




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR BROADWATER

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr CRISAFULLI** (Broadwater LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.14 am): The best part of my job is listening to the stories of people across our great state. It is an indescribable honour when Queenslanders trust you with their personal stories, when they trust you to fight for them. I have placed a priority on getting away from George Street to listen to Queenslanders in their homes and their communities talk about the issues impacting them. I have been constantly amazed by the strength and resilience of people who have suffered in unimaginable ways. I have been equally amazed by the selflessness of people who race to comfort and support their fellow Queenslanders in their hour of need. This is what our state is all about. In tough times we trust that we will be there for each other. It is the Queensland way; it is what Queenslanders do.

Right now more than ever Queenslanders need to trust the government to provide a pathway out of the chaos and crisis that is enveloping this state. To be effective in a difficult economic climate a government needs to have a record of delivering what they promise: to deliver projects to the specifications they have outlined; to deliver projects in the time line they have outlined; to deliver projects for the cost they have outlined.

Queenslanders are prepared to give a government a break. I understand that sometimes circumstances conspire to impact these factors, but Queenslanders will not be taken for mugs. They do not want to hear excuses repeatedly. They do not want their government to blame everyone else but themselves. They do not want to see a government throw its arms in the air and say it is not possible to run things on time and on budget. It is simple: promises made must be promises kept. If promises cannot be kept, do not make them. Do not make empty promises just to scurry away from growing public pressure on an issue you have failed to deal with. Most importantly, if a promise is not kept, hold ministers accountable for their failures. Do not just reshuffle the same people around the same table. Without accountability there is no hope for improvement.

Why does this matter? Queensland families should be able to take solace in a promise from their government and plan their lives, their own lifestyles and their own finances accordingly. Businesses should be able to look at the budget delivered two days ago and make investment decisions based on those promises. Unfortunately, they cannot. They have heard the promises of record health budgets, only for the government to deliver record ambulance ramping. They have heard promises of tough new laws, only for the government to deliver fewer police and record crime rates. They have heard promises of new homes, only for the government to deliver record social housing waiting lists and cuts to residential lot approvals. They have heard cost-of-living promises around electricity, only for the government to deliver massive power price rises because they cannot manage their power plants.

Queenslanders would like to believe the promises made by this government. I would like to believe the promises made by this government. Unfortunately, the record proves we cannot. Overwhelmingly, Queenslanders believe this government is heading in the wrong direction. The chaos and crisis is sapping Queenslanders' confidence, and the government cannot be trusted to lead us

through the challenges we face today. For example, Queenslanders do not trust the Palaszczuk government to fix the Queensland youth crime crisis. They do not trust them to fix the Queensland housing crisis. They do not trust them to fix the health crisis. It is clear that we must rebuild trust in government. When I first became Leader of the Opposition I created shadow portfolios for integrity, open data and customer service. That was a very deliberate signal to Queensland—

Government members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Order, members! The House will come to order. The convention is that this speech is heard in relative silence. I would ask members to listen to the speech. You will have plenty of opportunity in the upcoming debate to respond.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I believe in a government that is accountable and transparent and that will place the people we serve at the centre of everything we do, every decision we make. As a united LNP team, we have made several policy commitments to further these ideals. We have committed to reforming the estimates process to ensure ministers can be held accountable, not shielded from scrutiny. We have called for the provision of open data to improve transparency in service delivery. We have promised the reformation of the Productivity Commission to ensure the services we provide Queenslanders are the best in the country. These are all steps the government could take and it would help restore the trust they have lost. They could do it today and we would support them. They could, but they won't.

They won't because it is deeply ingrained in this government to blame others for their failures. They won't because it is a reflex of this government to use their massive internal media machine—which grew a little in this budget—to muddy the waters and hide the truth. After nearly a decade in power, here lies the fundamental truth of this government: to have any hope of fixing a problem, you must admit you have one in the first place, and the Premier and her government have shown neither the insight nor the inclination for this admission.

The Palaszczuk government cares more about big, flashy announcements than actually delivering the solutions Queenslanders need and deserve. So what does this mean for this budget? It means the promises made on Tuesday must be viewed through the countless promises this government has made over eight years that lie in a smouldering ruin. The promises in this budget should be viewed in the context of Cross River Rail, which has seen the cost blow out by billions and delayed by years, or perhaps in the context of the Olympic upgrade of the Gabba which has seen the original cost go from \$1 billion to \$2.7 billion, yet in this budget there is only \$67.7 million allocated in 2023-24 of the \$7.1 billion for the Olympic venues. That is \$67.7 million for the \$7.1 billion. There is no plan for independent delivery of generational infrastructure and no 20-year tourism vision to develop new product that we can promote while the eyes of the world are on us in a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

Sadly, the promises in this budget relating to health sit amongst the lengthening list of delivery failures—whether it be their hopelessly late and misleadingly named satellite hospitals, or the failed promise to get ambulance ramping under control. With a reputation for being big on promise and light on delivery, the government should have outlined why they have failed in the past to deliver their commitments and why this will be any different this time. Announcements do not improve the lives of Queenslanders; calm and considered delivery does.

