



Speech By  
**Hon. Glenn Butcher**

**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**


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Record of Proceedings, 24 June 2022

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (12.22 pm): This is a budget that regional Queensland will remember for a long time. We are delivering on things that matter to the people in our regions: good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle. Before I talk about my portfolio areas, I would like to take a moment to celebrate my wonderful electorate of Gladstone and what this budget has delivered for the community. More than \$34 million will be spent upgrading the facilities and resources of the local schools in the Gladstone region. I note the Minister for Education is sitting in front of me and I say a big thank you from my community for that support.

Children are our future, particularly in Gladstone with the current industries that are growing. The kids in Gladstone are being given the best leg-up possible because of this investment. Central Queensland is a powerhouse for the Queensland economy and to see more than \$750 million invested in public services around the region is absolutely fantastic. That is up nine per cent from last year's budget.

I was also thrilled to see \$125 million allocated to upgrading the Port Access Road, which we know is vital for our community, as well as nearly \$5 million allocated to upgrade other roads in the region. I could go on—\$79.8 million in our state development area, which we know is attracting huge new industries; \$15.3 million to the hydrogen industry being developed in Gladstone; a further \$15 million on local water projects in the area; and nearly \$80 million for our crown jewel, the Port of Gladstone. I should stop there and turn to my portfolios before I run out of time today.

The Palaszczuk government is delivering on our commitment to water security with more than half a billion dollars of funding for regional infrastructure and planning supporting water security projects right across this state. Making the phone calls to the mayors reminds me of why we do this job: to deliver for Queensland. I must say I find it funny that yesterday evening in the House the member for Nanango made a half-cooked attempt at attacking this budget. The shadow minister for construction of dams, whose record on constructing dams is zero—it is actually negative one because all the LNP did when it was in government was can a dam—has asked me one question all year and yesterday spent less than three minutes on her portfolio area while having a whinge about the budget.

The member made it clear to me that she had not read the budget papers. To help the member for Nanango, let me rattle off just some of what this budget included for her shadow portfolio: more than \$300 million—and I note the Deputy Speaker in the chair at the moment—for the Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline to provide long-term water security to the Southern Downs and Toowoomba's satellite communities. I have visited that region several times as minister. I have seen Storm King Dam, as you

have Deputy Speaker, bone dry, Leslie Dam incredibly low and truck after truck of water delivering precious drops to Stanthorpe. Thanks to this government these communities will have long-term water security ensuring their economic prosperity into the future.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr BUTCHER:** Those opposite do not like the fact that we are delivering for water infrastructure here in Queensland. We are also investing \$40.4 million, as the previous member spoke to, building a pipeline from Gracemere to Mount Morgan. This means Rockhampton council will not need to cart water ever again to that community. Even the member for Mirani has thanked me personally. He can shout me a beer at the pub in Mount Morgan when I am next up that way.

In Cairns we have allocated more than \$107 million to shore up stage 1 of the Cairns Water Security Project. That has been matched by the federal Labor government to give certainty to that ever-growing Cairns community. The Townsville community will also benefit, with \$26 million for the Lansdown Eco-Industrial Precinct to be used to build a reservoir and 13-kilometre pipeline connecting the precinct and pumping station to the Haughton pipeline, which is another project that this government has funded for the great people of the Townsville region.

The Flinders Shire Council will receive \$25.6 million for stage 1 of the Hughenden Water Bank project. That will pay for 7,000 megalitres of off-stream storage and a distribution system. Round 6 of the highly successful Building our Regions program will progress with \$39 million allocated in this budget to further support regional communities with urban water supply and water treatment infrastructure, despite the fact that last night the member for Nanango said that there was nothing in the budget for regional development. I would argue that a \$39 million investment is something that is in the budget for building our regions in Queensland.

I will not be dictated to by those opposite when they are looking at their budget papers like they are flicking through the *Courier-Mail*. There are actually figures on the pages. We are doing what we said we would do. Our budget documents also detail the significant spending that our government owned corporations continue to make in water infrastructure across this state, which includes important preconstruction works to get us ready to start rebuilding Paradise Dam.

