



Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon


MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 24 June 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (12.49 pm): I rise to speak in support of this good Labor budget. I have been listening to the contributions of Liberal National Party members over the last two days. It is very clear that they have no new ideas and no solutions—just vibes. All we have heard is them stick up for their multinational and coal company mates. So that leaves the question: what would they do if they were elected? We have seen it all before. All they know how to do is cut frontline services, sack nurses and sell assets.

I will start with health. This budget delivers: \$1.3 billion for a new hospital in Coomera; a 114-bed expansion at Robina Hospital; and another \$16.5 million commitment for a 20-bed transit lounge at Robina. I heard the contribution of the member for Bonney yesterday who reckons there was nothing new in the budget for his electorate. I know that those opposite do not have a lot of experience with handing down budgets, but I would have thought that at least by this stage they would know how to read one. We have a summarised version with lots of pictures in it—and I have highlighted it for the benefit of those opposite—that shows there are new upgrades in the member for Bonney's electorate which he seems to have missed.

There is a \$72 million commitment for a 70-bed expansion at the Gold Coast University Hospital which is scheduled to be completed next year. This is in addition to the 40-bed mental health rehabilitation unit, construction of which will start soon. This is in addition to the mental health stabilisation clinic that we recently opened at Robina. This is in addition to the Tugun Satellite Hospital that we committed to. Both of these are election commitments that the LNP refused to match at the last election. The only election commitment that those opposite made was for a planning study—it was not to build a hospital. If those opposite do not support the sensible revenue measures that have been put forward, then they either do not support a new hospital on the northern Gold Coast or they will do what they did last time they were in government—they will sack nurses again.

Speaking of sacking frontline workers, let us talk about the hypocrisy from those opposite when it comes to the management of national parks. This year's budget will deliver a 37 per cent increase to the operational budget of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service budget compared to that of the Newman government. I am happy to stand up here every day of the week and compare our track record to that of those opposite. They said they were going to be different this term and support good ideas, but they cannot even find anything good to say about the \$262 million investment in national parks. Maybe they missed what some of the leading groups have had to say—groups like the Queensland Conservation Council which said—

This investment is the greatest investment in national parks in our state's history.

We know the shadow environment spokesperson likes to get out to national parks like K'gari—Fraser Island—to post happy snaps and meet with Indigenous land and sea rangers, but those opposite refused to fund those very positions at the election. I am not surprised because he is a member of a political party whose deputy leader threw a ridiculous Twitter tantrum, refusing to respect the wishes of the traditional owners on K'gari by saying that he would keep calling it Fraser Island despite what the 'woke' Annastacia Palaszczuk says. That is the LNP's approach to the environment and to the traditional owners of this country.

The member for Bonney can post whatever he wants online—and I did enjoy seeing him posing with Arundel State School students and the equipment we bought for them recently through the organics grants. But, ultimately, he is a member of the Liberal National Party—the party that turned Queensland into Australia's dumping ground. I did note the change of heart by the Leader of the Opposition and his new-found support for our record \$2.1 billion waste package. I thank him for that change of heart. Although, clearly, the member for Bonney was not listening to his leader as intently as I was because just a few hours later he came in here and said the opposite of what the Leader of the Opposition said. He suggested that this budget gives no clarity and does not have a clear path. I do not know how much more clear we can be than providing a decade of certainty, upfront payments for councils—they are already out the door—funding for industry and funding for regional waste plans. I table a number of regional waste plans for the benefit of the House. There is a number of them here that we are working on with regional councils.

Tabled paper: Queensland Government report titled 'Respecting Country: A sustainable waste strategy for First Nation communities', April 2021 [945](#).

Tabled paper: Council of Mayors South East Queensland report titled 'SEQ Waste Management Plan: Final report 2021' [946](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Government report titled 'Queensland Organics Strategy 2022-2032: A strategy to improve the management of organic materials along the organics supply and consumption chain' [947](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Government report titled 'Keeping Queensland Clean: The Litter and Illegal Dumping Plan' [948](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Government report titled 'Tackling plastic waste: Queensland's Plastic Pollution Reduction Plan' [949](#).

Tabled paper: Queensland Government report titled 'Waste Management and Resource Recovery Strategy' [950](#).

I do agree with one comment that the opposition environment spokesperson made: climate change is the greatest challenge our environment is facing.

Ms McMillan interjected.

Ms SCANLON: I take the member's interjection. The rest of his party certainly does not acknowledge that. I am pleased that we now have a federal Labor government that takes this issue seriously and will work with us and not against us when it comes to investment in renewable energy.

