



Speech By  
**Hon. Grace Grace**

**MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 August 2022


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Education, Employment and Training Committee, Report**

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (4.24 pm): I commend the Education, Employment and Training Committee for its budget estimates report. I acknowledge the work of the chair, the member for Redlands, who always does an excellent job; the members of the committee on both sides; the committee secretariat, along with the Clerk and the parliamentary staff—a big heartfelt thank you.

I am proud the Palaszczuk government has continued to give Queenslanders a great start in life with yet another record school and early childhood education budget of \$16.5 billion. When we say 'a record', it is not just the CPI increase; this is real increases in that which is why we use the word 'record'. There will be around \$2 billion this year alone to maintain, renew and build new schools and facilities that is supporting 4,200 jobs. It is another example of the Palaszczuk government creating good jobs and delivering even better services right across Queensland to maintain our wonderful lifestyle. It is an example of the government doing all it can with an election plan and delivering it.

As with our air conditioning program and as with our ACES program, we are delivering in spades. It is not just any alternative programs that were not coming from those opposite, but we have a \$3 billion Future Schools program, delivering new schools and in our fastest growing areas. Further to that, the budget maintains some excellent moneys in there for the \$220 million over two years for additional classrooms at existing schools experiencing in-catchment enrolment growth. It is not in itself just about new buildings; there is \$650 million over the next five years for renewal projects—playgrounds, tuckshops, halls, classrooms—and there is the \$43.2 million for our discrete Indigenous communities. I am really looking forward to rolling that out.

These are obviously big projects and we have a lot of pressures on at the moment; we are not immune to that either. We are working at a national level for the new teachers that we will be employing and I am glad to see we are on target. We have employed 2,186 teachers as of 30 June 2022, and 1,152 teacher aides, so we are well on target to meet our election commitments. This is even an increase in the net number of teachers when the student numbers, because of COVID, have remained relatively stable. It has been an incredible turnaround on what we have been able to deliver.

The member for Moggill raised issues in relation to these numbers of teachers; this from a government who previously sacked 14,000 public servants and, when we needed to employ 500 teachers, did not employ one extra government—

**Mr Watts:** You are just making it up now.

**Ms GRACE:** What, the previous LNP government didn't sack 14,000 public servants?

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms GRACE:** I would like to know exactly what rock you have all been under because that is what the previous Campbell Newman government did—sacked 14,000. If I were the member for Kawana, worrying about 14 members that resigned in the last seven years—that is two per year, I might add—I would be worried about the 14,000 who were sacked when he sat around the cabinet table. It is really quite amazing when you think about it.

There were issues that were raised here about CCC referrals of the OIR. This has almost been a badgering of public servants by the member for Kawana. These reports have all been fully investigated and a report has yet to be finalised. When it is finalised, then we will know the outcome and not one minute before.

In respect of the time frames in relation to CCC investigations, they are in the control of the CCC. When we go to the QIRC, the time frames are in control of the QIRC. When decisions are made, those decisions are taken and they are acted upon. No-one in this House can control those independent bodies on their time frames, and it is ridiculous to even suggest the question about why the time.

WorkCover claims were also raised by the member for Moggill. That is because we have made it easier for people to get compensation with beneficial legislation, not like those opposite who put barriers in to stop people making claims. I commend this report and I commend our budget for education. It is world-class.