



Speech By  
**Adrian Tantari**

**MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY**

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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

### **APPROPRIATION BILL**

#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation Bill**

#### **Economics and Governance Committee, Report**

 **Mr TANTARI** (Hervey Bay—ALP) (12.39 pm): I rise to add my contribution to this debate on the Economics and Governance Committee estimates report. The recommendation of the committee, as we know, is that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the bill, be agreed to by this House.

The estimates hearing brought into focus the continuation of the great work being done by the Palaszczuk Labor government in leading Queensland through one of the most difficult periods in our collective memories. It highlighted the ongoing commitment of the Palaszczuk government in working to ensure the state of Queensland leverages its strong economic response by driving recovery in our fast-growing economy and, in doing so, by providing action on national cost of living throughout Queensland. It also gives me great pleasure to say that the EGC budget estimates report emphasises the strong leadership shown in our state by the Premier and her ministers. This clearly shone through in the estimates hearings and in the detail of the report we are debating, ensuring that the people of Queensland get a fair share from the natural resources that every man, woman and child own.

The Premier and ministers have delivered a budget that will be delivering better services for Queenslanders no matter where they live and, in particular, in regional Queensland, including the electorate of Hervey Bay, through planned expenditure on things that matter: more jobs, better infrastructure and great service programs needed for this time and well into our future.

The 2023-24 budget has delivered a record investment of \$8.2 billion in cost-of-living assistance packages to tackle the national cost of living to Queensland families and businesses and deliver improved services. As noted in the committee report amongst the many initiatives are continued support for the hosting of the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games, putting in place the procurement opportunities and benefits for all of Queensland, and in particular regional Queensland. Also included are initiatives to deliver better local health care by supporting hospital builds across Queensland, including Hervey Bay. Further initiatives highlighted by the Treasurer were extending the discounts on payroll tax for eligible regional employers, and extending the 50 per cent payroll tax rebate on the exempt wages of apprentices and trainees until the end of June 2024. These are all initiatives focusing on a timely response to our current economic situation with a clear understanding of the impact these times are having on the mums and dads managing a home budget and employers who run their local small businesses.

The opposition's statement of reservation contained in the report is again what we now normally expect from the other side of the House. Whilst the opposition has agreed to pass this excellent state budget, they continue to make no real contribution to the budget estimates process, with the opposition statement even making the outrageous statement that the government has not provided effective cost-of-living relief. If they had spent at least part of their time during estimates listening to the responses by the Premier, the Treasurer and the minister, they would have heard that a record \$8.2 billion in relief is being provided to Queensland families. I do not know about you, Deputy Speaker, but \$8.2 billion is not, as the opposition put it, little. What it is to those who need it most is making electricity bills more affordable, cutting costs for local small businesses, providing free kindy for all four-year-olds, increasing the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme and providing relief on the costs of many daily activities and providing critical food relief to many. This may seem little to those opposite, but to the people of Hervey Bay, their families and businesses, it means a lot.

The opposition's response to this estimates process is clear for all to see. Their sole focus was not on examining the budget; theirs was an exercise in ratcheting up fear within our communities. That is all it was. They showed no desire to highlight alternative policies, they showed no desire to make a better Queensland, and they showed little care about what their mistruths are doing to our state.

We know what the LNP did with their last budget when they were in power. They chose to cut vital services, sold everything they could get their hands on, and sacked thousands of frontline nurses, doctors and public servants. That is what you get under an LNP budget: cut, sell and sack. It will never be any different under them.

I must thank the chair, the member for Logan, for his patience and skill in managing to keep the estimates program and the opposition on track in the best interests of the people of Queensland. I thank our hardworking committee secretariat for their tireless work through this process.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that has targeted its budget on cost-of-living assistance, delivering more jobs, increasing health and education services and building new and improved infrastructure and housing that works to keep Queensland strong and that works to build a better Hervey Bay into the future. I support the recommendation before the House.