



Speech By
Charis Mullen


MEMBER FOR JORDAN

Record of Proceedings, 23 June 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mrs MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (2.27 pm): I just want to start by saying that I am very glad we had a lunch break, because I really needed that time to get over the budget reply speech. Today the Leader of the Opposition announced two things and they were both jobs for themselves: one for the member for Maroochydore and one for a yet-to-be-named woman at some point. Given how few women they have on their side of politics, I am sure it really narrows the field in terms of who it will be. What an absolutely embarrassing display of nothingness. Does that not really sum up the Leader of the Opposition, the sad front bench they have and really, frankly, the deflated members on their side of the chamber—absolute nothing. So let's talk about something.

I am pleased to support our Appropriation Bill and acknowledge my strong support for the state budget delivered by the Queensland Treasurer this week. The 2022-23 state budget reflects the Palaszczuk government's commitment to deliver better services aimed at improving the lives of Queenslanders, supporting the state's growing population and unlocking further economic and employment growth. Our government's strong response to the pandemic has seen our domestic economy grow faster than the rest of Australia. This is despite the first half of 2022 delivering us a triple whammy: surges in Omicron variant cases, major flooding in South-East Queensland, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the impact this is causing the supply side of our economy.

Despite these challenges, may I echo the Treasurer's words—this is a state budget built on the perseverance, discipline and hard work of the Queensland people. We continue to see more jobs created. Labour force data released only last week showed Queensland created an incredible 46,600 jobs in the month of May, which is 75 per cent of all jobs in our nation. ABS data also shows that Queensland remained the most attractive jurisdiction to live in, with the strongest population growth of any state or territory—responsible for 83.8 per cent of total national population growth over the year.

This incredible growth in our population has certainly challenged our state in the areas of health, education, housing and infrastructure, but as this budget shows we are listening to the people of Queensland and we are responding to these challenges. This is particularly evident in my own electorate of Jordan—an electorate of high growth and ample opportunities.

The 2022-23 budget is first and foremost a health budget—for all Queenslanders. Like all states across our country, our healthcare system in Queensland is facing unprecedented challenges, with rising presentations to emergency departments and the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The recent parliamentary inquiry into the provision of primary, allied and private health care, aged care and NDIS care services and its impact on the Queensland public health system revealed that only through systemic change can we really see our health system improve.

I was so pleased last week that, through a refreshingly collaborative National Cabinet, our new Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, announced not only additional funding but also a commitment to and understanding that our health system needs proper reform—whether it is through our primary and allied health care, or ensuring that those currently in our hospital system who should be better cared for in aged care or disability care can be. I am proud to be part of a government that understands the importance of resourcing our health system properly.

It was interesting that the Leader of the Opposition said nothing about coal royalties, so it begs the question: if they do not support the coal royalties change, if they remain silent on what is a major budget issue, does it mean they do not support hospital investment? If they do not support the coal royalties change, does it mean they want to cut \$1.2 billion from our hospitals? If they do not support the mental health levy, which was not referenced, does it mean they want to cut \$1.6 billion from our plan to support those who need mental health support? Those opposite want to cut the mental health budget like they cut the Barrett Adolescent Centre so many years ago.

The 2022-23 budget will provide a record \$23.6 billion for the Queensland health system to help meet growing demand. This operational funding will see the deployment of more doctors, nurses and paramedics. We are also building and expanding our network of public hospitals, with additional funding: \$9.785 billion to deliver more than 2,200 additional overnight beds at 15 facilities, including expansions at the Ipswich and Logan hospitals; \$710 million for the expansion of the Ipswich Hospital, which will create an additional 200 beds; and \$530 million for Logan Hospital that will see 112 additional beds created. The Springfield public hospital remains funded through our \$2 billion Hospital Building Fund announced in last year's budget and will continue to be delivered. As exciting as this capital investment is, the operating budget is equally important, and this year's budget has seen this grow by 5.6 per cent and it will allow an additional 9,475 staff to be employed to deliver world-class health care to Queenslanders.

One of the most significant commitments in this budget has to be our \$1.64 billion investment to improve mental health, alcohol and other drugs services and for a range of initiatives to support suicide prevention and deliver additional beds. This will make an incredible difference to those in my electorate who are struggling with their mental health or with addiction. In particular I would like to congratulate the Minister for Health for her commitment to a new five-year plan, focused on building services, supporting vulnerable groups in our community and strengthening access to care.

The growth that we are experiencing is not limited to our health services. With so many young families moving into our region, we are seeing an explosion in student numbers as well. Our record \$19.6 billion for education and training in this year's budget will see the delivery of more classrooms at Flagstone State School, Spring Mountain State School and Woodcrest State College. There is funding for our new primary school in Augustine Heights, which is due to open in 2023. There is a commitment for a new primary school in Flagstone for 2025, and there are further funds for land acquisition for a new school in Greater Flagstone, and I will be strongly advocating for this to be a new high school in Greenbank or a P-12 campus in the area.

I am also pleased to see further funding for Greenbank State School, with \$500,000 for refurbishments, and almost \$1 million for maintenance for our Jordan schools. Whilst it may not seem like much, this is funding that I am extremely proud of—\$1.5 million for Flagstone State Community College which is getting a new fence, something the school has worked closely with me to make a reality.

