



Speech By  
**Jessica Pugh**

**MEMBER FOR MOUNT OMMANEY**


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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 3)**

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**BETTING TAX AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms PUGH** (Mount Ommaney—ALP) (4.28 pm): I note that my speech will have some thematic similarities to the speech of the member for Hinchinbrook. It is a pleasure to rise to speak on the cognate debate. Today I will focus my contribution on the significant impact of the February floods in my community. Later in my contribution I will touch on the significant good works that the Gambling Community Benefit Fund has had in helping my community clubs recover from the floods. My community was really badly impacted in a number of ways by the floods in February. I can never thank enough the hundreds of volunteers and public servants for all they did during that terrible time for my community. Many community clubs were impacted, and I will certainly speak about that later, and hundreds of residents' homes were also very badly impacted.

Hundreds of residents in Oxley and Corinda in particular were displaced during the floods. For residents whose homes were inundated, some are still renting and are unable to return home. I would expect that members of the House would be familiar with the state-federal joint funded flood recovery fund. Over \$700 million has been allocated between both levels of government to help impacted home owners retrofit their homes to be more flood resilient—up to \$50,000 per home—or to raise their homes out of the floodwaters so that the next time the water comes through, their house is not in its path. For home owners who are interested, there is also the option of applying for buyback whereby the state and federal governments facilitate the purchase of the home. That purchase is conducted in my area by Brisbane City Council. In other cases it is facilitated by the local government in that particular district.

A few weeks ago the QRA, alongside some other departments, hosted a flood forum in my electorate at the Oxley Bowls Club, which was very badly inundated in February. They have had a remarkable recovery thanks to Vaneet and all of the volunteers there. Local residents were able to pre-book a time or walk in off the street between 12pm and 4pm. They had the opportunity to catch up with all kinds of support services, including mental health and pastoral care. They could get an update from QRA about where their application is up to and connect in with some of the other services that they might not have spoken to for a number of months since the floods in February.

The aim of this program—over \$700 million—is, simply put, to ensure that next time we have a rain event like the one we had in February there are far fewer homes in its path. Many people in my community have now been through two floods in just over a decade. Many of those residents have shared with me the mental health strain that experiencing those two events in fairly quick succession has put on them. Some residents in my community were actually around for the 1974 floods and remember that, too. We can only imagine that even the sound of rain to some of these residents can be really distressing.

This funding program gives them the options and the autonomy to have a real say in what they want to do with their home and their future. I recognise that some residents do not actually want to have their home bought back even though that is an option for them. We respect and recognise that. The good news is that we now have a set of criteria and a funding scheme designed for future natural disasters. Now that we have that criteria in place, we do not need to redesign that should another event occur.

I now turn to some of the smaller grants given out in this year's budget from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund. As I said, my clubs were heavily affected by the February floods because, rather than having houses constructed on this land, most are built on land that floods easily. The recovery periods have been fairly staggered, to put it mildly. Some have made an almost complete recovery; others are still really struggling months on. Thank goodness for the Gambling Community Benefit Fund, which has provided a huge boost to many of my flood-affected clubs. In round 114, several of my flood-impacted clubs received huge grants. I would love to share them with the House.

In February, Centenary Little Athletics lost all of their gear and equipment in the floods. It was really awful to have to throw it all away. The amazing volunteers at the club threw it all out quickly so that it did not fester. Grants officer James submitted a great application to replace the equipment and to upgrade the facility. The Centenary Little A's share their facility with the mighty Jindalee Jags. The Jags are a brilliant club. Their clubhouse was flooded as well. The federal member, Milton Dick, and I spent hours at the club helping hundreds of other volunteers clean the clubhouse after the floodwaters receded. They did a brilliant job of getting the clubhouse back up and running in record time. They have been flooded twice in the last 11 years—2011 and now—and some of their facilities desperately need an upgrade, especially the female changing rooms. I should mention that their female teams are phenomenal and regularly make the finals alongside their male counterparts.

I am beyond excited to share that they have received \$100,000 to upgrade their change facilities and make them more modern. Our Jaggies are a phenomenal club under the leadership of president Michael Rutch. They have done an amazing job in pushing through COVID and now these floods. I know that Michael would be the first, if he were here, to say that he is supported by lots of amazing volunteers like Dee, Bill and so many more. This funding will be a game changer for the club. I cannot wait to see the final outcome.

The Jindalee Bowls Club was absolutely smashed by the floods. Everything inside the clubhouse was wrecked. The management team did a wonderful job trying to salvage what they could. We tried to hose off the chairs and salvage whatever possible. They have received over \$67,000 to upgrade their building and purchase new equipment, because they did not get much out unfortunately. Milton Dick and I really loved using their hall. They had a huge hall. It was a really well used community facility. We used it for our annual Seniors Morning Tea. It has been a huge loss for the community because it was a regular meeting place for Probus clubs, seniors groups and lots of other community get-togethers. It was also home to the fabulous Centenary RSL and the Centenary Meals on Wheels. This hall cannot be rebuilt soon enough. That is why this \$67,000-odd will come in handy.

I say a special thankyou to the Centenary Salvos. They have taken on many of the regular tenants such as Jindalee Taekwondo and Centenary Meals on Wheels. My community has really pulled together and done its absolute best to get us all through a really tough year.

Just around the corner from the bowls club is the flooded Jindalee pool. Guess what! The Centenary Dolphins Swimming Pool received \$71,024.99 for equipment. The club has done such a great job promoting the benefits of swimming and it has done an excellent job promoting and growing this lovely community-based club.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Ms PUGH:** A lot of clubs flooded; it was pretty awful. The Corinda Pony Club has been absolutely amazing, hosting flood recovery forums and catch-ups. It is a delight to see their community spirit rewarded with \$100,000 to upgrade their arena after the floods, because a lot of it washed away. When I contacted club member Jemima to give her the heads-up, she was beside herself with how this is going to benefit their members. They also lease out and share their facilities with other groups including Equus Terra, a riding club that supports young people with different needs to enjoy the pleasures of horseriding and all of the mental health and development benefits that come with it.

Of course, none of these grant applications would have ever been written or even remotely possible without the dedication of amazing club and school volunteers—our coaches, referees and grant writers. I take a moment to recognise the work that has been put in by our volunteer club presidents and their teams of committee members and helpers. I will name just a few: Russell, Helen and Claire from Oxley United, whose AGM I am attending tonight via Zoom—thank you, Zoom; Bill and

Wayne and the gang from Jindalee Jags; Simon, Belinda and the Stormers team; Stacey, Amanda and the team at the Centenary Dolphins; and the lovely girls down at the pony club, Jemima, Di, Christine and Brenda.

There was one more grant: Mount Ommaney Special School received \$39,847.50 for a facility upgrade. It just could not go to a more deserving school. The last word has to go to the Centenary State High School students, who wrote their grant application as a gift to the school for a shade sail for around \$30,000. They received the grant, which they applied for themselves. They will give that as a gift to the school. I commend the bill to the House.