Nowhere has trust in the government been eroded more than in health. The government went to the last election promising to keep us safe. On this basic commitment, they have failed. In keeping with their inability to accept responsibility, they have sought to blame their health failures on COVID. There is one problem with this: the health system was in a downward spiral long before any of us had heard of COVID. Ambulance ramping was 15 per cent when this government came to office. It had already doubled before COVID and it is now at 43 per cent. Queensland's ambulance ramping is the worst in the country.

There are 58,446 people on the elective surgery waiting list, 23.7 per cent of patients do not have their surgery within the recommended time frame, and the number of people waiting 24 hours in an emergency department is at record levels. After nearly a decade in power, Queensland's health system under this state government is broken and it is in dire need of repair. The glue that keeps this broken system together is the incredible doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. It is our health professionals and patients who bear the brunt of a broken system. When the minister tries to shift blame to governments a decade in the past, it is the call centre operator who must explain to a father that there are no ambulances available to come to the aid of his daughter suffering an asthma attack. These are not hypothetical stories; they are happening with disturbing regularity in Queensland. We know this because we have made a point of listening to patients and health professionals.

Early in this term, we learned of disturbing events within Queensland Health. We decided to hold a town hall meeting to discuss the health crisis. We were overwhelmed by the tragic and harrowing stories from patients and health professionals aghast at what they were forced to work in. We were honoured they trusted us to take their stories to the floor of parliament and fight for a better deal. Now,

32 Queensland Health crisis town halls later, the avalanche of stories continues. Throughout the Queensland Health crisis, one common question is asked of me: where is the Premier? The Premier has been caught up in the glitz and glamour of the job while patients wait at the end of a phone line for an overworked ambulance officer who never comes.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Acting Speaker, I take personal offence and I ask the member to withdraw.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: The Premier has taken personal offence. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw. I spoke earlier of trust and of the government's inability to deliver what they promised. Nowhere is that truer than in health. The satellite hospitals that were announced before the last election were deliberately misleading. While they will provide important medical services, they are not what was promised—hospitals. It is not just the opposition who says this; senior Queensland Health officials say this. They do not have overnight beds. They are not open 24 hours. They do not have an ED. Call them what they are and focus on delivering these missing services at the nearby hospitals. This is a failure to deliver. The Premier herself promised these hospitals would be open in May—all seven of them. How many are open today? This is a failure to deliver. They are more than \$110 million over budget. That is \$110 million that could have been spent reducing the surgery waiting list or funding some of those unfunded beds we heard about this morning that are counted as real beds. This is a failure to deliver. Remember the \$263 million Care4Qld strategy that was released over two years ago. That was meant to fix ambulance ramping. Today it is the highest in the country. This is a failure to deliver.

These failures have deepened the state of chaos and crisis into which the health system has descended. They also underline the point: the Premier and the government cannot be trusted to deliver what they say. It is through this prism we should view the Premier's health and hospital announcement. This \$9.8 billion program promised new hospitals, but for those on the northern Gold Coast the government is asking you to trust them at two more elections before they get the benefit from the Coomera Hospital. If you share the transport minister's views on delivering a project on time and on budget, even that is doubtful.

I have one message for the Premier: it is not good enough. The Queensland Health crisis is happening now and Queenslanders want to know: where is the Premier? Given the rivers of gold generated by the tax increases of the government, for the Premier to have only spent one per cent of the total announcement last year is an insult to the health professionals and patients who rely on this. The budget papers show just five per cent will be spent two years after the promise was made.

The government has announced maternity services have returned to Gladstone after 339 days of failure. When will they return to Cooktown, to Chinchilla, to Biloela? When will they open in Weipa—a town the government promised would have operational maternity services last year? The Premier and the minister have sat around the cabinet table signing off on every decision of the last eight years that has led to the chaos and crisis in the health system. It is difficult for Queenslanders to trust them to fix it.

When I became Leader of the Opposition, I said my job was not only to hold the government to account; it was to provide hope and opportunity and chart an alternate vision. When it comes to the Queensland Health crisis, the LNP has put solutions on the table. They are solutions designed to rebuild the trust of patients and health professionals—better resources, better triaging, sharing data in real time and putting doctors and nurses back in charge. These solutions empower our health professionals and provide transparency and accountability in government. Today the opposition outlines another two planks in building a better health system.

To underline my commitment to transparency and to Queenslanders, today I announce an LNP government is committed to making health data available in real time within 100 days of the election. I make this commitment because Queenslanders should know how our hospital system is performing and transparency drives ministerial accountability, and accountability drives change. Queensland Health collects the information; in fact the Palaszczuk government has spent hundreds of millions of dollars digitalising hospitals, so let's use it. A good government would not balk at the potential and possibilities which data driven insights could deliver to us.

