



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.19 am): I rise to deliver this year's budget reply on behalf of the people of Queensland. The greatest gift of being a member of parliament is the ability to help people. To me, that is the job—to make Queensland better tomorrow than it is today. It is our job to listen to the stories of Queenslanders and do whatever we can to make their life easier. That is our challenge.

That is why I have placed such an emphasis on listening to real Queenslanders. We have listened to Queenslanders across our great state at health crisis town halls, in coffee shops, at crime forums, on the street, at small business round tables—in all corners of our communities. We listen to what they have to say when we are invited into their homes to sit at their tables. This is where you hear the real things Queenslanders care about. This is how I keep focused on issues that matter to them. This is how we rise to the challenges on their behalf. This is how we work for them.

When Queenslanders talk to me they talk about things like ambulance ramping, integrity issues, being stuck in traffic, being bounced around on rural roads that have fallen into disrepair. They talk to me about the housing crisis, youth crime and cost of living. They talk to me about having to rebuild their lives after yet another devastating flood or natural disaster, and the need for a helping hand to get back on their feet. They talk to me about the issues they care about and the Queensland they want. If you stop to talk to Queenslanders, they will tell you what matters to them, but you have to listen.

This is why the budget is so important. The budget is a chance for government to show Queenslanders they have listened. It is a chance to open the books and show Queenslanders they have been heard. It is a chance to reveal the true state of affairs and what will be done to make their lives a little easier. It is a chance to make Queensland better tomorrow than it is today. It is a chance to keep your promises.

Queenslanders will go on the journey if the government is up-front, open and transparent—if government is honest. Right now, Queenslanders can no longer trust this government. We heard from the Treasurer earlier this week about how good everything is going in Queensland. He would have you believe Queenslanders have never had it better. The Premier would have you believe the economy is thriving, the budget is glowing and Queensland families are applauding from afar. They may believe that in their skyscraper office, but it is not the experience of the Queenslanders that I speak to. Queenslanders are concerned about the future laid out before us—things like rising inflation and interest rates and things like job security; how will they pay for the life they want for their family? The Queenslanders I talk to talk about the next bill that is coming in the mail.

The Queensland economy is more than a set of convenient numbers. The economy and its strength must be about people. It must be about the experience of Queenslanders. A good budget demonstrates that the government has listened to the stories of Queenslanders and has charted a path that will make the lives of Queenslanders a little easier—to make Queensland better tomorrow than it is today.

On Tuesday, listening to the Treasurer, these were the thoughts foremost in my mind. Throughout the Treasurer's budget speech—and indeed listening to the Premier and her ministers over the ensuing days—one question kept gnawing at me. If the Palaszczuk Labor government says the economy is doing so well, why are so many Queenslanders doing it so tough? If the Palaszczuk Labor government says it is doing so well, why are Queenslanders concerned about the future? This budget unhinged the state government from the Queensland cart. The disconnect between power and people is gaping.

The government's increase in payroll tax will hit the hip pocket of every Queenslander. It will impact the cost of almost every good and service, and we have to be up-front about that. Again, I ask: if the economy is doing so well, why is the government hitting Queenslanders with this new tax right in the middle of a full-blown cost-of-living crisis? The government told Queenslanders at the last election that it would not introduce new or increased taxes to pay for their plan. Was extra health and mental health funding not needed in October 2020? Let's be up-front: a tax is a tax and a promise is a promise.

The new payroll tax will impact Queenslanders who rely on industries like food, retail, construction—there are many more. Let's be up-front: this is a tax on Queenslanders and should have been foreshadowed with Queenslanders before the last election. The same goes for the other new taxes the Treasurer has announced on gaming and mining. The Treasurer knows full well that the cost of these taxes will be passed on to Queenslanders and for him to suggest otherwise is misleading.

The Treasurer deliberately misled Queenslanders before the last election and his only explanation was that we should have listened to what he did not say rather than what he did say. The Treasurer has broken the trust of Queenslanders and now he will not even face them. He has made the lives of Queenslanders harder and it is too hard for him to admit it. Let's be honest: if Queenslanders could not believe his promise on no new taxes, why should they believe his budget promises now? The truth is that they cannot.

Queenslanders understand budgets sometimes mean we must make tough decisions, but you must be up-front with Queenslanders, especially during an election campaign. The Treasurer's denial over his broken promises have been something to behold. To suggest, despite being asked about increased taxes for business, the fact he did not use the word business in the response means that it is not a broken promise is just being slippery. The Treasurer crows about hand-picked numbers, but the Treasurer's trust deficit has shredded the credibility of this budget. Like the promises he breaks, the budget's ability to heal the crisis in health and in housing and to deliver transport for the future are not worth the paper they are written on. I promise you that Queenslanders know when they have been deceived, and they do not like that.

