



Speech By
Michael Crandon


MEMBER FOR COOMERA

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 3)

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BETTING TAX AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (3.23 pm): I will do my utmost. I am going to stick with the Appropriation Bill (No. 3). The report makes some comments around the report and the overspend. While I have this opportunity and so I do not forget, I want to thank the secretariat for the hard work they do. As we all know, their work is outstanding. They pull these reports together for us. Sometimes they are very urgent reports that have to be pulled together, and they do such a fine job in that regard.

In relation to keeping things civilised, I note that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads is unwell and is unable to be with us today. In fact, he was going to be at the same table as me at the P&Cs Queensland 75th jubilee luncheon, and that would have been a great opportunity for us to have a chat off the record. I acknowledge that we have several P&Cs Queensland delegates in the gallery as we speak, one of whom—and he is going to be embarrassed about this—is my son, Jason. I will be taking him for a wander around the precinct later. I will not go anywhere near the crane, I can assure you, Mr Clerk.

I want to focus on two particular areas. What we are talking about with the Appropriation Bill (No. 3) is an overspend of \$2.825 billion. A couple of million of that is the responsibility of the Clerk and Mr Speaker, but the other \$2.823 billion is all on the Treasurer's shoulders. I am going to focus on two particular areas: the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning, with an overspend of \$574 million in round figures; and the Department of Transport and Main Roads, with an overspend of just over \$330 million.

It really does seem sad that we have that sort of an overspend. One of the areas of the overspend was the Queensland Regional Accommodation Centre, which is affectionately known as Wellcamp to some and 'Wastecamp' to others. That is in the order of \$200 million plus, so 40 per cent of the overspend from infrastructure relates specifically, as I understand it, to the 'Wastecamp' facility. What we are talking about is unforeseen expenditure—

Mr Power interjected.

Mr CRANDON: I take that interjection from the member for Logan, who is the chair of the Economics and Governance Committee, because in the public hearings we were talking about the questions that I wanted to ask about how we could rectify some of the other overspends or some of the other interesting ways the Treasurer is managing the portfolio. For example, I saw going out to the forward estimates that funding for exit 49 has been pushed out beyond the completion date, with \$38 million—which is about a third of the funding—being pushed out to beyond the completion date. I

put a question to the transport minister in relation to that and he simply said that sometimes the figures do not match up. Well, that really does nail it because the figures do not match up here. We have a \$2.823 billion overspend.

This unforeseen expenditure leads me to a question. If it is possible to bring forward funds for projects, why would you not bring those funds forward for projects in the fastest growing region in Queensland? Everyone knows where that is. It is the state seat of Coomera and I will give the House a few statistics. There are 87,000 residents in the state seat of Coomera—and I see the Clerk smiling because he gets the information from me every month as it is updated for us—and over 51,000 voters. We know that and we have known that for a long time—in fact, since 2011—

Mr Lister: They're all racing to be represented by you. They all want to move to your electorate.

Mr CRANDON: That is exactly right. That is why they are moving into my electorate and moving out of everyone else's. We have the fastest growing region in Queensland with a massive number of the residents of the Coomera electorate living in Pimpama—something like a third of the residents—yet we have these issues with exit 49. The funding was made available in 2019 by both the federal government and the state government in the budget—so this is very relevant to this bill and the overspend in relation to this bill—but they have just started clearing the trees. We are almost in 2023 but they have not started any construction. They put up a few fences and they started clearing a few trees, but no construction has started.

Here we are, 3½ years down the track from early 2019, all of the funding was there and meant to be made available. That could have been fast-tracked. It is proof here that we could have brought funding forward for that. It is the fastest growing region in Queensland—Pimpama, a suburb in the Coomera electorate—yet that has been left stuck in the slow lane. I have often said it. By this time I would be getting a point of order from the transport minister on this; he would be asking what the relevance of it was. I have often called on him to fast-track this funding, yet it has not been done.

It goes beyond that. If you are going to bring funding forward to fast-track projects, why would you not do the project that is having a massive economic impact on the businesses in the Coomera electorate? Yet again, in the Yatala enterprise area, we have exit 38. Trucks are stuck in the slow lane trying to get on and off the M1 at exit 38 every day. In fact, it is seven days a week at exit 38. The business case was on the minister's desk at the end of 2018, and there has not been one dollar of funding, not one cracker, not a penny. Ask me how much that is? It is zero. There has been no funding whatsoever for exit 38 since then and there is still no funding in the 2022 budget. We do not even have a suggestion that we might look at some funding or look at some further project planning in the forward estimates. There is nothing there, not a cracker.

Traffic conditions on the northern Gold Coast is a diabolical mess. What do we have? We have a bandaid solution on exit 45, and I would like the minister to explain that to me as well. What we have is a \$20 million project that will be finished by the end of this year, just in the next couple of months, yet the funding, according to QTRIP, is pushed out for another two years beyond this current financial year. The funding for it is pushed out another two years. I think there might be somebody moving figures around just to try to make the books balance.

When we eventually get to it, we find they have to come back to the House and say, 'By the way, we have overspent \$2.83 billion on these projects and we need you to ratify them for us.' Okay, we will ratify it—it is an appropriate thing for us to ratify—but let me ask the Treasurer, let me ask the departments, let me ask in particular the Minister for Transport and Main Roads: if you are going to have an overspend, if you are going to bring funding forward which you have proven you can do, because there is something like \$330 million in TMR alone, put it towards the urgent projects. The most urgent projects, of course, are on the northern Gold Coast, the fastest growing region in Queensland.

I will stand here every day and fight hard for the people of the northern Gold Coast. I hope that eventually I will get through to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. If I do not, that is okay—October 2024 will be the time that we will make a total difference to the way things are handled in this state.