



Speech By
Jennifer Howard


MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Record of Proceedings, 24 June 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.49 pm): I rise to give my support to the 2022-23 Queensland budget. In so doing, I congratulate the Treasurer, the Assistant Treasurer and the entire leadership team on their work on behalf of Queenslanders. This is a budget that puts the health of Queenslanders first and commits itself to meeting the needs of Ipswich's growing population. Our fantastic quality of life in Ipswich is strengthened by having a Queensland Labor government that is not afraid to invest heavily in public services or to make multinational corporations pay their fair share to preserve our quality of life. You cannot trust the opposition to support making coal companies pay their fair share; nor can you trust them to make the top one per cent of big businesses help pay for our mental health services. Only a Labor government is bold enough to deliver these revenue measures.

This budget builds on our fantastic track record of jobs growth and economic recovery, after two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. Queensland has the strongest growing economy out of all states and territories. This budget builds on that fantastic performance by creating more jobs, delivering better services and building official and critical infrastructure.

I welcome this budget's record health funding for Ipswich. This investment will support our growing population and will see Ipswich people being able to access good quality health care when they need it. In this budget, the Palaszczuk government is prioritising the health of Queenslanders with a record \$23.6 billion to be spent on hospitals and health care. We are creating an additional 2,200 new overnight beds in 15 hospitals across the state, including Ipswich Hospital. Our local healthcare system faces a growing number of challenges such as rapid population growth, more patients with complex health needs, fewer people with private health cover and a shortfall in funding for primary care. With an ageing population comes an increased demand for emergency health services. These challenges are being felt not only in Ipswich but right across the nation.

The Palaszczuk government is responding to these challenges by supercharging investment in hospitals. In this budget, we will deliver \$710 million for stage 2 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion, which will deliver 200 additional hospital beds by 2027. We are also continuing the development of a new satellite hospital in Ripley, which will help to take pressure off the Ipswich Hospital. Along with the funding towards the construction of this satellite hospital, we are providing a further investment of \$85.4 million to expand the site and create an additional 90 extra beds at the facility.

Ambulance services in Ipswich will be given a boost with the development of the new Ripley ambulance station. In this budget we are delivering \$4.4 million out of a total spend of \$7.4 million to continue developing the station. West Moreton Hospital and Health Service will receive a record \$810 million to continue delivering quality healthcare services to Ipswich and its surrounding regions.

Mental health is another big focus in this budget, with more funding to complete the \$91 million Ipswich Hospital Acute Mental Health Unit. We are supporting better mental health services in Queensland by applying a mental health levy to big business. This will generate \$425 million a year to fund future mental health care. This is the No. 1 issue for most residents in my community, so I am really happy about this component of the budget. For Ipswich people, good health care means a better quality of life. By putting health care first in this budget, we will achieve better health outcomes for our community.

I know that many Ipswich people are concerned about housing. Over the past two years, Ipswich has been experiencing increasingly low rental vacancy rates, high house prices and rising rental prices. More people—even those on average incomes—are finding themselves in housing stress and are wondering whether they can afford to keep a roof over their heads. Housing is a basic right, and I am proud to be part of a Labor government that cares about this issue and is committed to supporting those in need. In 2017 we announced 383 new social homes to be built across Ipswich. As of December last year, 241 had already been completed. In the Ipswich electorate specifically, we have completed the construction of 86 new social homes since 2016-17 and are committed to building more. In this budget we are delivering \$34.3 million to expand and improve social housing right across the Ipswich region.

Across the state, we are investing an additional \$16 million in the immediate housing response package to help families in housing stress to secure and sustain a home. This response package will provide a \$7 million increase to the Rental Security Subsidy; an extra \$6 million for specialist homelessness services to broker temporary emergency accommodation; and \$3 million for extra support workers in specialist homelessness services to help families to stay in their current home or secure a new tenancy. Our government is also committed to opening up supply for new affordable housing. For those looking to buy a new home in Ipswich, \$45 million will be provided for the Ripley Valley Priority Development Area to develop infrastructure, including \$9.2 million towards catalytic infrastructure to support the delivery of land supply for housing.