Secondly, today I can announce an LNP government will deliver a contemporary Queensland Health workforce plan. It is one thing to promise new hospitals but another thing to staff them. The work we would undertake in government would make a thorough assessment of the current gaps in the workforce of our health system. It will also examine the sobering reality of why so many members of our health workforce feel burnt out. With an ageing and growing population, we will commence this work to ensure that our health system is adequately and sustainably staffed with a highly skilled workforce well into the future—calls that have been made by medical groups for months.

We have a world-class health workforce in Queensland already. I want to ensure that it remains the case. The value of seeing the right clinician at the right time can be a life-changing or life-saving intervention. The work will allow Queensland to structure and grow our health workforce to deliver multidisciplinary care using modern models of care which deliver the best outcome for patients. That is what delivering health care is all about, not record budgets and big announcements. It is about patient care, and I will always put the patient first.

The Queensland youth crime crisis has seen a constant stream of Queenslanders becoming victims due to a government which made a conscious decision to weaken the youth justice laws when they first came to power—the first seeds of the Queensland youth crime crisis. Queenslanders no longer feel safe in their homes, with break-ins up 58 per cent since 2015, the number of stolen cars up 108 per cent since 2015, and assaults up 178 per cent. Their decision to weaken the laws when they first came to power put ideology before common sense. Eight years ago, the state government boasted about watering down youth justice laws. The only ones boasting now are young crims on social media taunting their victims. The Premier's decision created a generation of youth criminals, Labor's generation of untouchables. They know their rights are greater than the rights of the victim.

There are thousands of victims out there. I have listened to their stories and they are harrowing. I have listened to a small business owner called Paul who grew up in social housing. He aspired to be his own boss. Today he is a broken man. With three break-ins, thousands of dollars worth of damage, it is not just an attack on a person's business, it is an attack on that person's dreams. I have listened to Queenslanders who have had intruders in their own home, like Taryn and Vicki, their personal sanctuaries violated. I have heard stories of Cairns woman Caroline holding her kids and hiding them in a bedroom while her husband was assaulted by intruders as he tried to protect his family. They survived; many others have not—people stabbed in their own home or struck by stolen cars. I have sat with their families as well. This could have happened to any one of us. Queenslanders know this and they are scared.

As I travel around the state, Queenslanders are telling me they do not trust the government to solve Queensland's youth crime crisis. After reading this budget, you cannot blame them. In 2016, the government announced a five-point plan to tackle youth crime. Then in 2019, they announced a four-point plan and then a five-point plan in 2020, and in 2021 they issues a media release promoting a crackdown on juvenile criminals fitted with GPS trackers. In Townsville, three have been fitted, seven in Logan and the Gold Coast, and four in the northern suburbs of Brisbane. That is it. If the criminals do not want to wear them, they do not have to. What sort of message did that send? It was never about dealing with the issues; it was all about the announcement. Late last year we had another 10-point plan designed to tackle youth crime. It later became an 11-point plan when Labor adopted the LNP's policy to introduce breach of bail.

This government talks tough, but Queenslanders have heard it all before and crime continues to increase. Queenslanders cannot trust this government to keep them safe. We know the latest plan was thrown together at the last minute. The chaos and crisis of how this plan was formed was put on display when the LNP exposed in parliament how increased penalties for car theft were written in a way to ensure maximum penalties could never be enforced. There was also a promise to run an engine immobiliser trial before the end of this month. Again, it is the men and women on the front line that are the only thing holding together a broken system, and today we acknowledge the hard work of the Queensland Police Service. It has been a tough time for them of late. Some of them have made the ultimate sacrifice and we thank them.

Contrary to the protests of the minister, and as I indicated earlier, the reality is the thin blue line is getting thinner. This week it has been revealed that there are 72 fewer full-time equivalent frontline officers than at the time of the last election. I will repeat that: 72 fewer, in the middle of a youth crime crisis! Current police officers do not feel valued by this government, and they are leaving. I offer this advice: look after those people who are there before they walk out the door.

At the last election, the police minister actually promised more police—1,450 additional, in fact—but it was revealed recently by the minister this commitment was not for actual police officers; it was funded police positions. When you dial triple 0, only an actual police officer can respond. I say to the Premier: it is time we have an actual police minister, not a funded one.

For a government to rebuild trust, it must place the rights of victims at the centre of the solution to the youth crime crisis. As I have previously said, I have met with countless people who have been impacted by the youth crime crisis, victims and proud advocates fighting for their voices to be heard. They have described how every time another tragedy happens it brings it back to the surface again. They have described the smells, the sounds, the textures of the crimes, and they play it through their head. They have described the trauma. They say it never leaves them. It is time to show that we are on the side of victims, not the side of criminals.

That is why today I propose a set of measures to begin righting this balance. The first thing we should do is stop rubbing salt into wounds. I am talking about the government charging victims for a replacement driver's licence when their wallet has been stolen, or replacement vehicle numberplates when their plates have been stolen. We support the government's move to reduce the fee to \$35 to replace a driver's licence, but when it comes to victims of crime, we can do better—this must be free. It is time to put the rights of victims first. They have already paid a high price for Labor's weak laws. Let's not make replacing stolen licences and numberplates a further burden for them.