For the eighth year in a row, Queenslanders have heard the refrain: 'record health budget'. They have seen the Premier's social media channels pumping out shiny propaganda to build new medical facilities. Queenslanders have heard that story before. That is why Queenslanders know it takes more than record funding to heal the health crisis. It takes a plan and the ability to deliver it. If you listen to Queenslanders they know it is not about your record health budget, it is about your record on health.

Those on the front line—those doctors, nurses and allied health professionals—are reaching out to the LNP to say they are not seeing any of the additional funds promised each year. The money is not getting to them. They hear the glossy announcements, but all they see are dozens of ambulances ramped at hospitals filled with patients they cannot help. Again, if the Queensland economy is doing so well, why do almost one in two Queenslanders who need an ambo end up stuck on a ramp rather than getting the care they need in a hospital?

The additional hospitals the government said they were building last year turned out to be a pipedream. Under questioning, the Premier admitted they were only in the early planning stage. Last year's budget contained zero dollars—I repeat: zero dollars. It will be years before we see a sod-turning for facilities like the new hospital on the northern Gold Coast which will service a huge growth corridor, including those I represent in Broadwater. Already the area is short 500 beds—today. This only promises to deliver another 400 beds almost seven years into the future.

Even when funding is available Labor struggles to deliver health infrastructure. The sod was turned for the Cairns Hospital mental health unit in February 2022. That is the same month the state government promised it would open. Where is the apology to those desperately in need of care in the Far North? We have seen these health promises before and the complete inability to deliver them. Queenslanders could not trust the government to deliver then, why would they trust them to deliver now?

Let's be honest: Queensland Health is in crisis, but this crisis is not new. The health minister can blame COVID or Canberra or sick patients, but the truth is that under this government our health system has been in decline for over half a decade. While this government runs from responsibility on the health crisis, Queenslanders are collateral damage. They are the ones dying waiting for an ambulance to arrive.

Here are some numbers you will not see in this budget. Ambulance ramping when this government came to power was 15 per cent. Now it is 42 per cent. In every major adult hospital in the south-east it is now 50 per cent or above. In other words, odds are that you will sit in the back of an ambulance longer than clinically recommended. The Treasurer has made health promises in this budget. Even if the Treasurer is to be believed, this budget will not see one patient spend a night in a new hospital until late into this decade.

For seven years the Palaszczuk government have run our health system into the ground and now they are asking Queenslanders for another seven years before they fix it. Those opposite want you to believe that a Treasurer who has broken an election promise with each of the three budgets he has delivered this term and a government which has presided over the disintegration of the health system can be trusted to break character and deliver on a promise. The state government have broken promises in the health system for the last seven years and they demand we trust them now.

The number of patients on the elective surgery waitlist not seen on time has blown out from two per cent in 2015 to 23 per cent. Health matters to Queenslanders. The health system matters to Queenslanders. Keeping your promises matters to Queenslanders. The LNP opposition will continue to fight until Queenslanders get the health system they deserve.

The opposition has shone a light on the Queensland Health crisis. We have cut through the government's spin to show Queensland Health has been going downhill from the moment this government took office. The government has searched for a political solution to this issue, with some parts of the government even considering changing the way data is measured in an effort to make the problem go away.

The health minister has mocked our health crisis town hall meetings, which the shadow health minister Rob Bates arranges to hear from the patients and health professionals who are victims of the Queensland Health crisis. We heard from people like Jody Heywood, Olivia Keating and Janelle Oldfield who we met at Caboolture—victims of botched surgeries who still suffer today. They helped launch an investigation at that hospital. We heard from people like Brian and Graeme who we met at Ipswich who waited hours in pain in the ED. It is because of people like them that these town hall meetings will not stop. We will keep the spotlight on the health crisis impacting Queenslanders dealing with the state government's broken system.

I said when I became leader that we would be a constructive opposition. That is why we have already proposed a number of measures to improve the performance of Queensland Health. They include real-time data being accessible to patients and health professionals to help them make the best decisions for their situation; providing better resourcing for triaging in emergency departments to ensure patients are managed effectively and safely; allowing frontline clinicians the power to effectively run their hospitals using local expertise, putting them back in charge for the betterment of local people; and proper resourcing, investing in more beds with a plan to deliver them on time and on budget.