Sunwater's allocation of \$30 million for preparatory work this financial year is a whole lot more than the member for Nanango was going to allocate. She came into this place and said that she could fix it for \$25 million. The member for Burnett sat here last night whingeing that it is only \$30 million. In her budget, the member for Nanango said she could fix it with a concrete mixer and a bit of plaster for a measly \$25 million. We are taking the time and we are making the investment to once and for all fix the dam for the people of the Bundaberg region. All up, it is a \$1.2 billion investment for the region on top of the \$3 million for the regional water assessments that we are doing at the moment.

We are building a bright future for manufacturers in this state. Thanks to a further \$50 million investment in two major grants programs, manufacturers across the state will continue to bolster their capability, create new jobs and re-shore work back to Queensland. That is on top of more than \$17 million that earlier this year this government committed to making our manufacturing hubs permanent.

Last night I had to sit here and listen to the member for Nanango have a half-hearted go at me. It was a bit rich given that she cut manufacturing spending and pledged to cut more if she were elected. Yesterday, in his speech in response to the budget, the Leader of the Opposition announced no new funding for water and no new funding for manufacturing. She cannot tell me that I have no sway at the cabinet table, as she did last night, because since I have been the water and manufacturing minister spending on water has only gone up. Our record is \$3.4 billion since 2015.

Clearly, no-one in their leadership team is listening to the member for Nanango. If they were, her shadow portfolio area would have had a mention in the response speech to the budget by the Leader of the Opposition, but he did not mention it at all except to say the word 'water' once. I will take that as a compliment. Clearly our budget and our water and manufacturing programs are so good for this state that the Leader of the Opposition would not change a thing. That is a compliment to the team and it is a big compliment to the way that we are doing things in Queensland with water and manufacturing.

The member for Nanango says that I never leave my electorate, but I can tell her, if she is listening to this, that her spies are mistaken. She must be thinking of my identical twin who is based in Gladstone. I am on the road every week—and I mean 'on the road'—in regional Queensland. I am not on a junket to the Margaret River wine region or on a ride at Luna Park in Sydney. I have witnessed the drought in Stanthorpe, Warwick, Barcaldine and Longreach. I did not have to go on a taxpayer funded junket to Sydney to talk about drought. That was absolutely pathetic from those opposite.

This budget delivers big time for Queensland, no matter where people live. There are more good jobs and better services to support the great lifestyle that we all enjoy in this wonderful state. Many of the projects in my portfolio will be jointly funded by the amazing new federal Labor government. Working with my new federal counterparts has been a breath of fresh air, even just in the past two weeks. I am looking forward to providing more for Queensland as we work together.

In my wonderful home region of Central Queensland, more good jobs will be created when construction gets underway on the Mount Morgan pipeline. Mayor Tony Williams from the Rockhampton Regional Council has said that he will sleep better at night knowing that the people of Mount Morgan have shored up their supply of liquid gold. In Townsville, Mayor Jenny Hill said exactly the same thing. She said she is reminded of how serious we are about water security every time she hears the words 'Haughton pipeline'. Right now, early works are due to continue on Paradise Dam. With the money in the budget, those early works will continue to be delivered.

As I said before, this budget takes our investment to over \$3.4 billion since 2015. This government is looking to the future and it is delivering funding that ensures our state and Queensland are prepared for whatever challenges there may be.

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

*The speech read as follows—*

Of course, it's critical to fund the big projects but we have a number of vital programs, which help keep water flowing across Queensland.

Stage 2 of the Rural Water Futures program has received a \$9.3 million boost in funding over the next two years, to ensure the state's precious water resources are managed sustainably into the future and to deliver tangible benefits to irrigators, the environment and community more broadly.

\$7.1 million has been allocated, over four years, to enhance water modelling capacity to support water planning, water security and infrastructure assessments

The Queensland Government is committed to delivering water security, but we need to make sure our water infrastructure is an asset, not a liability, to future Queenslanders.

\$5.5 million provided over four years will be used to develop a Queensland bulk water infrastructure assessment plan, a strategic framework to inform future water infrastructure investment decisions

The Strategic Water Infrastructure Plan will help us to be sure we're building the right infrastructure, in the right place, at the right time, to deliver water security and prosperity for our state.

