




Speech By
Lance McCallum

MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2)

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 **Mr McCALLUM** (Bundamba—ALP) (4.23 pm): It is certainly a pleasure to rise and follow the tour de force of nonsensical 'econo babble' from the member for Buderim. I look forward to his support when it comes to voting for these bills before the House.

I too rise in support of the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2021 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2021 because we are delivering a plan for Queensland's economic recovery as we emerge from the Omicron wave. From job creation to economic growth and retail sales, Queensland is leading the nation. Unforeseen expenditure, which is the subject of these bills, is expenditure from the Consolidated Fund above the amount approved through prior appropriation. Unforeseen expenditure can occur occasionally for any number of reasons, including natural disasters, weather events or emergent issues, new decisions and the implementation of government policies made during the year, a change in the timing of Commonwealth payments or accelerated project delivery, including pulling forward capital spending.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) seeks supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Legislative Assembly in the 2020-21 financial year of \$1,795,000. This unforeseen expenditure was primarily due to additional services, costs associated with the 2020 state election and additional service delivery.

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2021 seeks supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred in the 2020-21 financial year by six departments of \$447,456,000. The majority or 87.8 per cent of that expenditure arises from three departments. The Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs contributed \$114,247,000 due to the increased demand for out-of-home care services in the child protection system. The Department of Justice and Attorney-General contributed \$188,940,000. The Queensland Fire and Emergency Services contributed \$91,179,000, primarily for the COVID-19 response for quarantine accommodation costs, logistics and border control activities, additional firefighters and aerial firefighting costs. This unforeseen expenditure is less than half the amount incurred in the 2019-20 financial year, representing just 0.74 per cent of total appropriations. That is below the LNP peak of unforeseen expenditure of 0.94 per cent of appropriations in 2013-14 and it is below the state average of the past decade, which is 1.88 per cent.

While there has been unforeseen expenditure totalling \$449,251,000, another 17 departments had underspends totalling \$1,432,802,000. That is not reported in the bills currently before the House, but it has been published in the Consolidated Fund Financial Report. These instances are typically represented when funds for a program have not been spent in the year in which it was anticipated they would be spent. The net impact is that the total appropriation in 2020-21 is almost \$1 billion less than is reported in the 2020-21 budget.

That means that Queensland's economic recovery continues to lead the nation out of the pandemic. It underscores the economic benefits and jobs growth that come with our strong health response. We have avoided the long lockdowns that have occurred in other states and our economy has gone from strength to strength since the budget was delivered last June. That fact is borne out in the recent 2021-22 budget update. On almost every metric, Queensland is either outperforming the national average or is the best state in its own right. Revenues are higher and our deficit and debt are lower than had been forecast. Our economic growth is expected to strengthen further to 3.25 per cent in this financial year, which is stronger than the original forecast of 2.75 per cent.

Year average employment growth is forecast to strengthen to 4.5 per cent, which is well above the three per cent forecast originally. That will be the strongest employment growth in 15 years. The deficit for 2021-22 is expected to be \$1.492 billion or thereabouts, which is less than half the \$3.485 billion forecast at the budget. Our budget is in a stronger position in each subsequent year of the forward estimates compared to the 2021-22 budget, with a return to surplus still forecast in 2024-25. Net debt is expected to be \$7.2 billion lower than was forecast.

In 2021, our economic growth was faster than the national average. Our economy grew by 6.1 per cent while Australia's economy grew by 3.9 per cent. Household consumption in Queensland grew by 2.9 per cent in the last quarter, which was one-and-a-half times faster than the rest of Australia. Private investment in our state grew by 4.6 per cent, while the national average grew by just 0.8 per cent. Business investment in Queensland grew by 4.9 per cent, compared with 0.8 per cent nationally. Our economy is 6.4 per cent larger than it was pre-COVID whereas the national economy is just 0.1 per cent larger.

We have added more jobs than any other state or territory since March 2020, with 124,300 more Queenslanders in jobs today than there were pre COVID. January labour force data from the ABS underlines the strength of the Palaszczuk government's economic recovery plan for Queensland. We have recorded the highest growth in employment in Australia and the largest fall in unemployment of any state. Our unemployment rate is now at its lowest level since December 2008, dropping by 0.3 per cent to just 4.4 per cent. We continued to defy expectations of an Omicron downturn, creating 17,400 jobs in January 2022. Australia would have gone backwards without Queensland, given employment increased by just 12,900 across the nation. The participation rate rose by 0.2 per cent to 66.4 per cent, above the national average. This is thanks to our world-leading health response which allowed our economy to stay open until Queenslanders had sufficient access to vaccination.

Since we were first elected, the Palaszczuk government has seen the creation of more than 1,000 jobs, on average, every single week for seven years. That is 376,800 new jobs under Labor. We continue to follow the path we have charted to recovery, ensuring Queensland is in the best possible position for the rest of 2022 and beyond.

Locally, we have so many highlights. Neogen, a world-leading food safety giant, is consolidating its Australian operations from Victoria to our local community in Bundamba and building an \$11 million genomic centre that will help primary producers grow and breed the best produce and livestock. This means more local jobs and a workforce of about 50 which will grow to more than 75 over the coming years. We have another 250 local jobs being supported at the biggest Australia Post parcel facility in the country in our local community at Redbank. It is just one business in our rapidly growing Redbank Motorway Estate that right now is providing jobs to over 2,000 people.

As my colleague the member for Jordan mentioned, Ipswich will become home to Australia's first hydrogen fuel cell manufacturing facility. Lavo hydrogen technology will build a \$15 million facility in Springfield, backed by our Invested in Queensland program. We are also investing in local manufacturing, with Australian Water Engineers at Riverview receiving a \$100,000 grant under our Made in Queensland program to secure new equipment that enables more work to be done locally instead of overseas.

In conclusion, this bill continues to deliver on our plan for Queensland's safe and strong economic recovery. We are leading the nation as we emerge from the Omicron wave. Our economy is growing quickly. Jobs are up. Business investment is up. I commend the bills to the House.