There is no chance a Queenslanders will spend a single night in any of the new hospitals announced for more than half a decade. Queenslanders afraid in the back of an ambo need help now. They need their government today, and their government did not deliver. I say to those opposite: listen to what Queenslanders are saying. Listen to the people who have held loved ones waiting for an ambo. Listen to people whose quality of life is deteriorating because they need surgery today. Listen to people who deserve a world-class health system. Listen to the common-sense solutions and, for the sake of Queenslanders, implement them.

Both in our cities and in the bush this government has form when it comes to stripping healthcare services. The sheer number of birthing services closed under Labor across rural and regional Queensland is a clearest indicator of that. It means babies are born on the side of a road. Not only is it utterly undignifying for the mums, but it is downright dangerous for them and their babies. I met Yvette Bracefield from Chinchilla a few months ago, alongside the new member for Callide, Bryson Head, who joins us in the gallery having just been declared moments ago with a six per cent swing away from the government! Yvette gave birth to beautiful baby Beatrix on the side of the Warrego Highway earlier this year because the Chinchilla birthing suite was not operational. Whilst precious Beatrix arrived safely, it is a miracle that she did. The neglect of regional and rural health facilities is a shameful record this government has overseen.

I want to address the issue of mental health—an issue which should be at the forefront of all of our minds in this place. It is important for this place to understand the context of announcements made in this budget. Last year experts and psychiatrists warned that Queensland's mental health system was on the brink of collapse. The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists pointed to the fact that our mental health system in Queensland was the most poorly funded in the nation. Everyone in this chamber wants to fix this problem. We all acknowledge it is complex.

As an opposition, we want to see exceptional care delivered to those Queenslanders with mental illness. We want to engage, empower and grow our mental health workforce. We want to learn from and implement new service models which have worked domestically and internationally. The parliamentary select committee had bipartisan support. The opposition hoped it would be used as a vehicle to unpack the very genuine problems across the mental health sector. Our members engaged in good faith. To see this very important discussion now be used to justify a new tax has undermined the importance of this work.

The Treasurer claims his budget was a budget for our times. If you listen to Queenslanders, you would know that the cost of living and the battle to keep a secure roof over your head is making times even harder. The Palaszczuk government says this is a budget for the times, but it is not the one Queenslanders needed in their hour of need.

There are Queenslanders who will have read or heard about this budget getting ready to bed down with their family for the night in a trailer or their car. How did we get here? It is a question those victims of the state government's failure to deliver on housing must be asking as they languish in the queue for public housing or struggle with astronomical rents and lack of rental housing—people like Kim Calkin, who I met on the Gold Coast while her son performed magic tricks for the member for Theodore and the member for Everton, the shadow housing minister. Kim held a brave face as she explained why they were living out of their camper trailer. I am delighted to tell the House that Kim now has a home.

The reality is though that tonight thousands of Queenslanders are struggling to put a roof over their family's heads and they will not be so lucky. It was not the plan they had for their lives, but it is happening because this government has not planned properly for the future. In my budget reply 12 months ago I warned of the working homeless—a big issue coming on the horizon. Unfortunately, I stand here 12 months later and the state government has failed to act.

We are not here because of decisions made in this budget; we are here because of decisions that have not been made over the past seven years. This situation has not happened overnight. It has been a problem that has been allowed to develop over the past seven years.

The failure to unlock new land has locked Queenslanders out of their homes. The state government's failure to approve and bring more land to market as the population grows means the door is closing on the great Australian dream. Lot approvals have declined year on year. This places more demand on existing housing stock. Residential building approvals decreased across the state by close to 40 per cent between 2015 and 2020. At some point the supply was bound to run out, and now it has.

This failure to deliver and failure to plan over many years is the reason we face a full-blown housing crisis today. Those who have been fortunate to secure rental accommodation are paying more just to keep their homes. The rent keeps going up but record low vacancy rates mean they do not have any other option. They have to do without in other areas because the alternative is homelessness. Those people are asking: 'If the Palaszczuk government is going so well, why can't I put a roof over my head?'

If you listen to Queenslanders, now more than ever they want the security of a place to call home. Public housing data shows that between 2017 and 2021 the number of social housing bedrooms has grown by less than one per cent—less than one per cent. The state government has barely built a thousand new bedrooms. In the same time, the number of people on the waiting list has increased by 20,665. That is a 70 per cent increase. Over 50,000 vulnerable Queenslanders are now on the waiting list, and that number will keep on rising.

