



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Enoch**

**MEMBER FOR ALGESTER**


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Record of Proceedings, 24 June 2022

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algester—ALP) (Minister for Communities and Housing, Minister for Digital Economy and Minister for the Arts) (2.21 pm): I am very proud to be the member for Algester and very happy to see this year's budget deliver for my local community. As a former teacher and a parent, I am particularly focused on the great outcomes for schools across the Algester electorate delivered in this year's budget. The 2022-23 budget includes over \$18 million for school infrastructure in the Algester electorate, supporting the Palaszczuk government's commitment to good jobs and better services for our community. This includes \$13.5 million out of a \$20.2 million total spend to construct a new building for additional learning spaces at Calamvale Special School and \$4.1 million of a nearly \$15.9 million commitment to additional classrooms at Pallara State School. I am also pleased to see the budget investing more than \$1.5 million into the Browns Plains TAFE and Acacia Ridge TAFE for ongoing maintenance and training infrastructure, supporting the jobs of the future.

Investment in health care and cohesive, connected communities is at the heart of this budget. Algester residents will benefit from significant health commitments, including \$530 million for a further expansion of Logan Hospital, a \$465 million investment to expand QEII Hospital and \$1 million to improve the quality and coverage of digital infrastructure in the Logan City Council area.

As Minister for Communities, I am absolutely thrilled to see this budget deliver a record investment to build capacity and expand our network of 127 state government funded neighbourhood and community centres across Queensland, with a record investment of \$115.8 million over four years. This includes \$51.8 million to support the single largest boost to neighbourhood and community centre operational funding ever. This includes a nearly \$124,000 funding uplift for the belong community centre at Acacia Ridge in the Algester electorate—to \$250,000 in 2022-23. The staff and volunteers at belong do such important work, supporting some of the most vulnerable members of our community and combatting a range of local concerns, including social isolation and loneliness.

At the heart of our support for some of our most vulnerable Queenslanders is the community and social services sector. It is a sector that people turn to when times are tough or when they need a helping hand. I am delighted that the 2022-23 state budget includes a significant investment of \$125.6 million over four years to strengthen the community and social services sector. Thanks to our \$115.8 million boost to the neighbourhood and community centre sector over four years, each of the 127 state government funded NCCs across Queensland will receive base operational funding of at least \$230,000 per year. This is a significant increase from the current minimum base funding of \$124,000 and it means a great deal to these neighbourhood and community centres.

In the seat of Hill, for instance—and I know the member for Hill is a strong advocate for the five centres across his electorate—this uplift will deliver a boost of nearly \$524,000. In the member for Burdekin's electorate, six neighbourhood centres will share an operational funding boost of more than \$680,000. The Lockyer and Laidley community centres in the member for Lockyer's seat will receive a combined boost of more than \$212,000 thanks to this year's budget. In the member for South Brisbane's electorate, West End Community House and the East Brisbane Community Centre will receive a combined boost of nearly \$190,000. This government is delivering for all Queenslanders wherever they might be, even in the bush.

Our Far-North communities will not miss out, with seven centres across the member for Cook's electorate sharing a combined operational funding boost of more than \$801,000. Of the \$115.8 million boost to NCCs over four years, there is also \$9.3 million to expand the neighbourhood and community connect worker program to 20 workers in areas of greatest need. We have also committed \$39 million to build new neighbourhood and community centres or undertake significant refurbishments at existing centres and a further \$9 million to undertake capital upgrades at existing neighbourhood and community centres.

In addition to our support for neighbourhood and community centres, the state budget includes further funding for us to act on the recommendations from the inquiry into social isolation and loneliness. I want to acknowledge the member for Mansfield, the chair of the committee that oversaw that inquiry, as well as all members of that committee. This includes \$4 million over four years for a new innovation fund that will support community-led responses to local issues, with a focus on responding to the causes and impacts of social isolation and loneliness. There is also \$2.1 million to support the further development of plans and initiatives to address social isolation and loneliness. This includes the development of training and resources to support workers and volunteers in the community and social services sector.

This year's state budget is also delivering a landmark investment of \$115.5 million over four years into Queensland's arts sector and cultural infrastructure. This includes a \$50 million new investment over four years to support the delivery of Grow 2022-2026, the second action plan of the whole-of-government Creative Together 10-year road map.