We have in this budget a \$32 million investment to community groups and community organisations to reduce emissions and bolster our climate team. Of course, we remember that when those opposite were in power they axed the office of climate change and went to the last election saying that they would entirely reduce our emissions reduction targets and renewable energy targets altogether. They want a plan, but they do not want to set their own plan or their own emissions reduction targets, which is interesting.

I could go on and outline all of the failures of the LNP on the environment until I am blue or green in the face, but we do not have the time. Ultimately, I conclude by saying that I am incredibly proud of the investment we are making in this budget for the environment, for the Gold Coast and for my electorate.

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

The speech read as follows—

We're continuing to deliver for roads and rail thanks to this budget.

We've got funding for the second M1, after those opposite blocked it when they were in government.

This budget will continue to see construction move ahead on a \$1 billion M1 upgrade between Varsity Lakes and Tugun, as well as critical upgrades to intersection at exits 41 and 49.

As well as progress on three new train stations on the Gold Coast funded entirely by the Palaszczuk Government.

Together with Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3.

And a trial in my community of on-demand public transport.

This was a commitment I made at the last election, and now locals living within the Nerang West, Highland Park and Pacific Pines areas can be picked up at a time that suits them—either from their home or a pick-up point near their home and be taken to key shopping or transport hubs.

It'll provide critical funding for the \$4.9 million Beaudesert-Nerang and Maudsland roads intersection, where work is about to commence.

And it secures funding for the Yalkuri Drive and Beaudesert-Nerang Road intersection upgrade, again a key election commitment.

This critical road funding will join millions for education, like:

- Our \$5 million for the Nerang State High School Performing Arts upgrade
 - \$250,000 new outdoor learning area near Block E
- Share the dignity vending machines, which will now be available to all state schools in our community

It provides additional funding for the Nerang Neighbourhood Centre and for vulnerable Queenslanders experiencing homelessness.

Speaker, I want to conclude by touching on what this budget means for young people.

Having the privilege of being Youth Affairs Minister, I've heard the stories and issues that matter to young people right across our state.

As I speak with young Queenslanders they have made their voices clear that they want a government that will tackle the challenges of mental health, youth homelessness, equitable access to sanitary products, the transition for those coming out of care and closing the gap.

This week, the Palaszczuk government delivers a budget that focuses on addressing the issues that matter to not just all Queenslanders but also to our youngest cohort.

I spoke earlier about the record investment in hospitals and beds for the Gold Coast and Queensland.

It equally addresses the complex experiences of mental health, with a record \$1.6 billion to support Queenslanders experiencing mental ill health, including addiction.

It will give greater support and access to young Queenslanders who are struggling with mental ill health.

Headspace reports one in four young people experience some kind of mental ill health.

Beyond Blue reports that 75 per cent of mental health issues occur for many people before the age of 25.

Experiences with mental health are wide and varied, as are the circumstances, causes and stresses.

And this investment will respond with a holistic approach.

These issues are complex, and the solutions are not always quick and simple.

The courage for government to admit that is no small thing, but we owe it to those courageous Queenslanders who came forward asking for help.

It has always been Labor governments that take on hard reforms for the most vulnerable.

And this is one of them.

We'll support them with almost \$30 million to tackle youth homelessness, building on the work this government has already done around making housing more affordable and accessible including our announcement this week of up to 1200 new social homes.

It's hard to get a job, attend school and have every chance to succeed in life, if you don't have a safe, secure home.

Which is why this funding is so important.

It continues the record funding that we've locked in with \$2.9 billion committed to build more affordable housing.

That's \$1.9 billion to increase social housing stock, and \$1 billion for the Housing Investment Fund.

I've been fortunate to see the benefits of this government's investment into affordable housing already with youth foyers in Logan and the Gold Coast.

And I look forward to this vital funding helping young people experiencing homelessness.

As well as helping young people gain the skills they need to get a good job and have a great lifestyle.

There's \$1.2 billion in this budget for skills and training, with a \$100 million boost that builds on our commitment to free TAFE for under-25-year-olds.

Funded by seeking a fair share from companies that have recorded profits from Queensland.

Funding will also go towards \$15.5 million to expand consent education.

It was also pleasing to hear my colleague Minister Linard announce help for young adults transition out of care by extending support up to the age of 21, as well as expanding foster care payments.

Because Speaker, only Labor governments will deliver better health, better education, good jobs, great lifestyle and represent all Queenslanders, including our most vulnerable.