




Speech By
Hon. Cameron Dick

MEMBER FOR WOODRIDGE

Record of Proceedings, 25 October 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Economy

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.46 am): As set out in the ministerial paper I tabled earlier this morning, Queensland's economic performance is leading the world. The *Report on state finances of the Queensland government* for 2021-22 is the written proof that our strong health response to COVID-19, the strength of our health system and the strength of our people have led to a strong economic performance. The \$4.3 billion surplus is the largest Queensland surplus on record. In extraordinary times, this is an extraordinary result. This surplus is the result of two deliberate government strategies: our government's COVID-19 Economic Recovery Plan restored the strength and health of our economy; and our savings and debt plan helped restrain and better manage expenditure to restore the strength and health of our budget.

The drivers of the \$2.4 billion improvement in our fiscal position were higher revenue and lower expenditure. Taxation revenue increased \$510 million compared to the 2022-23 budget estimated actual, largely due to higher transfer duty. Payroll tax revenue was also higher relative to the estimated actual forecast due to the ongoing exceptionally strong labour market conditions in Queensland.

Stronger economic performance means lower debt. Net general government sector borrowings, as at 30 June 2022, were \$393 million lower than what was estimated in this year's budget. Furthermore, these net borrowings are \$13.75 billion lower than what was estimated in the budget I delivered in June 2021. Queensland's net general government debt is \$10.99 billion. That is barely one-tenth of Victoria's, which stands at \$100 billion. While the Liberal New South Wales government is yet to publish its final figures, its latest reported estimated actual borrowings were five times Queensland's at \$53½ billion.

While general government sector expenses were \$931 million lower than the estimate at the budget in June, I note one area where expenses rose: employee expenses. Employee expenses rose because the Palaszczuk government continues to invest in frontline services, especially frontline healthcare workers.

Our government has now delivered six budget surpluses, but we do not deliver budget surpluses for their own sake.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: The member for Kawana is warned under the standing orders.

Mr DICK: We put them to work to deliver infrastructure, services and jobs for the people of Queensland. We are going to put this budget surplus to work as well. This record surplus enables us to fund vital service delivery, like the additional \$1 billion for the Housing Investment Fund the Premier and I announced last week. That additional investment will help deliver 5,600 new social and affordable homes through innovative partnerships with the private sector and superannuation funds. Because of the strength of our budget surplus, we delivered this increase in housing investment without increasing

borrowings, compared to our budget projections. However, given the extreme international volatility we face and the prospect of a third severe consecutive La Nina, it is important that we further strengthen Queensland's fiscal buffers. We will continue to fortify those fiscal buffers. As we protect Queensland's great lifestyle, we will continue to deliver the infrastructure, the good jobs and the better services that the people of Queensland deserve.