



Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard


MEMBER FOR NUDGE

Record of Proceedings, 24 June 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for Children and Youth Justice and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (12.55 pm): Budgets are an expression of what a government values and this budget is about people. It is about Queenslanders. It is about good jobs, better services and an investment in the lifestyle we love and value dearly as Queenslanders. There is record health investment for three new hospitals, 11 hospital expansions, 2,500 extra beds and 9,475 extra health staff. There is \$1.6 billion for mental health services over the next five years. There is \$390 million to build five new schools, money for additional and renewed infrastructure and \$20 million to upgrade school playgrounds and tuckshops. These are all welcome investments in delivering the quality health and education services Queenslanders expect.

It is the investment in my own portfolio of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs that truly gets to the heart of what this budget values most—people. This year, we are investing in a record budget that recognises two of the most important jobs that our government has: protecting vulnerable children and young people and building stronger and safer communities. Some \$2.2 billion over five years and \$500 million per annum ongoing for out-of-home care services has been allocated in this budget to respond to what has been a significant and sustained increase in demand in the child protection system since COVID commenced. We are seeing hopeful signs that the increase in demand is slowing, but my department will always be there to provide a child with a safe place when they need it, regardless of the circumstances or the cost.

My \$2.3 billion budget this financial year represents an increase in funding across all three of my portfolio responsibilities and, as I mentioned in this House yesterday, includes an historic commitment to extend support to young people leaving care to the age of 21. We are making a \$400,000 commitment to co-design, establish and review the extension of the availability of the foster care allowance by two years for carers of young people who remain living with them up to the age of 21. We will also be funding culturally appropriate non-government case worker support and financial support for young people leaving non-family based care from 18 up to the age of 21.

This reform was called for by young people and our government listened. Now it will be designed by young people, for young people and will commence from 1 July 2023. This will be life changing for so many young people—roughly 700 every year. I warmly acknowledge Create Foundation, their young consultants and so many stakeholders across our sector for their tireless advocacy for this reform. It has truly been my privilege to deliver it.

This budget also includes increased funding of \$75.3 million towards implementing our Youth Justice Strategy reforms, including an expansion of the number of locations from eight to 14 for the statewide multiagency collaborative panels. These panels work across government agencies, including

police, education, health and housing, to reduce youth offending. We are also continuing our investment in Indigenous youth and family workers and family-led decision-making, the Mount Isa transitional hub, and our co-responder teams across the state, who work tirelessly with at-risk youth to keep our community safe.

Some \$3 million has also been allocated in this budget for a community partnership innovation grant scheme to partner with local communities on crime prevention projects. Local communities are often the first to identify when a young person starts to disengage and these grants are about honouring that knowledge in, and partnering with, local communities to support and divert young people from the youth justice system.

We are also investing \$16.2 million to continue to deliver on the whole-of-government Queensland Multicultural Action Plan to ensure equitable access to job opportunities and services for all Queenslanders, migrants and refugees from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. We have also allocated \$1.1 million over four years and \$170,000 ongoing to support and engage with the Australian South Sea islander community—a community with a rich history and culture and a community that has made a significant economic contribution to our state. I look forward to working alongside QUASSIC, the state body, and QUASSIC president Clacy to ensure that this investment delivers on what the community has been hoping and calling for.

In my own electorate of Nudgee, I warmly welcome the doubling in funding to Zillmere Community Centre—what would we do without our local neighbourhood centres? I thank the education minister Grace Grace for the funding to upgrade the Earnshaw State College tuckshop and refurbish two new learning spaces. As well, there is funding to extend the outside school hours care service and facility at Boondall State School—delivering on my election commitment. I am excited to announce funding to deliver a master plan for Virginia State School as principal Tania Abel, the P&C and I work closely with Education Queensland to create a standalone performing arts and instrumental music space. Mrs Mac, watch this space!

I also thank the transport minister Mark Bailey for the significant investment in our Banyo station upgrade and intersection improvements on Sandgate Road at Cameron Street, Northgate Road and at the intersection of Hamilton Road and Bilson Road to enhance safety in my local community. There are so many announcements; these are but a few. I look forward to delivering on these commitments in the year ahead.