disappointment that I had out of this appropriation bill.

There are commitments to this area, this building, this precinct. In my view, we are the caretakers, if you like, for a brief period here in the parliament of the pre-eminent historical building in Queensland and its surrounds. I often refer to the parliamentary precinct as a bit like Vatican City in that the Speaker of the House is a bit like the Pope and the person running the finances—the Clerk of the Parliament—of the Parliamentary Service is a bit like George Pell, I suppose, in Vatican City. We expend money to maintain this building, its stonework and the beautiful areas that we all enjoy and it is a very humbling experience. I feel very privileged, as I know all members do, to be able to sit in this House. To that end, the appropriation bill 2021-22 was very appropriate in terms of maintaining this building and the precinct. I commend this appropriation bill to the House.