



Speech By  
**Adrian Tantari**

**MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY**


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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 3)**

**APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 3)**

**BETTING TAX AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (2.54 pm): I rise in this cognate debate in support of the appropriation bills and the Betting Tax and Other Legislation Amendment Bill before us today. The appropriation bills seek parliamentary approval for unforeseen expenditure in 2021-22. As we know, this is a financial process under the Financial Accountability Act and is to reconcile departmental appropriations at the end of each financial year against the relevant budget projections.

In July this year the Governor in Council authorised unforeseen expenditure during the 2021-22 financial year of over \$2.8 billion, comprising around \$2.1 million for the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service and \$2.8 billion incurred by 14 other departments. Some 62 per cent of that arose from three departments. State departments incur unforeseen expenditure for many reasons. Those opposite say it is due to waste but we know it is for other things. For example, a department may need an additional appropriation to respond to emergent issues, to implement government policy or due to the change in the timing of Commonwealth payments or project delivery. The unforeseen expenditure in 2021-22 is more than in 2020-21—we admit that—but, as Economics and Governance Committee report No. 36 states, the financial year was heavily impacted by COVID measures, floods, the bringing forward of federal government payments, accelerated capital works by TMR and targeted measures by the government to support Queenslanders.

As I have said, the majority of unforeseen expenditure arose from three departments, including funding to bring forward payments to local councils in relation to revenue collected from their waste disposal levy through the Department of Environment and Science. These payments were brought forward to not impact customers and to provide councils with a level of certainty so they could progress investment in recycling and resource recovery. There was further unforeseen expenditure for Business Support Grants such as the JobTrainer Fund, infection control training, Skilling Queenslanders for Work and the Future Fund. This expenditure was provided to support and keep businesses solvent during the COVID pandemic. Many of my local businesses in Hervey Bay benefited from this excellent funding during tough times.

The difference in fiscal management is quite evident between the Palaszczuk government and those opposite. Under the Palaszczuk government, the state of Queensland continues to power ahead. The Palaszczuk government's economic recovery plan is working and is delivering with strong growth and recovery as our economy rebounds. These appropriations we debate continue to drive the government's economic recovery plan, following on from our strong health response. They bring forward works and programs to drive our economy.

This is no more borne out than in the recently released labour force data. This data confirms what all the reputable national data is showing us and that is that Queensland's economy is leading and pushing forward Australia's economic recovery. Queensland has 417,100 more Queenslanders in jobs today than pre COVID. Earlier the member for Kawana said that Queenslanders were working harder than ever. I agree with that. Of course they are. There are 211,800 more Queenslanders working in August 2022 than there were in March 2020. That is before COVID struck and brought the world to a halt.

Since the election of the Palaszczuk government in 2015, an additional 467,600 jobs have added, and 42,700 of those have been in regional areas. They are regional jobs. That is more jobs for the people of Queensland and more jobs for the people of Hervey Bay. In comparison, we know what the LNP did. They cut 14,000 public sector jobs, including frontline workers.

Around my electorate the activity is increasing year on year. These appropriations we are debating are not just numbers. They are the new and enhanced facilities that are being utilised by our school communities. They are the paths and roads being upgraded and being made safer. They are the local hospital being upgraded and enhanced. They are the jobs that drive our community forward.

Works and projects are being completed regularly because of the forethought and timely response of the Palaszczuk government to assess the need and get the job done. A few such facilities in my electorate are the Hervey Bay Special School toilet block, new canteen facilities for Urangan State High School and the recently completed STEM building at Hervey Bay State High School. Work is moving forward on the new school halls at the Urangan State High School and the Urangan Point State School—all accelerated because of the growth Hervey Bay is now experiencing under a proactive and forward-thinking government.

This is a government that leaves no-one behind. It lifts the community and drives positive outcomes, unlike the cut, sell and sack policy approach of those opposite. Appropriations for the Department of Transport and Main Roads are going towards new intersections to ease congestion and improve safety. These major pieces of infrastructure will assist people to move around the Hervey Bay electorate more efficiently and a lot safer.

It is noted that with one of our major intersections the opposition spokesperson drove up the Bruce Highway to Hervey Bay the other day to find a camera to have his three minutes of fame. He then proceeded to bang on incoherently with a factually incorrect statement about the status of the intersection. He said we needed a plan for it, when the intersection is already in the detailed design phase and one step away from shovels in the ground! If that is not a plan, I do not know what is. Maybe he should start talking to people who might know something about this, like the department whose appropriations we are debating today, and not rely on the advice of their local LNP hack and part-time councillor.

It is okay that he got it totally wrong. I thank the spokesperson for coming to Hervey Bay because nothing showed the Hervey Bay community more accurately how incompetent and lazy the LNP is in getting its facts right regarding our local infrastructure. That is what our community is getting used to lately from the LNP spivs from Brisbane, running around for five minutes, peddling their inaccurate mistruths and talking down our region, before scooting back as fast as they came.

Further appropriations have seen the Palaszczuk government's \$34 million investment in a mental health unit well underway, with the new hospital service rising from the ground and now nearing completion. This will be a great addition to the public health system in response to our regional mental health needs. The Hervey Bay electorate is part of a growth region that has received massive commitments and investments by the Palaszczuk government. With the release yesterday of the Wide Bay Burnett Regional Plan, we further commit to building on this and are looking further forward, setting the Wide Bay region on course for the next 25 years of growth.

Investing billions of dollars in the manufacturing industry and infrastructure is having a dynamic impact on the people of the region. The volume of jobs being produced in the region is extraordinary, with the knock-on effects of supply chains moving the new jobs count into the many thousands. All this is in stark contrast to the former Newman government, a government that ignored our region, slashed and burned our jobs and devastated our community. At the end of their sad legacy, it was left to the Palaszczuk government to rebuild shattered regional centres like Hervey Bay.

The unemployment rates in the Wide Bay when the LNP left power and left its mess was 10 per cent. It is now 6½ per cent, with the rate in Hervey Bay at the lowest it has been in 13 years since July 2020. All this has made Queensland the envy of Australia.

The Palaszczuk government's health and economic response has enabled our state, and in particular our regions, to stay safe and rebound. In the Hervey Bay electorate you can see this growth everywhere. Our building industry is red hot, our businesses are busy, expenditure is up and the people

are seeing their hard efforts of the past years being rewarded. The people of Hervey Bay know that our city is thriving and that is in spite of the fear mongering of the LNP and its local operatives who are set on destroying our social cohesion for their own political advantage, taking down our great city and our lifestyle.

As part of the committee that reviewed this bill, I want to thank the committee for its deliberations, ably led by the committee chair, the member for Logan, and the committee deputy chair, the member for Mermaid Beach. I would like to mention the magnificent work done by the committee secretariat. The appropriation bills are what give our communities services, not waste that the other side keep talking about. It actually gives our communities services. The state could not function without the appropriation bills. With these bills the corrections are measured and required.

Finally, the Palaszczuk government has steered the path required to get us to this point and has taken thoughtfully considered decisions through these appropriations to safely navigate the stormy waters created by a worldwide pandemic. It has got us to this point safely and it is focused on our future. Well-managed appropriations are what this bill is about. I support the cognate bills before the House.