



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (5.32 pm): I rise to address the appropriation bills for 2022-23 and other associated legislation. At its core, this 2022 Palaszczuk state Labor budget is one that is based on a broken promise. Queenslanders simply can no longer trust the Palaszczuk state Labor government. Twenty-six times the Labor Treasurer promised Queenslanders that there would be no new or increased taxes. It is a fact that on 9 October 2020, in the middle of the then 2020 state election campaign, the Treasurer was specifically asked if he was ruling out new or increased business taxes. The Treasurer responded by saying, 'There will not be any increased taxes, we have said that very clearly from the start, no new taxes from the Labor Government if we are re-elected.'

The Labor Treasurer's integrity is in tatters, and no amount of spin or Orwellian language can hide the reality that the Treasurer was being deliberately misleading, tricky and, indeed, sneaky with his language. The point is that the Labor state government is having to introduce new and increased revenue streams because of Labor's inability to manage Queensland's finances.

Labor's reckless waste and significant blowouts on key infrastructure projects in Queensland have resulted in the state government having to introduce new taxes. This state budget also has to be seen in the context of what the Palaszczuk state Labor government has implemented via previous state budgets in relation to dubious economic strategies such as loading \$5 billion of debt onto government owned corporations, raiding \$4 billion of the superannuation scheme of public servants, and revaluing the state's Titles Registry at \$8 billion, which was twice what it was worth previously, as an offset mechanism to reduce net debt.

Therefore, it has to be said that, if over the entire tenure of the Palaszczuk state Labor government there had been proper fiscal and budgetary management processes undertaken by the state Labor government, the Treasurer would not have had to introduce new or increased taxes in Queensland. It has to be remembered that, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the Palaszczuk state Labor government was careless with its management of Queensland's finances and, consequently, total debt is forecast now over the forward estimates in this state budget to remain at \$128.5 billion.

Having said that, as a parliamentary member of the Mental Health Select Committee, I am extremely proud of the collaborative work undertaken by all members of the committee including the direct personal, parliamentary and professional contribution made in my capacity as the state member for Moggill and the resultant important recommendations that were made in the Mental Health Select Committee's final report to the Queensland parliament. I acknowledge the work of the chair, the member for Greenslopes; the deputy chair, the member for Southport; and other members of the committee.

A strong financial investment is needed in our mental health system across our state to assist the many Queenslanders with either mental health conditions and/or alcohol and drug dependency disorders. However, had the state Labor government undertaken responsible fiscal and budgetary management over the past eight state budgets, such an investment in mental health services could have been made from current revenue streams rather than new taxes. In essence, new taxes have become necessary in Queensland because of the Palaszczuk state Labor government's financial and economic mismanagement and total ineptitude over successive years.

As a former president of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland and the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland, investing in health infrastructure, including additional beds and new hospitals, is incredibly important. However, it is unclear whether the state government has a comprehensive health workforce strategy to, in fact, be able to open and operate such new hospital and health services in accordance with the government's own published Queensland Health and Hospitals Plan.

I would encourage the state Labor government to carefully consider the specific comments and recommendations related to the health workforce contained both in report No. 18 of the Health and Environment Committee and report No. 1 of the Mental Health Select Committee of the 57th Queensland Parliament.

As the current president of the Australian Medical Association of Queensland, Dr Maria Boulton, has said, the 'record' spend the government is touting is only keeping up with inflation and that additional hospital beds needed to be available yesterday. This budget also delivers nothing to comprehensively ease cost-of-living pressures or improve housing affordability, let alone provide a sustainable long-term investment in social housing.

As the state member for Moggill, I have worked consistently and collaboratively with local residents and various community organisations to fight for the vital infrastructure and services that local constituents of the electorate of Moggill absolutely deserve. Over the past seven years, significant and detailed correspondence has been sent to various Labor ministers of the Palaszczuk state Labor government and, along with my dedicated and detailed advocacy in the Queensland parliament and in other various meetings with departments and agencies, I have made it abundantly clear to all that the Palaszczuk state Labor government must fund and, in turn, deliver for residents in the electorate of Moggill.

