



Speech By
Cynthia Lui


MEMBER FOR COOK

Record of Proceedings, 23 June 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (9.36 pm): I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills 2022. In doing so, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Treasurer, the Hon. Cameron Dick, the Premier and the Deputy Premier for delivering another outstanding budget for the people of Queensland. This budget is a good solid budget that aims to improve the lives of all people, from metropolitan areas to the outback and from regional towns to remote communities.

It is hard to believe that, just over two years ago, the world's economy came to a standstill. There is no doubt that the height of the COVID-19 pandemic placed enormous pressure on the global economy and Queensland certainly felt the economic impact. Therefore, when it comes to this budget I have only one word—'solid'—because even after our most economically challenged times Queensland has come out solid in its quest to protect Queenslanders and recover our economy.

I cannot begin to imagine what it would take to put a budget like this together. With a vast and diverse electorate such as Cook, where do you even begin? I took one look at the budget papers for Cook and felt extremely proud to be a member of the Palaszczuk Labor government and even prouder to represent a government that delivers for all Queenslanders, no matter where they live. In my electorate that is from Mareeba on the Tablelands to Mossman and Port Douglas on the coast, Cape York and all the way up north to the Torres Strait Islands. This budget is delivering far and wide.

The 2022-23 budget delivers for health, education and jobs—all of which are at the forefront of this government's priorities. There is no denying the Palaszczuk government's support for vital services. The record announcement for health funding to better improve the lives of people is nothing short of amazing. I am thrilled with the health budget for Cook as we will see millions of dollars going towards the replacement, redevelopment, upgrade and maintenance of our health service infrastructure across the electorate. We will deliver a brand new primary healthcare centre on Mer Island in the Torres Strait with \$5 million out of a \$7 million total spend for the replacement of the existing facility. This has been a long time coming for the Mer Island community and I look forward to delivering that vital infrastructure to meet the ongoing health needs of the community.

The Weipa Integrated Health Service has received a major overhaul over the last couple of years at least, with a new birthing suite, operational cost car park and modification of their new CT scanner. In this budget, we will invest an additional \$800,000 to rectify noncompliance and redundancy requirements of the chiller and heating, ventilation and air-conditioning.

Wujal Wujal Primary Health Care Centre will receive \$315,000 for the supply, installation and certification of electrical works for body protected area compliance. Bamaga Hospital will receive \$150,000 for rectification works to staff accommodation.

This government continues to back health in the region and, despite the significant amount of dollars already spent, this government continues to invest additional funds into regional and remote communities to keep Queenslanders strong and healthy. In the Torres Strait, we will deliver \$11 million out of a \$50.7 million total spend to support the redevelopment of the hospital and the separate primary healthcare centre, part of the priority capital program in the Advancing Queensland health infrastructure program. While there has been a significant amount of work already done, I look forward in the near future to visiting the Thursday Island Hospital with the Minister for Health when work is completed.

While infrastructure is important, ongoing maintenance to keep our infrastructure in top condition is of utmost importance. The Mareeba Hospital will receive \$500,000 for the delivery of upgrades to mechanical and electrical systems. As the member for Maryborough said earlier, if I were to list everything I received in this budget we would be here all night.

Education is the key to success and every child, no matter where they live in Queensland, deserves access to good quality education. Schools in Cook will benefit from a massive boost to enhance our children's learning environment so that we continue to nurture and support educational outcomes for future generations.

On the Tablelands, this budget will deliver electronic security at Mareeba High School and Mareeba State School. Additional funds have been committed to Mareeba State School for a school security fence. Julatten State School will receive \$149,000 to deliver a sport courts shade structure. In Cape York, schools in Aurukun, Kowanyama, Laura and Lockhart River will be able to deliver administration upgrades, planning for hall renewals, an upgraded bore and irrigation system and enhancement of the administration block. I am absolutely delighted that over \$2 million will go towards delivering additional classrooms for the growing Western Cape College in Weipa.

I am extremely pleased to see that 47 schools will receive additional funding for maintenance and minor works in schools. I know that my schools will welcome this announcement to address some of their immediate concerns to maintain and deliver minor works. This budget will help schools to address maintenance issues and build pride in our local schools.

Local government plays an important role in communities. I value the close partnership with local councils in my electorate to deliver vital projects in the best interests of our community. Works for Queensland is one of the most successful programs to be delivered, receiving rave reviews from council. Councils in my electorate—and there are many—will benefit from over \$10 million in Works for Queensland grants. I am absolutely delighted to see more support for local councils to deliver infrastructure projects, supporting local jobs.

I acknowledge the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, Minister Bailey, and his department for their strong support for better and improved roads in Cook. Ongoing roads funding means that we continue to improve and maintain road conditions to keep locals and visitors to the region safe.

I am pleased that in this budget there is funding for a planning study for the Mareeba-Dimbulah Road. Locals have been calling for years to deter heavy vehicles from using the main street in Mareeba. I am proud to say that the Palaszczuk government is committing vital funds to explore options for the future.

This is a truly outstanding budget. It delivers for communities right across the Cook electorate. It supports infrastructure, services, economic growth and local jobs but it also supports the visions and aspirations for community to deliver big things in the electorate. I am referring to tourism and the opportunities that come with that.

The Speaker has 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—

In addition to all the roads funding to Far North Queensland, I am pleased that this budget will deliver bitumen seal and drainage for the Jardine Ferry Road and sections one, two and now three, of the Aurukun Road. We will replace the causeway in Pormpuraaw Road, Colman River and support works to seal and improve intersections between Mossman to Daintree.

What I am most excited about is that I'll be able to say that I delivered the two very first roundabouts on Thursday Island, in the Torres Strait even. This budget will support the construction of two roundabouts on Douglas and Hasting Street and Blackhall and Douglas Street.

We are a government that works closely with communities to support their aspirations for industry growth and development for the future. \$800,000 in this budget will help to deliver the Thursday Island Tourism Information and Business Centre. There is still so much to see and do in the Torres Strait and the Tourism Information and Business Centre will definitely help to showcase our beautiful region.

In Cape York, we will invest \$225,000 for the Kowanyama Visitor Camping and Tours Pilot to deliver and pilot unique eco-tourism products and culturally significant experiences for the Kowanyama region, part of the Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund. The Olkola Cultural Knowledge Centre will benefit from \$100,000 for the delivery of a multi-dimensional, unique tourism product and culturally significant experience for Cape York Olkola Country, also part of the Growing Indigenous Tourism in Queensland Fund.

The Ranger Program is another area of significance for First Nations people—it supports local jobs helps to deliver vital environmental protection work in the region. With over \$7 million in funding, the Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program will be able to continue their important work in Laura, Wujal Wujal, Shelburne Bay, Archer Point, Mareeba and Palmerville Station, Melsonby, Olkola, Port Stewart and Normanby Station.

Last but not least, Splash Parks are back. This budget will deliver splash parks on Thursday Island, Douglas Shire and Mossman. Not too long ago, the nearest splash park to any of my communities was in Cairns. I have always wanted to deliver something like this for my communities and since I've been elected in 2017, we continue to deliver and create these fun, family friendly spaces for families to enjoy no matter where they live. Cairns is no longer the nearest community where my families can access splash parks because we've delivered across Cape York and soon in Mareeba Shire, Douglas Shire and the Torres Strait.

So Speaker, when those opposite carry on about this government not doing enough, that is just not true. This budget speaks for all Queenslanders and those in the length and breadth of my electorate of Cook.

I commend the bill to the house.