Labor's response in last year's budget was to create a billion dollar housing fund. We saw the headline—\$1 billion. That fund did not contain a billion dollars. It was a fraud. Queenslanders were sold a big wallet that had nothing in it. It was a hollow promise made to people in need—a hoax—

Mr Janetzki: A cruel hoax.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—a cruel hoax for families on the edge. Instead of putting Queenslanders in homes, the budget drives home one fact: the state government cannot be trusted on housing. This budget is a failure when it comes to investing in housing. To not introduce one single new cent or home

in this subject is tin eared. It illustrates a government that has lost interest in fighting for vulnerable Queenslanders looking for a home. The lack of interest is why housing costs are going up. It is why more families face huge cost-of-living pressures and it is why more families are becoming homeless.

If you listen to Queenslanders you will know the pressure that huge increases in energy bills are placing on their lives. But we were told it would not be this way. The government told us that the delays at Callide would not impact Queenslanders. They were wrong. The power generators and distribution networks are in public hands and operate under the control of a minister. Queenslanders can rightly ask, 'If the economy is doing so well and the government is in charge of energy generation, why is my energy bill so high?' We know there are other factors at play in the energy crisis, and let's be open about that, but failures by government mean that electricity prices are higher than they ought to be.

Over many years government owned energy corporations have been used as cash cows. They have done this by borrowing money and paying it back to governments through higher dividends. Queensland's electricity generators currently have more than five times as much debt as they did when this government was elected. The costs from these borrowings are passed straight on to consumers, and that is Queenslanders—Queenslanders who are right now unable to turn on their heaters in winter because they cannot afford it. In Queensland's hour of need, the state government chose to keep milking energy generators for profit while Queenslanders wondered how they could keep the lights on.

The shadow energy minister and member for Condamine has repeatedly asked the government to detail their plans to address future energy needs. On every occasion they have failed. This budget provided an opportunity for the government to chart Queensland's way forward—a plan. I have constantly said that reliability and affordability must be at the centre of that plan. The government's failure to act is yet another missed opportunity that will cost Queenslanders more.

In my first budget reply I warned that less favourable borrowing conditions would seriously limit the state's ability to respond to future economic shocks. Now, after seeing this budget the situation has grown far more serious. Despite the government crowing about their net operating surplus, the fiscal deficit remains greater than \$2 billion this financial year and will be more than \$5 billion next financial year. That means the government must borrow billions of dollars in an era of rising interest rates. Debt is now \$110 billion. It will balloon to \$129 billion over the forwards. This is up 80 per cent since 2015.

As all Queenslanders know, when you have more debt you pay more interest. Household budgets are already feeling the pinch of higher interest payments, and the state government is no different. Interest payments will almost double over the forwards to \$2.9 billion every year. Despite a \$10 billion revenue windfall, we are still taking on billions more in debt. Debt and interest are taking their toll on the Queensland budget, and as always Queenslanders are the ones who have to bear the consequences: more taxes, more debt and poorer frontline services. This is a budget of missed opportunities.

If you listen to Queenslanders you will know the cost that clogged roads are having on our state. Congestion is stifling the economy and our great lifestyle. Congestion costs time, congestion costs money, congestion costs opportunity. Traffic congestion means it is harder for a plumber to get to your home to fix a burst pipe. Traffic congestion means it takes longer and is more expensive to get fresh produce to your local shopping centre, which drives up the price. Traffic congestion means it is harder for your business to be competitive, meaning more jobs are lost overseas. These are real impacts on the budgets of Queenslanders because they cannot properly plan and deliver transport infrastructure.

Infrastructure projects designed to bust congestion ahead of population growth are the key to an awesome future that we must build on time and on budget. The reality is that this government has not planned our transport network for growing demand. The poor execution of transport projects has resulted in massive cost blowouts that now run into the billions of dollars. Chronic infrastructure blowouts are becoming the legacy of this government. Let me remind the House of a few. Cross River Rail was promised to be open to passengers in 2024; now it is 2025. The government claims it cost \$5.4 billion—

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Miller.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—but hidden in the budget is a number closer to \$7.4 billion. Many of the costs remain a mystery with deals under a commercial-in-confidence cloak of secrecy. Construction of stage 1 of the Coomera Connector was meant to start in mid-2021. It did not—

Mr Bailey interjected.

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

Mr CRISAFULLI:—and the budget has blown out by a whopping \$600 million. The promised six lanes have been slashed to four. We are getting less for more. The list goes on. The Cairns Ring Road project was meant to run from the CBD to Smithfield. Instead, the people of Cairns will only get a

five-kilometre section from James Street to the Barron River bridge—less than half of what they were promised. The Gold Coast Light Rail budget has blown out by half a billion dollars. Before the 2020 election we were told this project was going to get underway by Christmas 2020. Major works are 18 months behind schedule. Blowouts on one project mean that Queenslanders miss out elsewhere. That is why good planning matters.

