



Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Community Support and Services Committee, Report

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (2.55 pm): As the Liberal National Party's shadow minister for the arts, I rise to address the Appropriation Bill 2023, and specifically the proposed expenditure of the Palaszczuk state Labor government as examined by the Queensland parliament's Community Support and Services Committee in its hearing held on 10 August 2023.

During this estimates hearing questions were asked of the director of the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art in relation to various contracts that were recorded in the gallery's contract disclosure reports. In particular, additional information and clarity was sought in relation to the entry of almost \$30,000 of expenditure for the Four Seasons Hotel in Singapore. The gallery director's response indicated that the expenditure was 'fully funded by the patrons themselves. It was not at a direct cost to the gallery.' This certainly warranted further explanation and clarity and I am pleased that a fulsome explanation was provided by the director.

Further questions in relation to the use and awarding of contracts were also raised relating to exclusive use by the Queensland Art Gallery of a bespoke travel agency based in Rosalie. Despite the director of the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art acknowledging the extensive use of this agency over many years, the director was unable to satisfactorily justify the exclusive selection and use of this travel agent over established state government travel booking processes, including through the use of the state's QTravel service. I would certainly encourage the government to consider looking at this.

Prior to these estimate hearings, and indeed over a number of years, concerns have been publicly raised in the media in relation to the need for additional financial support for the Queensland Maritime Museum and the heritage value of the iconic *Forceful* tugboat. It was confirmed in these estimates that the Queensland state government has not allocated specific funding to save the *Forceful* from becoming scrap metal. In addition, despite the established practice of other state jurisdictions, including South Australia and Western Australia, the Queensland Minister for the Arts confirmed that the state has no intention of bringing the Queensland Maritime Museum into the Queensland Museum Network. I would certainly encourage the government to look at what can be further done to support the Queensland Maritime Museum.

As the state member for Moggill, I note that the Minister for Communities in her opening statement proudly advised that \$39 million would be provided over three years for new builds and redevelopments of neighbourhood and community centres. I would encourage the minister to also look at what could be provided, particularly in the electorate of Moggill, because there is certainly an important need for a community and neighbourhood centre in my local area. Certainly collaborative work could be undertaken with both the Brisbane City Council and the Commonwealth government to deliver that much needed local community infrastructure.

On the subject of the electorate of Moggill and dedicated volunteers, during the consideration of the proposed expenditure for the portfolio of the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services, the Liberal National Party specifically sought answers on the support for the future of the McIntyre riding for disabled centre in Pinjarra Hills. I note that the response from the Minister for Seniors and Disability Services was that the state government had had discussions with the Commonwealth government but there were no specific plans for the state government to purchase the land and there was no direct feedback from the Commonwealth government that they were considering that either. Again, I would encourage, despite the decision-making of Help Enterprises, that anything that can be done to support local residents in their quest to continue those services which were provided by Help Enterprises and the McIntyre Centre riding for disabled would be most welcome given the importance of that for a range of local residents and also others who were receiving those disability support services.

It has been an important centre. It has been in existence there for nearly 60 years. I say to the government here in Queensland that anything that could be fostered and facilitated with the Commonwealth government as a matter of priority would be very welcomed and needs to be supported, although I do appreciate that there is a lot of complexity in relation to the current operator and the circumstances of how it came into being.

In conclusion, I thank all members of the committee, the chair, the deputy chair and the minister for her attendance on the day. It is important work that is done by the committee when we scrutinise the expenditure that is occurring here in Queensland. I acknowledge all of the contributions of the members of the committee and also the secretariat and their work in compiling the report.