I urge the government to implement measures to improve engagement with victims throughout the investigation and prosecution of crimes. We must also do more to put people in contact with support when the crime happens. Quicker support can often lead to long-term emotional and financial pain being avoided. It is time to empower victims.

Over 200 days ago, the government agreed to appoint a victims commissioner as part of the response to the *Hear her voice* report. This would be an avenue for victims of crime to raise concerns about the way their matter has been investigated or prosecuted. As is often the case, the promise was made, but it has not been delivered. It was hoped that this budget would provide a clear road map for the establishment of the victims commissioner, but, despite a reference, there remains no timeline. I therefore commit that, should the LNP form government after the next election and the government still has not made an announcement, within one month we will appoint a victims commissioner to help build a criminal justice system that serves Queensland's victims.

A body that currently exists is the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council. The council comprises people from the legal fraternity, academia, a prison advocate and even an artist, but not one dedicated victim of crime. This government talks a lot about the value of lived experience. If we are to ensure that the sentencing matches the expectations of the community, there is no better way to achieve that than ensuring victims are members of the body. I commit today that an LNP government would appoint a victim of crime to the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council. Better support for victims is very important, but we cannot give up and say, 'Well, this is how things now are.' Queensland is better than that. Queenslanders deserve better than that. More needs to be done to make sure Queenslanders do not become victims of crime in the first place.

We have put our real solutions on the table and it starts with consequences for actions. This is about putting the rights of victims before the rights of young criminals. When I speak to victims of crime—and I unfortunately hear too many of these sad stories—there is palpable anger when a criminal gets off, a repeat criminal, with yet another slap on the wrist. Meanwhile, the victim is left to deal with the financial costs and the harrowing experience of being a victim.

I truly believe that kids should be given a second chance. Any youth justice system that does not have as its central tenet a belief that kids can turn their lives around and become valuable members of society is not serving the children of the wider community appropriately. That is why I am passionate about gold-standard early intervention. There are excellent programs out there; I have seen them. We must identify these programs that are working and expand them across the state. This is why the Deputy Leader wrote to the Auditor-General requesting a full review of the government diversionary program for young offenders. It is vital that the government participates fully; that the information is open.

An issue I believe is intrinsically linked to the issue of youth justice is child safety. Keeping the most vulnerable Queensland children safe must be a core priority of any government. It must be an unquestionable truth that we hold fast that we will protect those who cannot protect themselves.

In the last six months the number of child safety case workers in Queensland has fallen. How will this lead to better outcomes for vulnerable children? How will this lead to not just protecting children from harm but helping them to thrive? What we have seen from this government is investigation and assessment times blowing out, residential care numbers exploding and case plans being woefully behind. Thirty-five per cent of investigations and assessments are not completed within the 100-day time frame. There are double the number of children in residential care today than there were five years ago. Almost 20 per cent of these kids do not have a current case plan. The portfolio has been passed from failed minister to failed minister who then move on to other posts without a thought given to what is left behind. We see the correlation between those in the youth justice system who have a child safety background. It should not be an incubator for juvenile offenders.

The third part of the LNP's solution is to unshackle the judiciary. There is a lot of community concern about the way judges are sentencing youth criminals. The judiciary enforce the laws they are given by the government of the day, and in the days of the Palaszczuk government youth crime has been out of control. Current government policy binds the judiciary through sentencing guidelines that limit their ability to administer custodial sentences in line with community expectations. That is why the LNP believes in the removal of detention as a last resort.

Mr Dametto interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Order, member for Hinchinbrook.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Tonight too many Queenslanders will sleep in a tent, a caravan—

Mr Dametto interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Hinchinbrook, you are warned under the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI:—or, as we saw earlier this week, outside this parliament. Every Queenslander deserves a warm bed under a real roof. Again, we should not be here. The government has failed to deliver on land releases. Incredibly, despite a growing population, residential lot approvals—a key responsibility of state government—have plummeted; they are 31 per cent lower than they were in 2015. This failure to unlock land and create new housing stock has put pressure on the entire market but nowhere more so than for those looking for affordable options.

We have also seen a massive failure when it comes to social housing. Social housing is our housing safety net but, tragically, under this government, that safety net is riddled with holes. In fact, the social housing waiting list has exploded since 2015, from 20,000 to nearly 50,000.

I would like to raise the particular plight of many First Nations communities when it comes to housing. Many leaders from these communities tell me that a lot of the issues they face come from overcrowding. Overcrowding leads to poor health outcomes. It leads to bad education outcomes. It leads to lower employment opportunities. It leads to social problems. What is the government doing?

We were promised that a \$2 billion housing investment fund would fix these problems. We were promised thousands of new social homes. We were promised that the growth management teams would fix land supply. We were promised land audits. We were promised emergency housing at Griffith University. These promises join a long list of delivery failures and continue the erosion of trust in the government. Instead of delivering housing solutions ahead of population growth, the Palaszczuk government has delivered us the Queensland housing crisis. The government has failed to build new stock and as a result has used funds to buy existing houses.

