



Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon


MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 10 November 2022

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 3)

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BETTING TAX AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (4.17 pm): I rise to speak in support of the bills. I follow the member for Currumbin who spoke absolute nonsense about GPs. Clearly she was not listening yesterday to the responses of the health minister and the Treasurer on the fact that the law has been applied in the same way since 2008.

There has also been a lot of ranting and raving about the alleged overspend in the Department of Environment and Science, particularly from the members for Scenic Rim, Ninderry and Condamine. In his speech, the Treasurer made it very clear that that overspend can be entirely attributed to the \$672 million to deliver annual payments upfront to councils. Those payments were made to provide support to local governments and to provide surety to them going forward.

We know that those opposite do not like listening to anyone on this side of the House but I would have thought they would listen to their own leader who, in his budget reply speech, said—

I said when I became Leader of the Opposition that I would always give credit where it is due and so I place on the record my acknowledgement of the \$2.1 billion, 10-year transition strategy for the waste levy. Without this, local governments face the real prospect of higher costs and worsening environmental outcomes for an industry that can create jobs and deliver wins for the environment.

As always, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for acknowledging the good work that we on this side are doing. He might like to update his own members of parliament who clearly did not get the memo in their own speaking points.

This is a party that pretends it manages the economy but cannot even understand basic accounting or does not want local councils to receive these up-front payments. I suggest that the member for Scenic Rim, who got up in his contribution and criticised these payments, have a chat to local mayor Greg Christensen, who was absolutely instrumental in ensuring that this package delivered for communities across Queensland. It is a \$2.1 billion waste package that received the support of unlikely members in the community, people like CoMSEQ chair and Brisbane Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner, who said—

... funding package confirms the State's commitment to supporting this plan and delivering the infrastructure and behavioural change needed to divert waste from landfill and ensure SEQ is a clean and sustainable global destination ahead of the 2032 Games ... CoMSEQ thanks Minister Scanlon ...

CoMSEQ Waste Working Group chair Greg Christensen said that the collaboration will continue through the establishment of the joint project management office with the state government to drive the delivery of the waste management plan.

We also had peak council groups like the LGAQ welcoming the decision with numerous quotes from them. This payment not only provides up-front surety to those councils, but, in addition to that, we are funding regional waste plans across the state where we are working with council and industry on where the holes are in the system and how we can plug them. We are doing that with a \$1.1 million Recycling and Jobs Fund—something I know is a foreign concept to those opposite given that all they did in the waste space was just repeal the waste levy and turn Queensland into the dumping ground of the nation.

We are delivering real and meaningful reform. That is exactly what the appropriation bill does. It also provides funding for us to provide investment for recovery and reconstruction costs that arose from the most recent flooding events in summer and, of course, provides the mental health levy which was a key recommendation of the Mental Health Select Committee. I am very proud to be a part of a government that is investing \$1.6 billion in health to deliver better services that address issues such as mental health, addiction, substance abuse and suicide as well as important capital investment. As has been said, it will only impact the top one per cent of businesses here in Queensland, businesses like Coles, Woolworths, the Commonwealth Bank, Harvey Norman—the list goes on.

I am hardly surprised to hear those opposite speak against this, particularly when it comes to health care. We saw the bizarre motion on Tuesday where they were fixated on the name of satellite hospitals. These hospitals would not exist if those opposite were elected to government. This side of the House takes investment seriously and we make no apologies for investing in our healthcare system, whether that be investment in mental health or investment in infrastructure on the Gold Coast like our 114-bed expansion at Robina Hospital, our \$16.5 billion Robina Hospital emergency department expansion, the 75-bed expansion at Gold Coast University Hospital, the 40-bed secure mental health rehab unit at Gold Coast University Hospital, the \$4 million redevelopment of Southport Ambulance Station or the \$1.3 billion investment to deliver the 404-bed Coomera Hospital by 2027. Despite what the member for Coomera and the opposition get up and say in the media, it is only this government that is delivering the health infrastructure that Queenslanders need. All they committed to—

Mr Crandon: You are not serious.

Ms SCANLON: I am absolutely serious, member for Coomera.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): Member for Coomera, order!

Ms SCANLON: At the last election the only thing the LNP committed to was a \$4 million planning study. That was all the money they committed to for the entire Gold Coast—a growing population. There was no actual money for real infrastructure—just planning.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members to my left, order!

Ms SCANLON: Now they have the nerve to criticise the fact that not only are we delivering health infrastructure in Coomera but we are planning—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera and member for Bonney, you are now warned under the standing orders.

Ms SCANLON: We are planning beyond that. I would have thought it would be welcomed by the opposition that we have a long-term vision for the Gold Coast. Once again, it is just fake outrage from those opposite.

Not only are we investing significantly but we acknowledge that we need to grow our workforce as well. As I mentioned yesterday, we have seen an 82 per cent increase in the health and hospital budget on the Gold Coast because we recognise that our health staff need the support and they need to continue to grow in a growing city like the Gold Coast. That is why we are investing significantly.

I support the appropriation bill. There is an enormous amount of important investment in here to deal with disaster recovery, to deal with the important need to address mental health and also to respond to the targets that we have set out in our waste agenda. I am pleased to see so much investment being rolled out across the state. In your community, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know that we have invested significantly in the Torres Strait to make sure that we can deal with scrap metals. We are investing significantly in schools across the state to deliver organics grants so that school students can learn how to deal with food and garden organic waste. We are also investing in urban composting facilities because we know that there is enormous opportunity there. Fifty per cent of people's general waste bin is made up of food and garden organics. We need to turn that into a product rather than have it ending up in landfill, creating harmful methane emissions.

It is this government that has delivered the policy reform needed through changes in the waste levy—a levy that we are proud of because it is delivering the objective it set out to achieve, being the reduction in the amount of waste going to landfill in both the C&I and C&D sector. Now we are focused on tackling that household waste problem. I acknowledge the incredible work that councils have also been doing across the state and the collaborative style they have taken in engaging with government to land on what I think is a sensible solution. Clearly, it is a sensible solution because it was backed in by the Leader of the Opposition despite the rest of his party seeming to oppose it today in parliament. I am very proud of the investment that we are making.

A government member: They must not have read the memo.

Ms SCANLON: I take the member's interjection. They must not have read the memo, or someone who was writing the speaking points clearly was not paying enough attention to the Leader of the Opposition. I commend the bills to the House.