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

The speech read as follows—

This is part of a \$150 million investment over the next three years to unlock development and increase the supply of housing in the growth areas of Ripley Valley and Greater Flagstone.

A further \$50 million will be for the new Growth Acceleration Fund to invest in the critical trunk infrastructure needed to develop residential lots and increase the supply of new houses.

Creating housing supply is important in a city like Ipswich which is anticipated to grow to up to 558,000 people by 2041.

Speaker, I know how important good transport infrastructure is for Ipswich people.

In 2017 I was proud to announce the accessibility upgrade of East Ipswich Station. This year, we opened the new station, and in this budget, we're delivering a further \$417,000 towards putting the final touches on the station.

Ipswich people rely on an effective transport network to connect them to work, school, retail precincts, health appointments, clients, family, and friends. A great deal of them travel on roads and public transport outside of the Ipswich area.

I'm pleased to see this budget will see continued solid investment in our roads and public transport not only in Ipswich, but also across the Greater Brisbane area.

This investment includes \$4.2 million out of a total \$10 million investment to design and develop an improved Fiveways intersection at East Ipswich that will be developed in accordance with the local community's needs.

This funding is part of a record \$27.5 billion road and transport spend by our government.

The Fiveways funding will go towards further community engagement to deliver a business case for a right turn lane from Brisbane Road into Chermanside Road. This will facilitate the efficient flow of traffic into suburbs such as East Ipswich and Basin Pocket.

We will also be seeking to understand what local people want to see from a long-term upgrade of Montauban Street, Gibbon Street, and Lusitania Street intersections along Brisbane Road in Newtown. Through our investment, these intersections will be made safer.

We also know that cycling is taking off in Ipswich and that's why we're committing a total \$2.2 million spend to build a new cycling network and cycling facilities that stretch from the Ipswich CBD out to Deebing Heights.

Our major highways will also be supported in this budget with an investment of \$4.3 million to install safety barriers along the Cunningham Highway from Redbank Plains Road to Ripley Road.

\$2 million will be spent on planning for the Centenary Highway—a major road that many Ipswich people rely on.

This budget will also invest \$180,000 out of a total spend of \$1.16 million to plan for an upgrade of the section of Centenary Highway that runs from the Ipswich Motorway at Richlands through to the Cunningham Highway at Yamanto.

Community safety

Speaker, thousands of people over the last two years have moved to Ipswich to take advantage of our laidback lifestyle, affordable housing, and access to good public services. We also pride ourselves on being a safe place to live with a strong sense of community.

The Palaszczuk Government is committed to improving policing services, domestic and family violence services, and protecting vulnerable members of our community such as young people and children.

In April, we launched a new mobile police van for the Ipswich district which can be swiftly deployed to various areas around Ipswich.

Since 2015, our government has recruited an additional 120 police officers to Ipswich to service the needs of our growing population.

A new \$25 million police station to be built at Ripley has already been announced, with funding of \$4.3 million in this year's budget to continue developing the facility.

This is part of a record \$2.9 billion investment in Queensland Police this year which includes funding for 2,025 extra police officers over five years, funding for major police infrastructure, and an investment in modern, high-tech equipment to support police such as body worn cameras, QLITE tablet devices, and ballistic vests to protect our frontline officers.

Speaker, I believe access to justice is for everyone, especially our most vulnerable, and that's why I'm extremely proud to have lobbied hard to get the Murri Court returned to Ipswich in 2018. Our government is continuing its support of the Murri Court in Ipswich with \$955,000 this year to keep providing equitable justice services for local Aboriginal and Torres of Strait Islander people.

Justice for women and girls is also a top priority in this budget. Our commitment to protecting women and girls from domestic and family violence continues with our response to the landmark Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce which will see an investment of \$363 million to increase our capacity to criminalise coercive control.

Domestic and family violence support services in Ipswich are in the frontline trenches everyday supporting victims to keep them safe. They also work hard every day helping victims navigate the court system so they can access justice and hold perpetrators accountable for their actions.