We are now 12 months into the Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2021-2025, which is a four-year plan for the next stage of the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027. We are investing \$2.9 billion over four years to underpin the action plan. This is the largest concentrated investment in social and affordable housing in Queensland's history.

There are those, including the member for South Brisbane, who have tried to say that the government has reduced our expenditure commitment for social housing. This is not correct. Obviously, the member for South Brisbane and her colleagues struggle to understand how to read a budget properly, but let me be very clear. Funding for building more social housing has not been reduced. The \$1.813 billion Queensland Housing Investment Growth Initiative is a four-year rolling program, and this investment remains unchanged. The impacts of COVID-19, mass migration into our great state, workforce and building supply chain shortages, and consecutive flooding events have all presented significant challenges to the construction industry, and we are not immune to these impacts. However, the department remains on track to deliver its targets and they have not changed either.

I also take exception to the comments that were made last night by the member for Oodgeroo in relation to homelessness services funding in the Redlands and bayside Wynnum area. They are not just incorrect; they are inflammatory and I find them personally offensive. The truth of the matter is that in September 2021, in response to the need for an ongoing service and in accordance with the Queensland procurement policy, the government released an open tender for a supplier to deliver outreach access and mobile support services in the Redlands and Brisbane, bayside Wynnum, local government areas.

The successful tenderer was evaluated as the provider who could deliver the best quality and value for money service that met the requirements of the tender. These are decisions made by the department based on the merits of applications received. The idea that the member for Oodgeroo would want us to somehow break those rules, to literally break the law, to meet his bizarre outlook of the world is quite astonishing. The inference—

**Dr Robinson** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Martin): Order! Member for Oodgeroo will cease his interjections. If you continue, you will be warned.

**Ms ENOCH:** The inference that there was any interference from Labor members is completely untrue, and I will be writing to the Speaker about this matter. It is absolutely disgusting.

**Dr Robinson** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Pause the clock! Member for Oodgeroo, you are warned under the standing orders. I would like to hear the rest of the contribution from the member for Algester without any further interjections.

**Ms ENOCH:** This week, the Premier announced that this government will deliver an immediate housing response package backed by a \$16 million investment in services and supports to help families secure or sustain a home. The immediate housing response package will help house families who are living in insecure or unsafe situations. This immediate housing response package will be delivered alongside our current efforts to boost longer term housing supply through our historic \$2.9 billion investment in social and affordable housing in Queensland. We are also engaging with the market to explore all opportunities to deliver more supply to support our traditional construction program and make social homes available sooner which is why, as I announced earlier this week, we will be making an initial call for up to 50 factory-built homes this year to pilot this approach. As a government, we are working hard to respond to the pressures of the housing market, and our \$16 million immediate housing response package adds to our commitment.

The Palaszczuk government's commitment to boosting housing supply and increasing housing and homelessness supports across Queensland remains as strong as ever. The work of the department to support people on the social housing register is non-stop. We know that the COVID-19 pandemic created challenges for many Queenslanders, particularly families, and our priority during the pandemic was to provide stability and support for social housing tenants.

We also know that as we emerge from the pandemic, some people's circumstances have changed along with their housing needs. Over the past 12 months, my department has contacted 98 per cent of households on the social housing register to check on their wellbeing and housing needs. They have reported that a staggering 21 per cent were either uncontactable, were being assisted by the portfolio with other forms of support for stable accommodation, or were no longer in need of social housing. Right now we need the social housing register to be the sharpest instrument possible to ensure that we are able to identify those who are in greatest need, and I have asked the department to focus their energy on just that.

Many people on the social housing register are also supported in a number of ways. There is a suite of other products that we provide to help keep a roof over their heads. Social housing is not the only form of assistance. In fact, in 2020-21 there were more than 205,000 forms of housing assistance provided to Queensland households or individuals, including emergency housing, private market assistance and various other services. In total, we will increase the social and affordable housing supply by almost 10,000 over the life of the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027. I want to acknowledge the former housing minister, Minister de Brenni, who initiated that strategy.

We have a proven track record with 4,153 new social and affordable homes already commenced across Queensland since the Palaszczuk government came to office in 2015. We have been working diligently to improve housing outcomes for Queenslanders. We remain on track to reach our target of commencing 727 new homes by the end of this financial year.

This budget is a budget for all of Queensland, and we continue to see it as a budget that will deliver not only in housing but also in our neighbourhood and community centres and for the arts.

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

*The speech read as follows—*

Importantly, our program of work also creates jobs across the construction industry and supports the state's economic recovery.