More promises were never delivered—projects like the replacement of the GS Bond Bridge which the member for Nanango has championed. It seems that every time I speak to the member for Coomera he is raising his community's concern about exit 38 on the M1. Despite the LNP on the Sunshine Coast securing a commitment from the previous federal government to fund 50 per cent of the Beerwah to Caloundra to Kawana to Maroochydore passenger rail line, the state government has refused to commit to this region-shaping transport project. Today I announce that a government I lead will.

What sort of government does not lock in a funding commitment for a vital project because it came from the wrong political colour in Canberra? Again, as the Treasurer spoke on Tuesday I could only think: if the Queensland economy is doing so well, if the infrastructure budget is so good, why are so many projects running late and over budget? Why are more Queenslanders sitting in more traffic than ever before or bouncing over dodgy rural roads?

The trouble for Queenslanders is that the government is hamstrung by its own financial ineptitude. There is no respect for taxpayers' money. The Palaszczuk government has wasted billions, and now real money that could have been used to ease cost-of-living pressures trickles down the drain. Let me give an example: \$200 million is the reported cost for the one-year lease of the Wellcamp quarantine facility. For \$200 million the government could have halved public transport fares. It could have saved people in the Caloundra electorate who travel daily from Nambour station to the Brisbane CBD over \$2,600 over the year. The member for Aspley may be interested to know his residents could have saved over \$780 during the same period. If you are one of those from the Gaven electorate who travels from Helensvale to Brisbane daily your saving could have been over \$2,000 per year.

That is the real cost-of-living savings that Labor cannot deliver because of the money that was wasted at Wellcamp. As the Deputy Leader of the Opposition states, the W in Wellcamp stands for waste. The budget papers should reveal the cost of this debacle and what is budgeted for the future. What will happen when the lease expires early next year? Will we continue to throw good money after bad? An honest budget would show that. Instead, Queenslanders are left with a Budget Paper stamped with 'commercial in confidence' over that section.

The issues that Queenslanders face are not because of decisions made in this budget: they are because of plans that were not put in place over seven years ago. This government has demonstrated for more than half a decade that it does not plan for the future. The costs of poor planning are now spreading their tentacles across the state and their grip is tightening around the Queensland lifestyle we have to protect. The lack of proper planning is not just a problem for transport infrastructure. Water security, the delivery of renewables, forestry, resources—no matter which area you talk about, a failure to plan drives up prices for end users, destroys employment opportunities and results in missed opportunities.

The Olympics will present a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for all of Queensland if we do it right. When the idea of bidding for the Olympic Games was first proposed by the South-East Queensland Council of Mayors it was seen as the catalyst for the delivery of infrastructure needed for the significant population growth we will experience over the next 20 years. The LNP supports this objective. Instead of rolling out bitumen, the Labor government sees the Olympic Games as an opportunity to roll out the red carpet. To them, it is a big self-promotion opportunity. Where is a 20-year tourism plan centred on driving new opportunities before, during and after the Olympics?

Where is the plan for ecotourism opportunities like Wangetti Trail, which again suffers in this budget from chronic delays and underspend year on year? Where is the plan showing what infrastructure we need to deliver over the next decade? We cannot build everything in the last 24 hours before the cauldron is lit. We need to plan, to sequence, and deliver this infrastructure. If we do not, we risk missing the opportunity to deliver a lasting legacy for Queensland.

Instead, this budget contains reannounced projects where the only new aspect is an increased price tag. Where are the local transport upgrades around the athletes village and the event sites that should have been in this budget? These must be planned here and now. Failure to plan is not an option. We cannot afford to squander a once-in-a-generation opportunity, but unfortunately the first chapter of the Olympic story is off the pace.

This budget was a test for the Palaszczuk government—to prove it can be trusted with the future of our state and delivering infrastructure for it. Just last week, former premier Peter Beattie spoke of the perils of a government without a vision for the future. He spoke of a lack of an innovation agenda. This

could be industries like agriculture. This budget is a missed opportunity for Queensland's farmers who deserve a plan to be at the cutting edge of innovation. Like the shadow minister for agriculture and member for Gympie says, Queensland farmers deserve access to the latest technology that improves on-farm productivity and reduces environmental impacts. Instead, savage cuts to the department will see industry-led best practice management programs thrown in a scrapheap.

