



Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 17 August 2022


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Community Support and Services Committee, Report

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (3.42 pm): I would like to thank the Community Support and Services Committee for their recommendation that the expenditure for my department's budget as proposed in Appropriation Bill 2022 be agreed without amendment.

I believe our hearing was respectful. It was without issue. I acknowledge all of those members who sat opposite who asked questions in a very professional manner—the members for Surfers Paradise, Maiwar, South Brisbane and others. I take a comment from the member for Maiwar. He is correct in one thing he said before: the amount of work that goes into estimates preparations from our departments is incredible—the number of hours that go into it—and sometimes for questions that do not get asked. He is right; that is estimates. That is preparation. Sometimes it is like studying for a grade 10 maths exam.

Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, how good was yesterday! How good was that treaty launch! It was such an historic event, such a momentous occasion. At the end of the event yesterday I received a text message from Jim from the Wuthathi ranger base in Cape York who was watching the whole process online. I have no idea how he got my phone number. Obviously the minister's phone number is on the wall of the ranger base in Cape York, so that could be challenging, but it was great to know that it was not just those of us sitting here at parliament who watched it. There were a number of people from very remote areas in your electorate, Madam Deputy Speaker Lui, who were dialled in and watching and were moved by it.

I had my first meeting this morning via teleconference with the new Independent Interim Body—the 10 members that we announced yesterday. They have already started work. They had their first formal meeting this morning. I put it very clearly to them. I said, 'Bring me a co-designed bill for a treaty institute and a truth-telling inquiry and bring that to me before the end of this calendar year, before the end of this sitting year, so that we can introduce such a bill to this House.' They have accepted the challenge. I wish them all the best, as well as my department representatives and other department representatives, as they bring that forward. It will be a momentous occasion.

I acknowledge that Victoria passed their treaty legislation last night. Two states in only a matter of hours have made significant advances. This afternoon there is an Indigenous Affairs Taskforce meeting via Teams with the Hon. Linda Burney. All states will be dialled into that. We will be having a conversation about the Uluru Statement, about voice, about treaty, about truth, as we talk about where all states are at, where we are all heading. It is quite an inspirational time.

I have to make one concession. Yesterday when I signed the statement of commitment I flogged the pen—I did. I stole the pen from DPC. They are welcome to send me a bill but they are not getting the pen back. I figured that is a keeper. That is going in the pool room. That is going in the trophy cabinet because that statement of intent is something that I think will sit in historic records in Queensland for some time.

I get back to the estimates hearing with a minute to go. Our department looks after some of the most inspirational Queenslanders. I acknowledge the work that they do. Whether it is across the NDIS, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Closing the Gap, our seniors and concessions rebates and discounts, it is a significant amount of work. We are very mindful that there are a lot of pressures on families right now around cost of living and other things.

I am surrounded by inspirational people in my office and my department. I am surrounded by amazing people in the Labor caucus. With that, again I want to thank the committee, the chair, all of the members, all of my department, my commissioners, my DG and everyone who attended our estimates. I do look forward to estimates next year.