



Speech By  
**Ali King**

**MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE**


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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms KING** (Pumicestone—ALP) (9.59 pm): I wish to begin by congratulating the Treasurer on another proud Labor budget from our Palaszczuk Labor government. This is a budget that will make a real and positive difference to people's lives right across Queensland, and I could not be more delighted. Nowhere more will that be true than in health and mental health, with an unprecedented investment in our Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan.

We absolutely know that our health system is under pressure. The last few years have brought a perfect storm of factors to strain our health system. Demand was increasing even before the pandemic. We have had staff members off due to COVID, influenza and RSV outbreaks. We have had a lack of overseas health workers available due to borders being shut. Workers have burned out. There has been a GP crisis right across the state from areas like mine to the Far North to Central Queensland and beyond. We have seen an increase in mental health issues, declining rates of health insurance and demand steadily going up due to an ageing population. Our budget is working to address those issues by building more hospitals, more beds and delivering more health services right across Queensland.

One of the centrepieces of our Labor budget is our \$750 million Queensland Cancer Centre at Herston. It is going to be a statewide centre of excellence that will offer every form of high-tech treatment under one roof and it will become the heartbeat of cancer research in Queensland. This new Queensland Cancer Centre is emblematic of Labor values in action.

For me, our most significant budget commitment is the promise our government makes in this budget to Queenslanders experiencing mental illness, to their families, their friends and their carers, and to the dedicated people who work to support them in their recovery every single day. I was so proud of the work our Mental Health Select Committee did to set the stage for this record commitment. It was a genuine pleasure to work in a bipartisan way with committee members. I particularly acknowledge the member for Greenslopes for his work as chair. I acknowledge the really knowledgeable and professional contributions that the member for Moggill was able to bring to the process, as well as all members. The member for Moggill brought unique expertise.

As the committee process played out, it emerged that, whether personally or professionally or through friends or family, almost every single member of the committee had been touched by mental illness in some way. It was a real work of the heart. I was very proud and glad to be part of it. It was a privilege to hear from Queenslanders right across the state about their experiences of mental illness and Queensland's mental health system. I especially acknowledge the young people who shared their stories with us so bravely and openly. I do not like to say that they were inspiring but they brought tears to the eyes of members of many occasions.

That is why our budget makes such a magnificent commitment of an extra \$1.64 billion over five years for mental health, addiction, substance abuse and suicide, along with just under \$30 million in capital funding. That money will change lives. The funding focuses on rehabilitation care, more community care units, adolescent day programs and step-up step-down services that are all very much needed.

Given how positive the committee process was, I hesitate to reflect on the contributions made by some LNP members today, but I was disappointed particularly by the Leader of the Opposition, who spoke at length about his commitment to Queenslanders' mental health and his belief in the importance of enhancing services in the mental health space. I was listening and I was waiting for the 'but' and right on cue the 'but' came. The Leader of the Opposition wants better mental health services for Queenslanders but, at the end of the day, he supports big multinationals over those same Queenslanders.

The member for Whitsunday said she was disappointed by our levy on big business to cover mental health services. The member claimed that mental health was being politicised by those measures and then proceeded to politicise the issue of mental health as hard as she could.

The member for Moggill said strong financial investment is needed in mental health services, and I absolutely agree. Again, I was waiting for the 'but' and it came on cue. He welcomed the investment but said that the government should not be asking the biggest and most profitable businesses in our state to chip in to support the most vulnerable Queenslanders in our state.

We have seen a range of extraordinary contributions from the LNP today. I note that the Leader of the Opposition talked about listening to Queenslanders, but Queenslanders know that it is our Premier who listens to them. Queenslanders told our government that they wanted more hospitals and more health services right across the state, and our Labor government listened and acted with the biggest boost to health funding and health infrastructure in Queensland's history.

When they were out listening to Queenslanders, as the Leader of the Opposition claimed, I want to ask the LNP how many of those Queenslanders told the LNP that what they wanted was to extend the royalties freeze for hugely profitable resources companies?

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): The member for Kawana will not interject while he is not in his seat.

**Ms KING:** How many Queenslanders told the LNP, including the member for Kawana, that they preferred to boost the bottom line of multinational companies over a boost to mental health services? The Leader of the Opposition talked about broken promises, but Queenslanders will never, ever forget the promises that he broke when he and his leadership team promised that no public servant had to fear for their job only to have their job slashed by those same people in government.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! The interjections are not being taken.

**Ms KING:** They are not. We have also seen some fairly predictable and disappointing contributions from the Greens party today. Whatever she may tell herself, nobody is interested in copying the member for South Brisbane's homework whatsoever. Labor does not deal in fantasies or misrepresentations. We promise what we can deliver and then we get on and deliver it.