I am pleased that, following my strong advocacy over many years as the local state member for Moggill, a \$6.5 million commitment has been secured for new classrooms at Kenmore State High School, with \$3.1 million to be allocated in the 2022-23 financial year. Further, I am also pleased to confirm that Kenmore State High School has been included in the Queensland government's school halls planning program, meaning funding of \$200,000 for initial planning has been allocated for concept planning, design and consultation, with such planning work to take place over the coming 12 months.

I also welcome the \$25.5 million investment in the construction of additional classrooms for Kenmore South State School. This is a terrific outcome for local families and the Kenmore South State School community and resulted from diligent and dedicated work over a long period of time. I would like to thank all parents, teachers and staff who joined with me in advocating to ensure that this vital educational infrastructure funding could be delivered.

This funding builds upon my advocacy and what has been previously secured and delivered for local schools in the electorate of Moggill, including more recently for Chapel Hill State School, Moggill State School and Brookfield State School.

Following the announcement made last week of the government's \$40 million in new funding for the Queensland School Transport Infrastructure Program, I immediately wrote to all of my local school principals in the electorate of Moggill offering my support to school communities so that student safety and school travel can be further enhanced according to each school's specific set of circumstances.

This state budget also allocates \$23.6 million of investment into the Mount Crosby Flood Resilience Program. I note that the budget confirms that the construction of the new \$29.5 million Mount Crosby Bridge will commence in late 2022, with \$14.7 million allocated for the 2022-23 financial year. It is crucially important that these works are progressed as an absolute priority. Our community cannot afford any further delays, particularly following the events earlier this year in relation to the severe weather and flood event.

There are many other critical infrastructure and related matters that remain unaddressed by the Queensland state government. An integrated road and public transport plan for the western suburbs of Brisbane with comprehensively funded solutions to ease traffic congestion and improve public and active transport services with cyclist and pedestrian safety must be prioritised, and it has still not been delivered by this state Labor government.

I have also repeatedly called for the extension of the 444 bus service to the Moggill District Sports Park and the Moggill ferry and for the state Labor government to increase public transport service timetables, including additional 443 services, and extend other public transport routes.

Further, enhanced footpath and pedestrian infrastructure along Moggill Road and Mount Crosby Road, including key pedestrian travel points through Pullenvale, Pinjarra Hills, Mount Crosby and a dedicated footpath to the Moggill District Sports Park must be delivered.

I have also called on the Palaszczuk state Labor government to fully fund a new high school to service families in the electorate of Moggill. The state Labor government should also fully fund school infrastructure for every local state school in accordance with their various school strategic infrastructure plans.

An allocation of funding to support the important work being undertaken by the Brisbane City Council in designing, developing and delivering a new community and neighbourhood facility at 98 Brookfield Road to better support the vital work of local community and not-for-profit organisations has still not been prioritised by the state Labor government. Mr Speaker, \$1.5 million in allocated funding has already been provided by the former federal LNP government.

Openness and transparency on the \$25 million Kenmore roundabout upgrade project, along with additional funding to fix the intersection of the Almay-Kenmore-Moggill Road through to Kilkivan Avenue, should have been delivered. In relation to the Centenary Highway bridge project, construction should have commenced a year ago, with \$33.5 million now removed in the 2022-23 financial year. This is something that has not been prioritised. It needs to be prioritised. Local residents also want definitive progress on the vital safety upgrade to the Mount Crosby-Warrego interchange.

I also take this opportunity to call on the Queensland state government to allocate specific additional and dedicated funding for local environment and creek catchment groups in the electorate of Moggill to support the ongoing and vitally important efforts to preserve, maintain and rehabilitate our local environment and creek catchments and also ensure the provision of clean, reliable and affordable energy and electricity to local residents and Queenslanders.

I wish to again reiterate my calls for enhanced police, ambulance, fire and emergency service resourcing for all residents in the electorate of Moggill. In particular, the Queensland state Labor government must construct and deliver an ambulance station in Karana Downs.

