



Speech By
Brent Mickelberg

MEMBER FOR BUDERIM

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Education, Employment and Training Committee, Report

 **Mr MICKELBERG** (Buderim—LNP) (4.11 pm): With the indulgence of the House I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the death last Sunday in Buderim of Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith SG, MC. Harry Smith was the company commander of Delta Company 6RAR at the Battle of Long Tan. There will be few Australians unaware of the gallantry of the 108 servicemen who battled the Viet Cong at the Battle of Long Tan. Harry Smith's bravery and leadership were recognised. It was his unstinting commitment to fighting for his soldiers that I admire most about Harry Smith. Long after he retired he was fighting for the men whom he served with. He never took a backward step and was always loyal. His death has sent shockwaves through the Queensland veterans community. On behalf of the Buderim community and on behalf of the veterans community I would like to acknowledge his contribution. Vale Lieutenant Colonel Harry Smith SG, MC.

Turning now to the estimates debate, I did have some notes, but after the contribution from the minister I think I might depart from my notes. This is the minister who presided over the kids in watch houses debacle; the minister who has literally created the problem in youth justice that is besetting our communities right now. The minister has the hide to come in here and rattle off some rubbish from ChatGPT. Is that what Queenslanders deserve? Queenslanders deserve policies that will deliver for them and right now this Palaszczuk Labor government is failing Queenslanders—it is failing Queensland families, it is failing Queensland businesses. To have a minister like Minister Farmer responsible for youth justice—

Ms Boyd: Attacking the women all the time.

Mr MICKELBERG: Listen to them playing victim! We have people like the member for Pine Rivers, whose own community is beset with crime, and she comes in here silent all the time because she wants to get promoted when Bailey gets the chop. Never mind that another year has gone by—and what have we seen from the Palaszczuk Labor government? Another year where they have failed to meet their own apprenticeship completion targets, they have failed to meet their own school-based apprenticeship targets and they do not have a plan to train the next generation of workers. They have a generation of failure.

Over the last 12 months the Palaszczuk Labor government's apprenticeship completion target was 11½ thousand but they delivered 9,800. Apparently that is achieving. Over the last eight years the Palaszczuk Labor government has never delivered on their completion target for apprenticeships. This is a Labor government that prides itself on training, supposedly, and they have never met their own target for apprenticeship completions. They like to talk about commencements—they sing about commencements—but it is all for nothing when people do not actually finish their training. More people quit training than finish training. More people are dropping out of construction apprenticeships than finishing construction apprenticeships. When I asked the minister and the director-general about what modelling was done to arrive at those targets the answer was they are stretch targets. That is the target you have when you do not really care if you are going to hit the target. They do not care because it is all about the announcement. They focus on commencements and not completions because it is all about the announcement. They do not care about delivery. Frankly, Queenslanders deserve better.

Trade areas like construction have some of the worst outcomes. Any Queenslander can tell you about their experience trying to get a tradie at the moment. It is affecting projects like building trades and Cross River Rail which are blowing out by billions of dollars. It is because of the failure to act and the failure to deliver by the Palaszczuk Labor government. I asked some questions, such as 'What actions are you going to do to ensure this downward trend does not continue?' The silence was deafening. Do members know what the Palaszczuk Labor government's response to the problem has been? They took a program from 2006 called Train to Retain. They changed one word—give them some credit—and reannounced it as Train and Retain. They made no changes to the program from 2006 and they expect that will fix the problems besetting Queensland's skills and trades sector at the moment. The minister has simply rebadged an existing failure and pretended that they will get a different result. Time and time again Queenslanders see the result of this Palaszczuk Labor government's failure. They see the result because this Palaszczuk Labor government only cares about the announcement and they do not care about the delivery.

I am fast running out of time, but I want to address the issue of crime on small business. I asked questions about whether or not the department had considered the 41 per cent increase in offences against businesses in the last 12 months. The answer was no. They did not ask it in their survey. They do not think it is an issue. The minister, to her credit, does. Her director-general has not even thought about it. How can those businesses have any confidence that this Palaszczuk Labor government is working for them when they will not even listen.