Where in this budget is the next phase of Advance Queensland? Has it been hidden away so it will not look like the Premier is scrambling to follow the advice of a Labor luminary? Where is work to protect our cybersecurity—a real risk for government and the privacy of Queenslanders? In the lead-up to the 2032 games, we have an unprecedented opportunity to supercharge innovation, and that work needs to start right now. Unfortunately, even with the Olympics on the horizon, the government has stalled and Queenslanders know why. Poor planning has taken the wind from the government's sails, but it is the integrity crisis that has broken its compass.

I will say one thing about this budget: it represents the Palaszczuk government perfectly. The tricky nature is a window into the soul of this government. They have given up on promoting any semblance of openness and transparency. The endless stream of integrity issues demonstrates a wideranging commission of inquiry into corruption in the Queensland government is vital.

The rotten stench of corruption is back in Queensland. Money is being exchanged for favourable decisions. Today, instead of using brown paper bags, money and decisions flow at the will of Labor Party aligned lobbyists who cast their dark shadows on the halls of 1 William Street. Queenslanders have been shocked, as almost every day a new crisis rocks this government. Labor lobbyists ran the Palaszczuk government's re-election and now they want their rewards returned. Those lobbyists secure large government contracts for clients, all behind closed doors. Those lobbyists now pay sizeable donations to the Labor Party, securing access and gaining favourable decisions at an alarming rate.

The allegations mount by the day: clients of those Labor lobbyists getting favourable decisions from the government; Queenslanders watch the Premier delivering statements about lobbyists, while her political party line their pockets, reaping the rewards of the system they oversee—you know it is bad when a union powerbroker tells the Premier enough is enough; taxpayers funding Jackie Trad's legal action to keep a CCC report secret—what have they got to hide?—and, just hours ago, MPs not showing up to work, all in a bid to hide the truth about the integrity crisis gripping this government; the former state archivist's annual reports to parliament and reports into the mangocube saga altered to remove information damaging to this government; public servants afraid to give fearless and frank advice; and do not forget the raid on the Office of the Integrity Commissioner.

When will we find out what was on that laptop and who stood to gain from the material that was deleted? A government that believes it is okay to see the Office of the Integrity Commissioner raided is a government that has zero respect for integrity and accountability. A line was crossed that day and the Palaszczuk government drifts further away from it every day, and we saw that again this morning. Integrity is dead in Queensland. This government shows no interest in reviving it. An LNP government will have a dedicated minister for integrity in the member for Maroochydore. From opposition, as Queenslanders have seen, we are fighting to return integrity, transparency, honesty and openness to the halls of power.

When I first became opposition leader, I said I would always chart an alternate path for the state. Where I have seen the government heading in the wrong direction, I have used my position to call this out—just as we did during the height of the pandemic when this government repeatedly refused to provide small and family businesses with financial support; just as we did when a little boy with cerebral palsy named Lenny was stranded over the border, unable to get an exemption—we got him home; just as we did for little Memphis, stuck interstate for two months—we got him home; just as the member for Currumbin did when the government refused to fund screening for spinal muscular atrophy for newborns. Children interstate were receiving this life-saving test; it is wonderful that Queensland kids now will.

Our constant pressure has also brought about many investigations and reviews, but it is worth noting the government pushed back against every single suggestion there was a problem. We have seen the commission of inquiry relating to the CCC; the QBCC governance review; the Coaldrake review of culture and accountability in the public sector; the review of the Public Records Act; the CCC laptop investigation; the CCC lobbying inquiry; and the commission of inquiry into DNA testing in Queensland. For months, the opposition was ridiculed by the Minister for Health for demanding the inquiry into the forensic lab. We kept on pushing because we recognised how serious the situation was. Earlier this year, the member for Whitsunday gave a powerful speech about this topic in this House. She explained why this is so important. The member gave voice to an unnamed rape victim and detailed the struggles of reporting an incident only to be told there was no evidence. No evidence means no justice.

To know there are victims who will have a shot at justice is a special feeling. I congratulate the families of victims, especially Vicki and Shannah Blackburn, who never gave up, and Hedley Thomas, who never stopped telling their stories. However, I remain concerned this government is not taking the issue seriously. The opposition can find no allocation in this budget for the commission of inquiry, let alone money to implement any recommendations or money for the additional resources that will be needed to restore the credibility of the centre.

When you put all these integrity fires together, then all these investigations and all these inquiries feel like a tattered patchwork holding back the truth from Queenslanders—a truth that will be brought into light through a royal commission into the Palaszczuk government's integrity crisis. The more the state government seeks to dodge the truth, the louder the calls grow for a royal commission—and so will our calls for the government to keep Queenslanders safe today, tomorrow and into the future.