The member for South Brisbane claimed our government was squandering the resources boom, but she could not be more wrong. Building hospitals is not squandering the resources boom. Investing in more renewables and battery storage is not squandering the resources boom. On the contrary, building hospitals and creating more renewable energy and storage are exactly how those royalties should be invested.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. There are too many interjections. They are interrupting the member. She is not taking the interjections. If I have to mention this again, I will start warning members.

**Ms KING:** More than anything, the Greens party member for South Brisbane is the member for double standards when it comes to housing. The Greens constantly play politics with unrealistic and misleading claims about housing. On the very day that our government announced a further \$16 million to provide practical help and housing to our most vulnerable, the member for South Brisbane claimed that there is no new housing money in the budget. This is the same member who objects to every kind of housing development in her electorate and who has even been known to picket the driveway of unit developments, stopping workers from getting on with the job of building housing for Queenslanders. It is shameful.

Ultimately, our budget is a hugely positive story. Here is what our Palaszczuk Labor government's budget will mean for the people of Pumicestone. This budget continues our half a billion dollar hospital building program in Caboolture and on Bribie, with construction funding for the massive redevelopment of the Caboolture Hospital that will see the hospital double in size, adding 130 new beds and a whole range of new services and facilities.

The budget also has construction funding for our Bribie Satellite Hospital and our Caboolture Satellite Hospital. These hospitals will be a game changer for our communities, and it was great to see the construction fencing go up on the Bribie site this week. Both our satellite hospitals will have extended hours, minor accident and illness centres, as well as other crucial hospital services delivered by doctors and nurses right in the heart of our community. I cannot wait to see the construction finish next year.

Our Bribie and Caboolture neighbourhood centres also do wonderful work supporting our community, so we are backing them with an 81 per cent increase in funding. I was delighted to ring the hardworking team at the Bribie Island Neighbourhood Centre today and let them know about the increased funding and that they are going to be able to deliver their life-changing services to even more people in our community.

Something that is really dear to my heart is our Abbey Museum and Abbey Medieval Festival. Our northern Moreton Bay region has so much to offer, and I have long believed that we need enhanced tourism experiences to make sure visitors do not drive through on their way to somewhere else. That is why it was wonderful to receive a commitment of \$2.1 million in this budget to deliver the art gallery the museum has been wanting to build for so long, a cafe to ensure that the operation remains sustainable into the future, and a further \$400,000 in infrastructure funding to support the festival. If you have not been, I invite all members to don your gown, pull on your tights and join the tens of thousands of visitors at the beautiful greenfield site on 9 and 10 July. The jousting is especially spectacular and not to be missed.

Our Pumicestone schools did well in the budget, with planning money for a much needed new administration block at Bribie Island State School and \$1.2 million for a security fence for Bribie Island high. There is also over \$400,000 shared between all of our state schools for key maintenance and minor works. I know that many families in Pumicestone will be pleased that a new \$80 million education resourcing model will be rolled out in Queensland schools and will formally recognise dyslexia, ADHD, mental illness and other conditions as disabilities and provide support accordingly. While we already support kids with these conditions, this means more dedicated resources to help them learn and achieve their very best.

People in the Bribie area often tell me that public transport does not work for them—

**Mr Mander** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders.

**Ms KING:**—whether it is bus routes that do not help them get to where they want to be or difficult timing with linked services. That is why I am delighted that this year's budget includes \$400,000 for a public transport planning study. The study will encourage residents on and around Bribie to give detailed feedback about their transport needs and what is and is not working. I acknowledge and thank Minister Bailey for his work with me on this issue over a long period. I am really looking forward to receiving our community's feedback so we can design optimal public transport services for them for the future.

There are so many road commitments in this budget for Pumicestone that I almost do not know where to begin. Most importantly—I am sure the people of Beachmere will think this is the most important—funding begins for our start to finish upgrade of Beachmere Road. It is such a key issue for this community. The two things they all agree on are that Beachmere is the best place in the world and Beachmere Road needs an upgrade, so they have been delighted to see the enhanced scope of the project announced recently.

There is significant funding to continue upgrades to Bribie Island Road. The Regina Avenue intersection at Ningi will help residents, business owners and patrons get in and out of the local shops. We are going to see more work on stage 2 of the Old Toorbul Point Road intersection upgrade that will link the dual lane sections from the service station to Saint Road. There is also funding in the budget for the Hickey Road to King John Creek upgrades.

Bribie Island Road is such a key connector for our community. It has seen enhanced usage over the last few years, so residents are delighted by these upgrades. There is also more money in the continued planning for a future replacement of the Bribie bridge and funding for upgrades to the D'Aguilar Highway, which will be welcomed by residents.

This is a great Labor government and we have delivered yet another great Labor budget. If the LNP does not support these budget measures, if they will not back a levy on our biggest businesses or an increase in royalties paid by resource companies from their record profits, they will have to cut around \$400 million a year. I invite them to outline exactly what they would choose to cut. This fantastic Labor budget backs health, backs jobs and cares for Queenslanders, especially the people of Pumicestone, and I could not be more delighted to commend the budget to the House.