The budget has allocated \$4.9 million over four years for a Queensland rural water compliance system—the Improved Compliance Program—to develop improved systems and capability, which will support the department's compliance and enforcement of the Water Act 2000

\$3.4 million over four years will be used to address recommendations from the Queensland Audit Office report into dam safety regulation, including recruiting specialist regulation, compliance and engineering staff and further developing information communication technology capability

The Cloncurry Community Service Obligation payments will continue, with almost \$28 million over four years to subsidise the delivery of water to Cloncurry Shire Council, via the North West Queensland Pipeline.

This government is also providing funding of \$300,000 to the State Council of River Trusts Queensland, Mr Speaker.

The Queensland Water Regional Alliance Program has received a funding boost of \$2 million per year to go towards helping local governments across nine Q-WRAP regions, to deliver efficient urban water and sewerage services.

QWRAP helps the participating local governments—many of which are small or remote—to achieve efficiencies in water and sewerage service delivery by collaborating on projects at regional scale.

With these announcements and this Budget, Queenslanders can rest assured that urban water and irrigation water supplies are stable, safe and affordable.

We're into round six of the Building our Regions fund, Mr Speaker and this is a program I'm particularly passionate about.

Previous rounds of Building our Regions have seen more than \$348 million approved towards hundreds of projects, creating nearly 3,000 construction jobs.

A total of almost \$8.3 million has been just awarded to 23 councils, for 35 projects that will improve water supply and sewerage infrastructure throughout regional Queensland—all the way from the Torres Strait and Cape York, to the Gulf, western Queensland and further south in places like Quilpie, Maranoa and Goondiwindi.

This budget has allocated \$39 million for the next stage of round 6, which will enable regional and rural councils to begin construction on critical water supply and sewerage systems.

It's the Palaszczuk Government that you can count on, Mr Speaker, to deliver for these projects, to make sure there are good jobs, better services and a bright future for all Queenslanders, no matter where you live in this state.

This budget is bolstering job growth in all areas, Mr Speaker, but perhaps nowhere more than in the manufacturing industry.

As I mentioned at the outset, our manufacturing sector—which contributes more than \$20 billion each year to Queensland—is another focus of this Budget.

Our investment of \$40 million for the Made in Queensland grants program has been very well received in the industry, Mr Speaker.

Since 2017, we've invested millions of dollars in grants that have gone toward 105 projects; that investment has seen more than 5,300 jobs supported and created so far.

We expect this to rise to more than 7,600 jobs on completion of all 105 projects. The projects will generate more than \$140 million in private sector investment for our state.

A further \$10 million for the Manufacturing Hub grants program will mean exponential growth for mum-and-dad businesses in regional Queensland, enabling them to enter markets that were never before a possibility.

Through this grant program our Hubs have already awarded \$11 million, helping 38 manufacturers from Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, Gladstone, and the Gold Coast adopt LEAN practices and invest in advanced manufacturing technologies.

This has seen more than \$18 million in private sector investment pumped back into those regions.

The support doesn't stop there.

Our six Manufacturing Hubs are making all the difference to these businesses, Mr Speaker, and I'm so proud the Treasurer saw the value in the program and permanently funded the hubs earlier this year—another \$17 million.

The hub staff are experts and their expertise is there to help local manufacturers grow their business, create jobs, capture more customers and develop leading edge processes and efficiencies within their business.

Money has also been given to supporting new industry development that will create more supply-chain certainty.

Queensland has a unique opportunity to extend the local supply chain for new economy minerals, particularly the development of battery chemicals and battery manufacturing.

In this Budget we are committing \$500,000 over the next two years to support the development of a battery manufacturing industry as proposed in the Draft Queensland Resources Industry Development Plan. This is part of a \$5 million investment overall.

Our abundance of new economy minerals, such as vanadium, cobalt, graphite and nickel, are all used within emerging battery technologies and energy storage.

This places us in prime position to capitalise on what could become a billion-dollar industry.

This Budget and these priorities make it clear we are serious about Manufacturing in Queensland.

This sector contributed more than \$22 billion last financial year to our state's economy, something this government intends to build on.

As I said at the outset, Mr Speaker, we know that water and manufacturing are vital to keeping our regional economies strong and growing.

That's why, as Minister for Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water, I'm proud to stand behind this Budget and what it promises for regional Queensland—that's good jobs, better services and a great lifestyle today, and into the future.