In this budget, we will continue supporting domestic and family violence support services in Ipswich by investing \$398,000 this year to improve victim safety and hold perpetrators to account. This funding is part of a total investment of \$1.8 million for domestic and family violence support services in Ipswich.

Vulnerable children are also a top priority in this budget. That's why we're committing \$2.2 billion in funding over five years to child protection services across Queensland to respond to a rising demand.

By 2023-24 we will be delivering additional support for young people leaving foster care with more investment in their transition to adulthood.

This will be done by extending the foster care allowance for carers of young people who remain living with them up to the age of 21, and providing financial support and mentoring for young people aged 18 to 21 who are leaving non-family-based care to live independently.

Schools

Giving children the best start in life will always be a number one priority for the Palaszczuk Government.

Every child deserves to live in a safe environment free from harm, and every child should have every opportunity to achieve their goals and live fulfilling lives.

Like every previous budget the Palaszczuk Government has handed down, this budget is strong on education investment.

Queensland schools and early childhood education will receive a record investment of \$16.5 billion to deliver new school buildings, upgrade infrastructure, renew playgrounds and tuckshops, and build five new schools across South East Queensland.

One of those schools will be a primary school built in the heart of Ripley that will commence classes in 2023. We will be allocating \$30.7 million in this year's budget to construct this \$60 million state-of-the-art primary school in the fastest growing area in Queensland.

The progress on this new school is very exciting, and I know many families in the Ripley area will be keen to send their kids to a school that's close to home.

We're delivering a strong investment in all schools across Ipswich with a total spend this year of \$43.7 million.

At Bremer State High School we're investing \$3.4 million to build additional specialist classrooms.

At Blair State School we're delivering \$350,000 to refurbish four learning spaces, and at Ipswich Special School we're providing \$200,000 to help with renewal planning.

There will be \$7.6 million set aside this year for Claremont Special School to build additional classrooms.

Ipswich West State School will be given \$350,000 to refurbish two learning spaces and an existing open learning space.

\$824,000 will be allocated across 12 state schools in the Ipswich electorate to continue delivering maintenance works throughout the 2022-2023 financial year, and \$289,000 will be invested in minor works for schools.

I know that all of this investment will help Ipswich children get the best start in life.

Jobs and opportunities

Speaker, this budget continues our government's strong performance in job creation and generating opportunities for businesses.

Since March 2020, we have created 206,000 new jobs in Queensland, and our strong performance continues with an astounding 46,600 new jobs created just in the month of May this year.

We are spending \$1 billion across the Ipswich region on vital infrastructure and capital works that will enhance productivity and support around 3,200 jobs.

The Palaszczuk Government is leading on jobs growth across the nation. One way we're doing this is by investing in community projects, such as the \$1.3 million we are spending this year to support Ipswich City Council deliver new infrastructure and community assets which will help create hundreds of jobs and stimulate our local economy.

This funding is supported through the South East Queensland Community Stimulus Program which is helping to create thousands of jobs across Queensland including Ipswich.

Our government will always continue investing in the fantastic Skilling Queenslanders for Work program because it's a great program that changes lives and helps disadvantaged people get the training and qualifications they need to secure well-paid jobs. Since reintroducing Skilling Queenslanders for Work in Queensland, we've provided training to 4,826 people in Ipswich, and helped 3,292 of them secure jobs.

We're also supporting businesses in Ipswich to take advantage of opportunities to grow their business and invest in our communities.

In this budget, we're providing payroll tax cuts to more than 12,000 small and medium businesses with payrolls under \$10.4 million.

We will also guarantee funding to the successful Mentoring for Growth program and invest \$6.75 million in the Small Business Wellness and Support package which will link Wellness Coaches with small businesses hit hard by the pandemic and recent floods.

Conclusion

Speaker, while I'm pleased to see this budget deliver a \$1.9 billion surplus, as the Treasurer said in his budget speech on Tuesday, we don't live in an economy; we live in a community.

A community is made stronger by the investment we put into healthcare, jobs, education, community safety, and transport infrastructure.

I thank the Treasurer and the Premier for delivering on this budget, and commend the budget to the House.