To this end today I offer this commitment: under an LNP government the Housing Investment Fund will only be used to deliver new social housing stock. To be clear, this is a fund that needs to increase the number of total dwellings available to put a dent in the supply issues that are driving up costs. That is not to say that government should not at times step in to fill the void of community housing schemes coming off funding arrangements or strategic social housing purchases in communities. However, a signature fund must address the fundamental challenge of the housing crisis, and that is the issue of housing supply. Purchasing existing homes, the *modus operandi* of this government, does not increase supply. That strategy takes potential homes out of the private rental market, a market which already has not enough homes. If you are going to deliver a signature housing investment fund, every dollar it generates must deliver increased housing supply. That is what we commit to doing.

Using every component of the housing sector is needed to help ease the housing crisis gripping Queensland. However, even the government's most ardent supporters would acknowledge the community housing sector in Queensland has been neglected. A report from the Commonwealth Productivity Commission found that since 2015 the number of community housing dwellings in Queensland has declined. Queensland was the only state or territory in Australia to go backwards. As a result, funding through the National Housing Finance and Investment Corporation has gone begging. The value of social bonds for community housing providers issued through the corporation since 2019 is substantial. New South Wales has received over \$1 billion in social bonds. Victoria has shared in over half a billion dollars. In Queensland we have received \$8.9 million.

An LNP government will adjust the housing policy settings in Queensland to enable our community housing sector to flourish. Today I commit that an LNP government would grow the number of community housing dwellings every year we hold office.

A growing cost in every Queensland family's budget is, of course, electricity. Many Queenslanders voted for Labor in Queensland and in Canberra because they were promised lower electricity bills. Minister de Brenni and his government have committed to lowering electricity costs hundreds of times since releasing their energy and jobs announcement. The most recent CPI data showed Queensland's energy bills rose by 32.5 per cent in the March quarter, and recently we learnt power prices will go up 21.5 per cent from July.

The Premier is quick to claim things are national issues. They will even make a logo about it. However, when it comes to electricity prices, the generator failure at Callide, a state government facility, is a significant contributor. In August 2021, in response to a question during estimates, Minister de Brenni said the incident at Callide C Power Station would have no net impact on consumers' electricity

prices—a view not shared by the Auditor-General, who said a lack of supply is a factor; and a view not shared by the Queensland Competition Authority, which blamed unplanned outages like Callide as a factor. It should have therefore been no surprise when the minister's commitment that Callide C would be back online by the end of 2022 was not met—or in February or in April.

The LNP will support any measures that will give relief from ballooning electricity bills, but where we differ from this government is in our focus on driving real reform to lower the underlying costs of these power plants that remain offline, and there is a report about what went wrong and it remains under wraps.

The government's failure to maintain their power plants has contributed significantly to the increase. Minister de Brenni has told Queenslanders the government's entire energy and jobs announcement hinges on the so-called Pioneer Dam. With no money in the capital statements for this project, the Pioneer Dam is the great hydro hoax. As a result, the Premier's jobs and energy announcement is just that, an announcement—at a time when her job was to find the energy to roll out a real plan.

Much has been made by the Treasurer of the billions of dollars being raised by coal royalties, but regional Queenslanders are asking why they do not see their fair share. As I have mentioned throughout my contribution, the government's history means they cannot be relied upon to deliver for Queensland, particularly regional Queensland. The Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline only has five per cent of its funding allocated and it is already 2½ years late. The budget has also shown that Rookwood Weir has blown out by over \$200 million.

Unbelievably, the government has cut investment in biosecurity, from \$231 million last year to \$151 million this year. As we have seen recently, the government's funding failures have resulted in fire ants marauding across Queensland. There have also been cuts to forestry industry development during a timber shortage, changes to fishing zones without industry consultation and limited funding for R and D and agtech.

Labor governments play a vital role in delivering essential services to our communities. Where this government struggles to deliver services it could do worse than to look to local government for pointers. I am proud to lead a team with several former mayors and councillors in our ranks. Councils have once again been forgotten by this government. In fact, the LGAQ wrote that councils had been 'royalty shafted'. Despite repeated calls for increased Works for Queensland funding to protect regional jobs, the government refused to listen. It is why the LNP have a shadow minister dedicated to local government as her primary responsibility. Under this government, local government is bundled into a mega department and forgotten about. Under the LNP, local government will have a dedicated voice around the cabinet table.

Queensland has some of the most diverse and iconic natural environments in the world and that is something we should all be proud of. The need to protect it for generations is vital. However, under this government I fear that will not happen not because those opposite do not talk about the environment but because all they do is talk.

We continue to have the lowest proportion of protected area estate in the country. While those opposite are happy to talk about the protected area funding from last year's budget, only 10 per cent is allocated to be spent this financial year and more than half will not be spent until after the election. When it comes to management, we continue to see an underspend. Less than \$1 million will be spent on protected areas management which will continue to see invasive species and pests run rampant in our conservation estate.