We continue to see strong investment in infrastructure. I am so pleased to see an increased focus and funding for the Centenary Highway. In two weeks, we begin construction on the \$15 million Centenary Highway and Logan Motorway interchange upgrade—a significant and much anticipated project in my electorate. I am also pleased to see funding that will support the Centenary Highway interchange upgrade at Augusta Parkway and an off-ramp upgrade at Springfield Greenbank Arterial. I look forward to sharing those details with our community as they progress.

There is also funding in the budget for further planning from Richlands to Yamanto—aimed at futureproofing the Centenary Highway for the significant growth from Springfield to Ripley and beyond. This will recognise the need for additional lanes, upgraded off-ramps, new interchanges and the extension of the Centenary Cycleway—a project that many in my electorate would like to see constructed. There is funding for the Centenary Bridge at Jindalee and additional funding for the Centenary from Darra to Toowong through an Australian government commitment. I am also pleased to see the additional commitment of \$150 million for catalyst funding for priority development areas like Greater Flagstone. This will ensure we are building the new roads, as well as water and sewerage infrastructure to support the development in this area.

Our government is also supporting the Ipswich City Council with funding for the Springfield Greenbank Arterial duplication, the Springfield Parkway duplication and duplication of Augusta Parkway. We continue to progress rail corridor planning for the Salisbury to Beaudesert rail line business case, which is jointly funded and strongly supported by a good federal Labor government, and the Ipswich to Springfield passenger transport corridor, which also saw a welcome federal election commitment from Labor which will now be delivered.

Mr Deputy Speaker, you have reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

Housing

Our Government continues to recognise the importance of housing—affordable housing, housing for vulnerable people, for families escaping domestic and family violence.

Our \$1.9 billion investment over the next four years and our \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund will continue to boost housing supply and increase housing and homelessness support across Queensland.

I'm particularly proud of our Housing Investment Fund that calls on developers, institutional investors, registered community housing providers and eligible government entities to bring forward innovative proposals to add new social homes and affordable housing builds, refits or refurbishments across Queensland.

Earlier this week, the Treasurer and Minister for Housing announced the HIF would deliver a pipeline of up to 1200 new social and affordable homes through a commercial partnership between community housing provider Brisbane Housing Company and the Queensland Investment Corporation.

This is exactly the types of partnerships and projects we wanted to see through HIF—and the seven projects announced will deliver half of this planned total comprising almost 600 new social and affordable homes.

And only last month, we announced the first two projects from HIF, located at Ethel Street, Cherside and Sutton Street, Redcliffe.

Skills and Training

Deputy Speaker, I am also pleased to see that skills and training remains a priority for the Palaszczuk Government with more than \$1.2 billion invested to continue delivering high quality training and creating career pathways for Queenslanders.

We know that our investment in training and skills yields results—only last year we saw more than 52,000 Queenslanders starting as an apprentice or trainee, an incredible 63 per cent increase from the previous financial year.

I recognise that workforce supply issues continue to impact us in Queensland and am very pleased that the Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2032 is set to be delivered and will have a focus on expanding training and skills programs to ensure we have homegrown talent to relieve pressure on employers now and as we head into the exciting Olympic decade.

Trade and Investment

As the Assistant Minister for Treasurer, I have been really pleased to be supporting the Treasurer through the important portfolio of trade and investment—which has never been more important.

I was pleased to highlight the work of some of our TIQ Queensland success stories during my recent visits to Toowoomba and Cairns.

Companies like Milton and King, Mort and Co, Kialla Pure Foods and Allfish for Dogs.

Deputy Speaker, we are exporting so much more—in fact, Queensland exports hit a record \$99 billion.

Over the next decade the world's gaze will turn towards Queensland even more. One of Queensland's greatest economic opportunities will come from hosting the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

This is more than just a few weeks of competition—but a 20-year opportunity for Queensland to capitalise on investment and development up to the Games and the legacy benefits beyond.

As we head into the next decade, it is timely to see a new Queensland Trade and Investment Strategy 2022-2032 and I would like to congratulate Trade and Investment Queensland for their work on the strategy.

Our Government will invest an extra \$150 million to deliver the new strategy—a strategy that will ensure that we continue to support our exporters as they reach for new markets and boost sales where they are already currently trading.

Conclusion

Speaker, in conclusion I would like to congratulate the Queensland Treasurer on the delivery of the 2022-23 Budget—I know just how challenging it is to meet the needs of our growing state and to ensure we are continuing to fund frontline services, to fund infrastructure and our growing health and education systems.

May I also acknowledge and thank the Under Treasurer, Leon Allen and the many Treasury officers who worked so diligently and professionally to meet the Government's requirements of delivering the State Budget.

The Treasurer in his Budget Speech made the following observation:

The Queensland Government interacts with hundreds of thousands of people every day. Often during some of the most difficult times in their lives. As we grow and transform, we must remember that we live in a community, not just an economy.

At its heart, this is a caring Budget—it recognises the challenges we currently face and tackles them head on, particularly in the critical areas of health and mental health provision.

It supports our incredible frontline officers, our wonderful neighbourhood centres, our beautiful environment.
We have continued to invest in Queenslanders—to meet their needs and to support their aspirations.
I commend the Bills to the House.