



Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Community Support and Services Committee, Report

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (3.10 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the Community Support and Services Committee's 2023-24 budget estimates report. I want to particularly acknowledge the large body of work that goes into preparing for the estimates process. It is certainly no easy feat. I acknowledge and commend the work of Minister Enoch, Minister Scanlon and Minister Crawford, their ministerial teams and departmental officers for the assistance provided during the estimates process.

The estimates process allows the opportunity for those opposite to scrutinise the government's expenditure, allowing transparency and accountability into how funds are spent. It is one of the key mechanisms to examine government expenditure, performance and effectiveness. By examining and reporting on the proposed expenditures contained in the Appropriation Bill and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill, the committee assists the parliament in its scrutiny of the government's proposed expenditure.

The Community Support and Services Committee's estimate hearing was held on 10 August and ran for a full day. What I expected to be a gruelling full day of deliberations turned into a show of who can beat their chest the hardest. I was somewhat disappointed that those opposite did not make the best use of the time allocated to them. It was even more disappointing to witness certain behaviours directed towards ministers, senior public servants and the committee chair during the estimates process, including: talking over the committee chair; not respecting the chair's ruling; total disrespect shown to ministers and public servants and responses to questions asked. Despite all of the negativity from those opposite, I am proud of the effort and contribution made by our side to run an efficient estimates process.

When it comes to housing, the government is getting on with the job of delivering more safe and affordable houses for Queenslanders. The proposed budget comprises over \$400 million in departmental expenditure and over \$200 million in funding to be administered by the department on behalf of the state. In this budget the government continues to support Queenslanders through Emergency Hardship Assistance grants, Essential Services Hardship Assistance grants, Essential Household Contents grants, Structural Assistance grants and Essential Services Safety and Reconnection grants.

The 2023-24 budget highlights for the Department of Housing include: the continuation of the delivery and supply of social housing as part of the Queensland Housing and Homelessness Action Plan, including within remote and discrete First Nations communities; and more investment in capital programs to provide housing and support to vulnerable Queenslanders, including older women and those experiencing domestic and family violence. We will continue our investment in the delivery of Queensland Housing Summit outcomes. We will provide critical housing supply and housing support initiatives to continue the delivery of the Helping Seniors Secure their Homes program that is being trialled in the Cairns, Townsville and Mount Isa local government areas. We know the challenges Queenslanders face when it comes to housing, and this government continues to work in the best interests of those in need.

In the portfolio areas of child safety, seniors and disability, this budget means more wraparound support for our most vulnerable citizens. The proposed budget comprises over \$2 billion in departmental expenditure and over \$4 billion in funding to be administered by the Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services on behalf of the state. The proposed \$2.381 billion in departmental expenses represents an increase of \$17.288 million on estimated actual departmental spending in 2022-23, which the department's Service Delivery Statements state is mainly in supplies, services, grants and subsidies for the delivery of programs.

There are huge investments in schemes to address the cost of living which I am very proud of, and certainly my electorate is going to benefit from this government's investment in initiatives to address the cost of living. I want to acknowledge the body of work that is going into treaty and all of the work that this government is undertaking to establish the First Nations Treaty Institute towards truth-telling and healing. We are in a really good time going into the future and I am proud of everything this government is doing. It was a good time to be part of the estimates process and I commend the report to the House.