Under the Palaszczuk government, we have the worst recycling rate of any state in Australia. This government has failed to support the waste infrastructure that our state needs to transition to a circular economy—they could not even recycle a popper. When it comes to reducing emissions, we have seen the great hydro hoax, the cornerstone of the jobs and energy announcement. Let us be clear: the government will not address climate change or reduce emissions or safeguard our environment through announcements. We need a government that acts.

I want to lead a Queensland where individuals, no matter their gender, race or background, have an equal opportunity at economic security—the security to make choices that suit their lifestyle and values; the security to find suitable accommodation; the security to care for their loved ones. We need to acknowledge that for women in Queensland there are barriers that exist and, in many cases, those barriers are greater than those faced by women in other states. We continue to have the second worst gender pay gap in the country at 14.6 per cent. That is a difference of around \$14,000 in earnings per year. The difference in superannuation accounts for men and women aged 65 years or over is less than \$20,000 nationally—

Ms Palaszcuk interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I will take the interjection from the Premier. In Queensland, it is over 50,000. We need genuine, targeted investment that outstrips that of other states or we will never catch up.

We continue to see the response to the landmark *Hear her voice* reports into domestic, family and sexual violence in Queensland. What we have not seen is an urgency in the response. We understand that when it comes to investigating coercive control, time and education is needed to ensure we get it right, but there are other recommendations that can be rolled out at a faster rate than what we are seeing. It took the commission of inquiry last year for the government to finally appoint an independent implementation supervisor. This role is crucial to the effective rollout of all of the recommendations to ensure this is not just a box-ticking exercise. The Townsville high-risk DV team was announced in June last year, and it still has not been rolled out. Statewide DVO breaches have increased by 50 per cent since June 2020.

The greatest scandal to hit our criminal justice system in a generation occurred at the forensic laboratory. After months and months of denying the issues at the forensic lab, we were presented with the final report late last year. This week marks six months since it was handed down. Six months, and we have heard so little about the progress. This budget is another demonstration of the extent of the issue. The sheer fact that we have funding extending out to the forward estimates demonstrates that this is not a minor problem to be resolved. Whether this funding will be enough will only be known when we see the full case numbers and grapple with the number of victims impacted. Victims have still not heard a formal apology from the government.

We know that housing costs and electricity bills are putting a great amount of cost-of-living pressure on Queensland families. As mentioned earlier, the Auditor-General identified the Callide power plant failure as a major contributor to the increase in energy prices. To address this significant driver of cost of living, I commit an LNP government to maintenance guarantees on power plants to ensure maintenance is not foregone to prop up the government's balance sheet. This is only part of the greater cost-of-living crisis they face. In my budget reply speech last year, I spoke of the risk of rising inflation and interest rates and the impacts this would have on Queensland families. Sadly, we are seeing that play out now, and I fear we are not over the worst of it.

We welcome the electricity rebate. I also acknowledge that the government's commitment to free kindy for Queensland families. That is a good thing. The Premier has seen other states do this and we are bringing Queensland into line. This gets a big tick from me. The \$150 towards swimming lessons—limited to those with a healthcare or pension concession card—is a sound idea which the government was forced into, despite initially denying the problem. The LNP committed to this policy in 2017. How many families since then have been denied this because of this government's failure to listen?

It would be irresponsible of me not to point out the government's failure in relation to cost overruns as well as its failure to maintain its power plants have increased the cost-of-living impacts for all Queenslanders. Likewise, the Queensland youth crime crisis has had a major impact on the cost of insurance. There is far more government can do than just providing rebates. Making our communities more resilient to natural disasters can lower insurance; dealing with congestion reduces fuel costs; improving water security and regional roads helps farmers to grow more products at a lower price. These are the sorts of things that a government in its ninth year should already be deeply invested in, but, as shown in this budget, the government is not. Long-term planning and reform is the last thing on the mind of a government that is caught up in its own chaos and crisis. It may try ministerial reshuffles, round tables, strategies and glossy documents to convince you otherwise, but this is ultimately a government that is bereft of ideas, racked by internal brawling and led by a Premier who is more interested in red carpets than everyday Queenslanders. Quite simply, the government's inability to deliver on its core business is costing Queenslanders in more ways than one.

Under the state government, Queensland is in a constant state of chaos and crisis. Revenue has never been higher, yet failure to deliver on promises has never been worse. By the end of the coming financial year, the government will have received over \$60 billion more than was predicted in Treasurer Dick's first budget in 2020—\$60 billion more. That is a massive amount of money. How can services be so bad when the government has received \$60 billion more than it thought it would? Where has the money gone? That \$60 billion would have funded 30 tertiary hospitals—not one has been built since 2020. The health crisis goes on. That \$60 billion could fund almost 100,000 new social homes, but demand for social housing is up 70 per cent, and the amount of new stock has barely increased two per cent in eight years. For \$60 billion we could have resourced the Queensland Police Service for over 16 years.