This is not just bricks and mortar—these are safe, affordable, and stable homes for Queenslanders.

We also have a lot to be proud of as we enter the second year of rolling out our four-year strategy—backed by historic investment.

We've delivered a new 40-unit Youth Foyer on the Gold Coast after the success of the Logan Youth Foyer. We are building another one in Townsville which will provide 40 new homes for our young people who need it most.

We are investing \$14 million in our Housing Older Women Strategy to co-design new homes and deliver specialised support services for older women, including a new housing support hub and advisory group.

We've launched our Help to Home initiative. This program is designed to encourage investors sitting on vacant properties to sign up to a government headlease.

It incentivises private investors to sign up with a guaranteed lease for two years and three months' rent in advance paid each quarter.

Help to Home will mean 1,000 more housing solutions for vulnerable Queenslanders.

We've delivered Stage 1 rental law reforms and are committed to Stage 2 reforms to strengthen the rental sector.

We've ensured over 3,000 Queenslanders experiencing homelessness received longer term housing outcomes during COVID-19.

We've delivered 4 new and 4 replacement crisis shelters for women and children escaping domestic and family violence.

In 2022-23, over \$160 million has been committed to continue investment to provide housing, support, and specialist homelessness services to vulnerable people, including older women and those experiencing domestic and family violence.

This funding is allowing us to provide many forms of homelessness supports as well as pathways to longer-term, sustainable housing.

It includes specific service responses for people experiencing, and at risk of, homelessness and women and families experiencing domestic and family violence.

This year's State Budget also includes an investment of \$29.8 million over four years to support initiatives to specifically assist young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness in Queensland.

We are committed to helping young Queenslanders experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness to find safe, secure, and affordable housing.

This significant funding commitment in the State Budget complements our efforts to assist young people to overcome challenges they might experience in obtaining housing and sets them on a pathway to achieve their social and economic independence.

And the work we are doing extends right across government, because we understand how important these issues are.

In partnership with the private sector, the Treasurer has overseen Queensland's Build-to-Rent initiative, which is delivering 750 new dwellings specifically for the rental market.

Our \$1 billion Housing Investment Fund, the first of its kind, is already delivering for Queensland.

Recently the Treasurer, Minister D'Ath and I announced 118 new social and affordable homes to be built on Brisbane's north side.

The Treasurer has also announced that a further 1,200 new social and affordable homes will be delivered through a partnership with Brisbane Housing Company.

This is just the beginning for our \$1 billion investment through our Housing Investment Fund.

And on top of this, a few weeks ago, the Deputy Premier announced \$200 million to unlock land supply and make housing more affordable.

This new funding will boost land supply and deliver more affordable housing outcomes for Queenslanders.

Mr Speaker, the arts connect us, strengthen our communities, and deliver significant economic outcomes for our state.

The Palaszczuk Government has backed accelerated growth of the state's arts sector with new investment of \$50 million over four years to support the delivery of Grow 2022-2026, the second action plan of the whole-of-government Creative Together ten-year roadmap.

We are entering a transformational period in Queensland as we work to prepare for and embrace the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympics and the opportunity and legacy it creates for Queenslanders.

We will elevate First Nations arts to ensure Brisbane 2032 will be a true celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures.

New investment will help us grow Queensland's reputation for exceptional First Nations performing and visual arts, the sharing of Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' stories through the commissioning of new work and building robust supply chains to deliver economic outcomes for First Nations peoples and communities.

It will also boost the State's cultural experience economy by supporting the most talented Queensland artists and companies to make and present their work in Queensland and on a global stage.

Additionally, investment of \$2 million in 2022-23 will support QPAC to develop and showcase First Nations talent and stories, and enable QPAC to engage wider audiences across the state through digital initiatives that extend its reach beyond its theatre walls.

We're also investing \$63.1 million over four years to support critical infrastructure asset upgrades and maintenance works, and enhancements to security and access at the Queensland Cultural Centre; and \$400,000 in 2022-23 to develop a 10-year strategic plan for the acquisition and storage of the state collection.

Mr Speaker, the 2022-23 State Budget has a strong focus on supporting Queenslanders and our communities—particularly those who are vulnerable or need a helping hand.

Through our record investment in housing, neighbourhood and community centres, the Arts and healthcare, the Palaszczuk Labor Government is supporting and delivering for Queenslanders.