Youth crime is out of control. In this budget, the number of full-time police who will be on the streets has increased by just five. That is right—five. Here is a fact that will not shock Queenslanders. While there has been an increase of only five new police officers, the Palaszczuk government now has 1,067 staff in communications, media and marketing. That is an increase of seven. This tells you everything you need to know about this government. They have hired more spinners to protect their image than police to protect Queenslanders.

Within Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the government not only did not meet its FTE target; it has reduced it by one over the past 12 months. For Corrective Services staff, jails are overcrowded at 125 per cent, yet FTEs have dropped by two since the last budget. This government is failing those who keep us safe. An LNP government will provide the support and resources for our emergency services that they need to do their job. We must—Queenslanders deserve this.

Kate Leadbetter, Matt Field and their unborn child, Miles, were not kept safe. They were killed when hit by a stolen car while they were out for a walk last year. Lives lost. Parents that will never be. A baby's cry that will never be heard. We hoped that this senseless loss would finally force changes to address juvenile crime problems and deliver results that plague communities across the state. Sadly, it has not. Cars are still getting stolen at record levels. Homes and business invasions continue to rise. Kids continue to get in trouble without consequences. This government's much vaunted GPS tracker trial has been a failure, with just three devices fitted. None are out in the community at the moment.

Sadly, as a reflection of a third-term government that is out of ideas, this budget provides no new initiatives to deal with this problem. We need to get these kids back on the right track. The member for Burdekin and shadow police minister will continue to prosecute that. We need to introduce breach of bail as an offence.

The need for increased economic security for women is not a new concept, neither is the need to be safe at home, in the workplace or respected as equal members of our community. However, as a community, a state and a nation, we still have a long way to go. We have failed too many women and we must do better. Too often these statements which should be unquestionable—to be safe, to be respected, to be equal—are questioned, ridiculed or often given lip-service. I cannot speak on the experience of disappointment, frustration, hurt and anger that this must cause, but my hope is to be Premier of this state, and that means I want to lead all Queenslanders, men and women, to a future that is safe, fair, respectful and full of hope for everyone.

The reality for women in our state is Queensland has the second worst gender pay gap in the country of 15.6 per cent, higher than the national average of 13.8 per cent. While New South Wales improved their gap from 13.4 per cent in November 2020 to 12 per cent in November 2021, ours went up to 15.6 per cent. The women's participation rate is lagging 63.7 per cent to men's 70.9 per cent. I hoped this budget would do more. In New South Wales, we have seen a massive injection of funding that is practical and targeted to women. There is a \$32 million grants program to provide \$5,000 payments to women to cover the cost of technology, wardrobe and training needs when returning to work. They have over \$30 million to specifically support women in business, from supporting start-ups to supporting women grow their business. They have announced \$5 billion over the next 10 years for child care, including \$775 million in the next four years. They are looking at practical, real solutions to overcome the barriers to women returning to work. This is the type of real action we need on women's economic security and the type this parliament should be driving forward.

While the pandemic impacted women's employment more than men, we are at a point of opportunity. Employers have seen the potential of flexible work arrangements and this opens the door for more opportunities. Flexible work makes it more possible for a woman to re-enter and stay in the workforce consistently. That is because not only can they work more flexibly but also their partners can, too, helping to equalise the parenting load while allowing both to go back to work. We need to be encouraging and incentivising these opportunities for employers and we will reap the benefits for all.

This budget does not do enough for women. It does not give real, practical and specific solutions to provide more opportunities and support for women in what is needed. Most of the measures under economic security in the Women's Budget Statement are not just for women. In fact, if you total the amount for the specific projects that are for women's economic security, you barely crack \$1 million. It is not good enough. We need the talk backed up with action because quality matters. Today I announce that an LNP government will have a dedicated minister for women's economic security in the cabinet. She will be part of a three-person economic team joined by Treasury and Finance. Two will be women.

The child safety system in Queensland is broken. Children known to Child Safety have almost twice the mortality rate of all children in Queensland. They are three times as likely to die from suicide, fatal assault and neglect. In the last financial year, 53 children known to Child Safety died. Put simply, children known to Child Safety are less safe than those outside the system. Right now in Queensland, children are being taken from safe foster families—for some, the only families they have ever known—and returned to unsafe domestic situations where they are forced to face situations that no child should ever go through. We have not kept them safe. Talk to the members for Whitsundays, Mudgeeraba, Burnett, Southport, Ninderry, Lockyer, Burdekin, Currumbin and Nanango. They share a lifetime of professions protecting vulnerable children. They will relay to you the horror stories they have heard from foster families who have seen children destroyed as a result of bad decisions made by a bad system which is supposed to keep them safe. The LNP is trying to shine a spotlight on these child safety issues. We are going to ensure these kids are safe. It is happening in all parts of Queensland and it cannot be ignored.