We know where at least \$11 billion of this money has gone—cost blowouts. Hospitals, roads, stadiums and, of course, Cross River Rail, have all overrun in cost because of ministers who are not across their portfolios. It means that there is less money to employ a police officer, remove a level

crossing, hire another doctor or build a home for a vulnerable Queenslander. The Minister for Transport and Main Roads has ruled out this government being able to deliver a project on time and on budget. This is the minister who has already had new trams delivered for a line extension that has just started, but will not have trains ready for the opening of Cross River Rail. This is the minister who can allocate \$120 million for three train stations just 12 months ago which now come in at \$500 million—a 317 per cent blowout in 12 months. For Queenslanders on the Sunshine Coast, who waste thousands of hours a year stuck in traffic, the decision of the government to embark on another study on the heavy vehicle passenger rail route is a hard blow to take. The route has been the same for three decades. Residents and businesses on the Sunshine Coast will know that this is nothing more than a stalling tactic—another delay on another study, with another \$15 million likely to be swallowed up by consultants on a business case.

This is the big untold story of this government—the gradual outsourcing of Public Service opportunities. The Palaszczuk government is obsessed with consultants. As this government ages, the obsession grows. It is an obsession fixated on the big four consulting firms who now enjoy cosy relationships and influence in the halls of power. The Palaszczuk government has hidden behind an ever-growing wall of consultants' reports to justify blowout after blowout of countless projects under this government. These are not the actions of an open and transparent government. This obsession was typified by the Premier spending nearly \$800,000 for Deloitte to run a report to justify her decision to Hoover up control of the Olympics into her own office. Queenslanders' money has been wasted on a self-fulfilling report to justify political ambition and control, and the high price Queenslanders are paying is rising by the day.

Opposition analysis of available data can reveal that, in the last five years alone, the Palaszczuk government has spent at least \$423 million on the big four consulting firms—\$423 million. That is \$234,000 of Queenslanders' money every day being handed to the big four. This is not sustainable; it is not a trait of open and honest government; it is not the way to value and empower the Queensland Public Service. Worse still, the actions of the Queensland government are a violation of the Coaldrake review. Coaldrake is heavily critical of the government's over-reliance on expensive consultants and its obsession with outsourcing work to the private sector—work that should be delivered by public servants and work that public servants want to deliver.

Today I announce that an LNP government will reduce the reliance on expensive consultants and will empower the Public Service like never before. Consultants will still be used when independence is required, but the days of the Queensland government handing over endless buckets of taxpayers' money to the big four consulting firms must end. This is a line in the sand. The LNP will deliver the best Public Service in the nation. The LNP will value and empower the Public Service like never before through three steps. First, to improve the procurement process when external skills are required to support Queenslanders, we will task Treasury to review how the Palaszczuk government has engaged, utilised and paid external consultants. Second, we will redirect money away from the top end of town, away from the pockets of the cashed-up big four consultancy firms, and reinvest it to empower the Public Service. That investment will provide world-class professional development and training packages to improve the skills, training, opportunity and leadership of the Public Service and ensure we deliver the best services for Queensland. Third, under an LNP government, consultants will be required to demonstrate how they will build capacity in the Public Service before they are awarded any work in a relevant project area.

We will stop the outsourcing of tasks that could be completed by the Public Service. This policy is about valuing, empowering and resourcing the Public Service, because we need Australia's best public service to pull Queensland out of the deepening chaos and crisis of this government. A Public Service empowered in decision-making and free to give frank and fearless advice will help the LNP government drive state building projects free from the billions of dollars of cost overruns that are rife in government. Australia's best public service: better training, better capacity, better outcomes—a path to drive Queensland out of the chaos and crisis created by almost a decade of this government.

With Australia's best public service, an LNP government will start delivering the state-run services Queenslanders deserve. As the Coaldrake review exposed, the choice at the next election will be clear: Labor, who have outsourced taxpayers' money at will to the big four and ruled the Public Service with fear; or an LNP government, who will value the Public Service to give frank and fearless advice. With an empowered Public Service, an LNP government will restore world-class services for Queenslanders, no matter where they live.

One of the great responsibilities any of us have in this place, regardless of other duties, is as a local member of parliament. As the member for Broadwater, I again point to the explosion of growth in the northern Gold Coast and the growing frustration of locals that they do not see infrastructure

delivered ahead of the pressure people are experiencing. I have already touched on the fact that Coomera Hospital will not be opened until at least the back end of this decade and that the first stage will deliver fewer beds than are required today. Mental health remains a major challenge for the government. The Gold Coast mental health rehabilitation unit has blown out by over \$17 million, but more troubling is delayed progress. This service is desperately needed for families under immense pressure.

In transport, the Coomera Connector is delayed and over budget, while the Hope Island train station still has an acute shortage of car parks despite being part of the 300 per cent cost blowout. Members in this House would have heard me speak about the Jabiru Island bridge duplication. Once again, this budget falls short of delivering the much needed link between Paradise Point and Hope Island. Its duplication remains absent from the forwards and, sadly, rehabilitation funding earmarked last year appears to have been underspent and cut from this year's budget. I will be asking the minister for further details about this.