The severe weather and flooding events earlier this year revealed the significant need for all levels of government to cooperate and deliver local infrastructure solutions. There are also a number of matters with respect to disaster management agency coordination that local residents rightfully expect, especially during times of natural disaster. Communities and suburbs in the electorate of Moggill were isolated. This was only further exacerbated by floodwater inundation, dam water releases and associated impacts in relation to the Mount Crosby Weir Bridge, Colleges Crossing, the Ugly Gully Bridge and Bell's Crossing. Local residents have also continued to question whether a full traffic bridge at Bellbowrie could have alleviated local suburb isolation and ensured vital emergency service access could continue to be maintained during these recent flood events.

Whilst acknowledging that the Inspector-General Emergency Management's flood review report and associated recommendations have not yet been delivered, it is disappointing that the Queensland state Labor government has chosen not to be proactive and outline dedicated funding in this year's state budget for an infrastructure solution to the continued and repeated impacts at Colleges Crossing, the Ugly Gully Bridge and Bells Crossing or progressing work with other levels of government to investigate the suitability of a full traffic bridge at a suitable location in Bellbowrie.

The genuine infrastructure needs of the electorate of Moggill are not about politics: it is about people. It is about the families who are spending longer in traffic congestion because the Palaszczuk state Labor government refuses to prioritise the western suburbs of Brisbane. The Labor government's priorities should be about the pedestrians and cyclists who risk their lives each and every day along state controlled Moggill Road and Mount Crosby Road because safe footpath and cyclist infrastructure has not been, and will not be, delivered by this state Labor government in a timely manner. It is about the residents and workers who want to use public transport and leave their car at home, but cannot because this state Labor government refuses to provide additional public transport services and extend routes to communities including: Bellbowrie, Moggill, Anstead, Karana Downs and Mount Crosby.

As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for education, I now wish to turn to the \$16.5 billion in funding that has been allocated in the 2022-23 Queensland state budget for education in Queensland. I note there will be new measures, including \$20 million over two years, to improve playground and tuckshop facilities as well over \$13 million to expand the Share the Dignity program in Queensland schools and a new disability resourcing model. It is important that these programs are delivered both efficiently and effectively.

The state government has also announced an additional five new primary schools to be built; however, it must be noted that all of these new schools will not be delivered until after the next state election. In relation to early childhood education, we have seen the leadership provided in New South Wales and Victoria with multibillion dollar investments. The government here in Queensland certainly needs to look at that and consider implementing that into the future.

Queenslanders also know there is a growing workplace health and safety crisis in our schools, and they know that it is getting worse. We know that our hardworking and dedicated teachers and school staff are suffering increasing verbal and physical assaults. The health and safety of every teacher, staff member and student in Queensland must come first. In May of this year it was revealed in an answer to a question on notice that more than \$322 million has been paid out to teachers and staff in WorkCover claims since 2015 when the Labor government was first elected. No amount of spin by the Palaszczuk state Labor government can cover for the fact that Queenslanders are paying more for Labor's inability to keep our teachers and staff safe in our schools. Queenslanders are also having to pay more for educational infrastructure budget blowouts because the Palaszczuk state Labor government has absolutely failed to properly plan, manage and deliver its own expenditure on key projects.

Last month the Auditor-General released a damning report which delivered a scathing assessment of the mismanagement of key projects and contracts under Labor's Department of Education. When the Auditor-General examined the delivery of Labor's Brisbane South State Secondary College and the Fortitude Valley State Secondary College, the Auditor-General found blowouts totalling over \$23 million.

As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for the arts, I welcome the announcement of funding to further support the development and promotion of arts and cultural works by First Nations Queenslanders. I have been a strong supporter of all initiatives to ensure that Queenslanders, no matter where they live, are able to experience the full range of local, national and international cultural and artistic programs.

I also welcome the allocation of \$7.6 million for Brisbane's Old Museum, with \$1.6 million of this funding to go towards the development of a business case and master planning. This is an iconic building and a very important part of Queensland's heritage.

Finally, as I have always done in my elected representative role as the state member for Moggill, I will continue to work with other elected representatives across various levels of government to ensure that local residents in the western suburbs of Brisbane and the electorate of Moggill get the infrastructure and government services they deserve.