




Speech By
Shane King

MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (11.19 pm): With the indulgence of the House, I start as others have by acknowledging Duncan Pegg's contribution to this place, as well as his friendship. I offer my condolences to his family and loved ones. As has been said many times, this was his week in the parliamentary calendar and we will all miss him.

I am proud to speak to this year's Appropriation Bill, which was introduced by our Treasurer, the Hon. Cameron Dick. This is the seventh year in which I have risen to support a strong Labor budget and I could not be more proud. My thanks go to everyone involved in preparing the budget. It is a lot of work and it has been a much shorter break since the last budget, which we brought down at the end of the last year.

I offer my thanks for the way that Queenslanders pull together in a crisis. We see that with floods, bushfires and cyclones, and we have seen it with COVID-19. Thanks to our willingness to do the right thing and protect each other we were able to invest money sooner in building back better across Queensland. However, we still have to balance our forward planning with the risks that this pandemic continues to present in our country. We need to keep futureproofing our small businesses and we need to make sure that our systems of government, particularly in health and education, have the technology and capacity we need to continue to outwit this horrible disease. We need to keep investing in a brighter future, with climate change in mind. That means more money for renewable energy sources, which is a particular passion of mine and I will come back to that a little later. Above all, we need to keep Queenslanders healthy.

To do that we are delivering another record health budget of \$22.2 billion, including a new satellite hospital in my area, the replacement of the Petrie Ambulance Station at Lawnton and multiple projects in the two major local hospitals at Redcliffe and Caboolture, including an MRI at Redcliffe Hospital. This budget continues our investment with an extra 5,800 nurses, 1,500 new doctors, another 475 paramedics and 1,700 additional health professionals over the four-year term. That stands in stark contrast to the cuts that we saw under the last LNP government. We are still undoing the damage they did in a few years.

We are also picking up the slack of the LNP nationally by rolling out new mass vaccination hubs in coming months. Those hubs will vaccinate the aged-care and disability workers the federal LNP could not appear to be bothered with. 'Get in the queue with everyone else,' they said, even though in our country the majority of deaths from COVID-19 have occurred in the older cohort. There is no better indication that the LNP does not value investing in health like Labor than the cuts to Medicare that we are now seeing at the federal government level. Was it 'Scotty from Marketing' who told us about those cuts or was it Malcolm Turnbull? I cannot keep up with the leadership changes. The federal LNP said that those cuts would not happen. When federal and state Labor tried to warn Australians and Queenslanders that the LNP would make cuts to Medicare that would leave them out of pocket, they said it was a scare campaign. What a shame it is that we were right all along.

Like health, education and training are key Labor priorities. This budget continues our commitment to employ more than 6,100 teachers and 1,100 teacher aides over this term of government. The rollout of air conditioning and solar for all state schools continues in this budget. In my electorate it is exciting to know that in a number of schools those projects are already completed or are nearing completion—in two years, not eight years. Our schools are getting building upgrades as well. It is really great to see Lawnton State School getting more love with new teaching spaces and an administration block, receiving \$7 million this year out of a total spend. The new administration block and hall that I secured last term have made for a lot of smiles around Lawnton State School. Lawnton is not alone in receiving funding as Burpengary State School, Jinibara State School, Kurwongbah State School and Narangba State School also received the funding that we have been promising them for a while.

I know that I sound like a broken record when I talk about the many awesome infrastructure projects we have on the go in the Kurwongbah electorate, in the most part thanks to state Labor budgets. In this budget we see the continuation of the long-awaited Deception Bay Road and New Settlement Road interchange, which is well underway. It was dropped from QTRIP under the LNP, but we brought it back and it is nearly done.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr KING: Talking about broken records, I am hearing one down the front from the member for Everton. Soon the Petrie roundabout will no longer be a roundabout or a bottleneck. Thanks go to Minister Bailey for listening. I also thank commuters for their patience during the construction of those two major bits of infrastructure in my patch.

The Dakabin station upgrade is nearing completion, much to the joy of Gemma Gale and the Dakabin Station Action Group. They have worked hard over the years to get a result. I am proud to say that we have listened and we are delivering that long overdue upgrade. I am looking forward to opening that with my neighbour and friend Deputy Premier Steven Miles as well as Gemma Gale. The Burpengary station upgrade, which I promised before the last election, has a line in the budget and planning is underway for not only the station but also the park-and-ride for Burpengary commuters. That park-and-ride is much needed as the new Burpengary Community Club will open soon across the road. That exciting new shopping and club precinct has the community buzzing. If it is anything like any of the other Comiskey ventures in Moreton Bay it will be a raging success. The Narangba station park-and-ride has not been forgotten. Work is continuing there with money for design in this budget.

I turn to energy investment—I did say earlier that I would get back to renewable energy. I welcome announcements made last week by the Premier about the \$2 billion Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund that will create many decent and secure jobs and will continue our government's investment in renewable energy. The fund will provide significant investment in big-scale storage such as batteries and pumped hydro that, like a large battery, is ready to provide clean energy at the flick of a switch. That versatility was evident a few weeks back when Wivenhoe's pumped storage came online quickly to help restore the state's grid when the generator at Callide failed and took out neighbouring coal-fired power stations. Steam turbines take some time to reset as they build up steam whereas pumped hydro comes online in minutes. The news that Borumba Dam is being looked at for a similar and larger system is great news, as is the 2,000 regional construction jobs it promises. As a former electrician who worked in the industry I know my former colleagues will love that news.

Before I finish I will return to an issue that I raised in my speech on the Debt Reduction and Savings Bill during the last sitting and about which we keep hearing from members across the chamber. At that time I tabled an article from the *Financial Review*, which I have tabled before for the benefit of informed debate. That article listed comprehensively Queensland government assets that the LNP sold during the Campbell Newman years. The article was not the only news source that reported those sales but it is the best summary I have seen yet and I encourage members to look at that tabled document. I say that because we do not sell assets. This government does not sell assets to fund things; the previous government did. I am dead against selling Queensland's assets. My commitment to my constituents on that matter is clear and I will stand up in this place to reiterate it at every opportunity. Our commitment as a government is also clear regarding that issue.

We will continue to build back better in Queensland, we will do it while prioritising Queenslanders' health and we will create thousands of jobs as we do it. We will find savings wherever possible and we will borrow money as well. However, like every Queensland household we will review and recalibrate our budget sheet as circumstances demand. We have taken the hits from COVID-19 and we are making positive changes. I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government and I am proud to stand here supporting another strong Labor budget. I commend this bill to the House.