Whilst the school is just outside of my electorate, I thank Minister Grace for the capital contribution towards the completion of the extra classrooms for Coombabah State High School, which services a large portion of families in my electorate. I will continue to campaign for replacement classrooms for Coombabah State School and Biggera Waters State School.

In my previous budget reply speeches I have committed an LNP government to promises, and those promises will be kept. We will establish a social enterprise investment fund—a great passion of the shadow Treasurer, who will outline the next step of this plan during his contribution today; we will establish a parliamentary budget office; we will fund our 50 per cent share of the Sunshine Coast heavy rail, even with a dodgy business case; and we will restore a Queensland productivity commission. Today I have outlined that an LNP government would deliver for Queenslanders: making real-time health data available within 100 days of the election; having a contemporary Queensland Health workforce plan; in the event this government fails to deliver, within a month of taking office appointing a victims commissioner to help build the criminal justice system that Queenslanders deserve; appointing a victim of crime to the Queensland Sentencing Advisory Council; the Housing Investment Fund to only be used to deliver new stock; a commitment to grow the number of community housing dwellings in every year of office; a commitment to address energy prices by implementing maintenance guarantees on power plants to ensure maintenance is not forgone to prop up the budget bottom line; and reducing the reliance on expensive consultants and empowering the Public Service like never before.

When I first took on this job I told Queenslanders that if the government put forward a good idea I would say so. When talking about new commitments, it would be remiss of me not to mention a couple of the announcements from the government which do have merit. Free kindy for our kids is at the top of the list. We offer our strong support and urge the government to ensure classrooms are ready, qualified teachers are in place and families are ready to reap the benefits from this announcement.

Never in our state's history have taxes been higher, debt been larger and services been worse. Never has a treasurer spent so much of his budget contribution obsessed with the opposition's response to his budget—a theme replicated in two days of question time. This is a government so embarrassed with its record on service delivery and economic management that it tries desperately to create a scare campaign to distract from the view that Queenslanders believe the Palaszczuk government is heading in the wrong direction, so—

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I have more to say than you, mate.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Comments will come through the chair. Treasurer, you will cease your interjections.

Mr CRISAFULLI: As we did last year, the opposition confirms that it will be supporting the revenue and expenditure measures outlined in the budget.

The Palaszczuk government promised 26 times that there would be no new or increased taxes, yet there have been five since the last election alone. It was a betrayal of Queensland families and those investing in our state—a deliberately deceitful plan but one tied to—

Mr DICK: Mr Acting Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take personal offence at those words and I ask him to withdraw.

Mr CRISAFULLI: I withdraw—the attempt to revive service delivery and the cost-of-living relief Queenslanders need because of the failings of this government. I would never stand in the way of these things. The question is: how can we regain the trust of Queenslanders who want to live and invest in our state? Ahead of the next election, the choice will be simple: an LNP government that will outline a

fully funded plan, with promises that will be honoured; or a Labor government so slippery that every Queenslander will ask who is next on their broken promise list. Will it be new taxes on families? Will it be a Dan Andrews inspired attack on the Public Service? Will it hark back to the broken promise of the Bligh era to sell off assets after not promising them?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Clayfield and member for Moggill, I gave indications around the use of hand gestures. You are both wanted under the standing orders.

Mr CRISAFULLI: Same faces, and they have form! Two years ago I asked of this year's budget, 'Where is the opportunity? Where is the reassurance? Where is the hope?' I ask the same questions today. Where is the hope? The tragedy of the last eight years of this government's failure to deliver is that it is hard to take reassurance from the government's word. It is hard to retain hope when so many times we have been hopeful for action only to be let down by failure of delivery.

In this budget the government has made much of the health and hospital announcements. Like anything, we have to look at the detail, because what the government did not tell us is that 95 per cent of the funding for its promised health and hospital announcements will be spent after the next election. The government is asking Queenslanders to believe that, despite its inability over the last eight years to manage the health system, we should trust it to deliver over another couple of years. It is the same story for Cross River Rail, for CopperString, for dams, for regional roads—the list goes on.

Queenslanders hoped the Palaszczuk government's ninth budget would chart a way through the chaos and crisis. This government has dashed that hope. Queenslanders deserve better. It is time for a new way. Queenslanders cannot afford the cost overruns this government says are inevitable. I say they are not. The opposition will empower and train the Public Service to take control of major projects from the consultants that profit from them. We will hold ministers accountable in administering their departments—the fundamental tenet of the Westminster system. These changes will drive value for money and ensure Queenslanders are not left waiting longer for the infrastructure they were promised.

I spoke at the start of my contribution to the guiding principles that I will take into government if we are given that great honour by the Queensland people: an economy built on the back of small and family business; world-class services no matter where Queenslanders live; and integrity and transparency at the centre of all we do. We must restore the hope of Queenslanders—hope this government has trashed. I say to Queenslanders: we will continue to earn back your trust in opposition and, if elected, we will restore your trust in government. By restoring that trust, we will end the chaos and crisis the Palaszczuk government has inflicted on Queensland. In just under 500 days Queenslanders will have a choice to make: real delivery over announcements, stability over chaos, hope over fear.