We have a long way to go in education and the budget has revealed not a single outcome target was achieved across reading, writing and numeracy through years 3, 5, 7 and 9. The shadow education minister and member for Moggill has repeatedly spoken about the absence of a comprehensive plan from the state government to deal with this steady decline. Good governments plan for the future. We welcome the \$65 million for land acquisition this financial year for new schools. We will be mounting a case to reverse the absence of funding in the forwards.

I said when I became Leader of the Opposition that I would always give credit where it is due and so I place on the record my acknowledgement of the \$2.1 billion, 10-year transition strategy for the waste levy. Without this, local governments face the real prospect of higher costs and worsening environmental outcomes for an industry that can create jobs and deliver wins for the environment. I believe history will judge this government for its poor record on environmental management. This government hides behind announcements and the things it promises, but on the environment, the actions tell the real story. Throughout our great state, we have some of the most pristine rainforests, beaches, bushlands, islands, parks, gorges, river systems and deserts. We need to do everything we can to conserve our environment. This will not happen if the government is solely focused on announcements, not actions. We will only see protection through genuine action by working with regional Queenslanders.

Queensland has the lowest percentage of conservation in the nation. In 2015, the state government set a long-term target of protecting 17 per cent of our state. No-one could have imagined how long-term that target would be. As the shadow environment minister and member for Bonney has pointed out, in the past two budgets we have seen the government's actions expand the state by 0.1 per cent each year. This year we have actually gone backwards. We have seen chronic underinvestment in the vital areas from the government, so the LNP supports the new funding of \$250 million. However, being held centrally there is no indication of what allocation that is per year. We cannot have another announcement without follow-up. Funds must flow immediately. We also fear that proper management of these areas, especially national parks, has been put aside. Expansion of our conservation area must go hand in hand with better management. We must conserve the biodiversity of Queensland. That means we need to do more to manage out-of-control weeds, feral pests and a lack of bushfire mitigation. Conservation of our environment must be more than talk; there must be outcomes.

In February this year, the status of koalas was changed from vulnerable to endangered in Queensland. We need swift action to ensure they survive. The increased funding is welcomed. We now need a conservation plan in partnership with local councils and conservation groups to get urgent action.

Just on partnering with local government, instead of fostering strong partnerships, the state government has cut several key funding programs, including \$8 million from the Indigenous Councils Critical Infrastructure Program. It is one thing to talk about closing the gap, but programs like this matter. In my own electorate of Broadwater, a key project that the electorate needs is the duplication of the Jabiru Island bridges. This budget confirms more than \$5 million in delayed funding to strengthen the existing bridge. I continue to welcome this funding, but we must begin planning to duplicate what is a congested area in the northern Gold Coast. We must begin planning and delivering a second crossing.

It is also time to upgrade learning facilities at Coombabah and Biggera Waters state schools. I am heartened by the \$101,000 for minor works at my local schools. I will continue to advocate for funds to go towards upgrading the damaged school notice board at Coombabah State School. I thank Minister Grace for her availability in discussing needs like this for my community.

Queenslanders have a right to feel ripped off by the government because we are not getting what we were promised. The government promised Queenslanders would have a place in a Queensland hospital. Instead, we see growing waiting lists and ambulance ramping rates—the worst in the nation. The government promised no new taxes. They delivered three. The government promised good management. We have had seven years of waste, inaction and poor delivery of infrastructure resulting in higher cost-of-living pressures. The government promised to keep us safe and yet we face the prospect of murderers and rapists walking free because of a forensic services lab that does not work. The government promised they would act with integrity. Laptops have been taken and wiped. Public servants have been silenced. There is special access for Labor aligned lobbyists and their clients and public money is being funnelled back to the Labor Party and unions. This is the sad reality of Queensland in 2022.

Queenslanders expect the budget to be a clear and honest account of the books, a straight-down-the-line conversation with Queenslanders outlining the government's economic plan. What they received was a budget underwritten by broken promises and a plan that delivers no new hospitals for another two elections.

The Treasurer has made a virtue of calling this a 'typical Labor budget'. The Labor government is caught up in an integrity crisis. The Labor government is caught up in a health crisis. The Labor government is caught up in a housing crisis. When the Treasurer calls this a 'typical Labor budget', for the first time this week he is telling the truth.