




Speech By
James Martin

MEMBER FOR STRETTON

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2023

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

 **Mr MARTIN** (Stretton—ALP) (4.47 pm): I rise to address the Palaszczuk government's record-breaking investments for Queenslanders in this year's budget. This budget supports our commitment to ease national cost-of-living pressures that are impacting Queenslanders while also investing in health care, education, housing, community safety and infrastructure in our growing state. It is a responsible budget that also significantly lowers our state's debt.

The Palaszczuk government has prioritised parents and households over the negative campaigning from the big coal lobbyists. It is important that Queenslanders get their fair share from record coal prices, and this budget ensures that this money is being invested where it matters most—through free kindergarten, electricity rebates, more hospital beds, more police and more police resources, and more social and affordable homes.

The LNP need to be honest with Queenslanders. Will they support progressive coal royalties and support cost-of-living measures for ordinary families? If not, what will they cut? If not, who will they sack? What will they sell and what will they privatise? Queenslanders deserve to know. How can those opposite support projects in their electorates if they cave in to the big coal lobby and rip \$7 billion out of the budget?

Queenslanders are right to ask which projects they will cut and whose jobs will get 'trimmed'. I can only assume that the LNP's proposed reformations of the Public Service will be ruthless and terrifying. Certainly in Queensland if you are a public servant you have something to fear from an LNP government. On this side of the House we believe that the riches of the state belong to the people of this state, and we make no apologies for insisting that record profits enjoyed by extracting Queensland's coal are shared by the people who own it.

As the Premier said, a budget is never just about the numbers; it is about the people. I am proud to be part of a government that puts ordinary Queenslanders first. The budget delivers the largest surplus ever recorded by any state or territory and the biggest infrastructure build ever undertaken by a Queensland government. Our \$89 billion Big Build will support more than 58,000 jobs and ensure that Brisbane is ready to host the 2032 Olympic Games.

One key aspect of the budget is delivering energy relief to Queenslanders to help tackle the cost of living. There is \$1.4 billion to support households and small businesses facing cost-of-living pressures. It is the most significant electricity bill support package announced by any state or territory, more than doubling the size of the federally agreed support package for Queensland under the national Energy Bill Relief Fund. The Palaszczuk government is providing \$550 off power bills for every household in Queensland and a further \$700 in electricity rebates for seniors and concession card holders that will bring the total cost-of-living rebate to \$1,072 for vulnerable households. Around 205,000 eligible small businesses will also be receiving \$650 off their power bills, and I know that that will be welcomed in Stretton. This package will more than offset typical household electricity bill increases in the upcoming financial year and in some cases households will have zero bills or be in credit. That

means that since 2018 the Palaszczuk government will have provided all Queensland households with over \$1,125 in electricity rebates. As part of this package, we have also allocated \$60 million for household energy initiatives and \$10 million for vulnerable household energy advice initiatives to deliver energy efficiency measures that keep the costs down for households and enable more choice and greater energy equity.

Education is such an important part of life and I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government that values and champions state school education. Every young student deserves to be given the best education opportunities possible, and this budget delivers that by providing a record \$17.8 billion for education and early childhood learning. A key aspect of the education package is free Kindy for All—something that has been very popular in my community and very popular all around Queensland. It will provide every little Queenslander with 15 hours of free kindergarten per week from 1 January 2024 and the program is set to save families up to \$4,600 per year and see a further 50,000 Queensland children benefit from free kindergarten. That is certainly something that I am very proud of. I have spoken with lots of families in the Stretton electorate. They are very excited about this initiative. Everyone is talking to everyone about it. It is the No. 1 topic of conversation at barbecues and family get-togethers.

The kindy package also includes an increased investment in early childhood education in terms of the workforce, which is very important, as well as support for children in disadvantaged areas and children with a disability. We will also be providing a boost of \$48.3 million over four years for safe and secure teacher housing in rural and remote communities as well. Mr Deputy Speaker Lister, the Acting Speaker has reviewed and approved my budget speech for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

This budget includes many new school infrastructure projects this financial year in the Stretton Electorate. This includes brand new classrooms and other upgrades for Sunnybank Hills State School, which has been named Queensland's number 1 primary school for the past two years in a row. The families, teachers and students at Sunnybank Hills work incredibly hard and new classrooms are much needed for such a popular and growing school.

Another rapidly growing and popular school is Stretton State College. With around 3.5 thousand students, Stretton State College is the recipient of an \$11 million multi-year package for a new sports hall that will cater for students in the fantastic academy programs of basketball, soccer, and rugby league. I am excited to see how well the Stretton rugby league teams perform this year after taking out Queensland titles in multiple age groups last year.

Mr Speaker, it is important that our school kids start the day in the best possible way—and that is with a healthy breakfast. I am excited that our government is expanding the School Breakfast Program that provides healthy and nutritious meals to Queensland school kids every week. The School Breakfast program is available to schools all around the state and supports families most in need. I have been to several of the school breakfast programs in the morning before class at schools in my electorate and I can see the positive impact that the program has on local students. There is no doubt that when kids have a good breakfast, they learn better.

I am also very pleased about further investment in Acacia Ridge TAFE. In collaboration with the Albanese Government, we are providing 37,000 Fee Free TAFE and vocational education and training courses for Queenslanders in 2023. Australia is seeing unprecedented workforce demands across the trades sector, so it is vital that we provide people with the skills necessary to fill those job roles and build successful careers. Our government is doing just that by ensuring that Queenslanders can afford to gain new skills in important industries.

A few weeks ago, I had the pleasure of visiting the Acacia Ridge TAFE campus where I met dozens of students who are studying in both new and existing industries as part of the free or subsidised TAFE programs. There are heaps of exciting courses at TAFE for people that are interested in trying something new and there are plenty of great jobs out there for people with recognised TAFE qualifications.

Healthcare

This is a record \$25.8 billion health budget to ensure Queenslanders get the best health care closer to home. Some \$24 billion will go to delivering the critical frontline services Queenslanders rely on. That includes \$764 million to put patients first with a plan to reduce ramping and improve access to our emergency departments.

It means keeping Queenslanders out of hospital and providing alternatives to emergency departments. Supercharging virtual care. Hiring more paramedics and putting more ambulances on the road. Investing in frontline health workers. And also providing more beds for our growing population.

In addition our satellite hospital program has been well received by my community. Despite attacks from those opposite—the public clearly support these satellite hospitals.

I was pleased to visit the site of the new Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital this morning along with my colleagues the Member for Toohey, and of course new Health Minister Shannon Fentiman. Construction on the satellite hospital is well underway and is scheduled to be operational early next year.

The Eight Mile Plains Satellite Hospital is a great asset for our community that will allow locals to access important medical care closer to home and take pressure off our emergency departments at QE2 and Logan Hospitals. The services available at the new facility will include a minor injury and illness clinic, medical imaging and diagnostic services, renal dialysis, chemotherapy and consult rooms for 280 appointments per week. It's a great block of land in a fantastic location halfway between the Logan and QEII Hospitals. There will also be plenty of ongoing secure jobs for nurses, doctors, and support staff right in my local area.

In addition to this we are funding more beds. That's 206 new beds at Logan hospital, and 28 new overnight beds at QE2 and 249 new beds at the PA. We are committed to delivering world class health care for Queenslanders and for our growing population.

Transport

I am happy to announce that the \$30 million Beaudesert Rd & Illaween St intersection upgrade is nearly complete with new bus stops, shelters, bike paths and safer pedestrian crossings. I know many locals will be happy to no longer be stuck in roadworks and have much improved traffic flow on the way to work and school pick ups and drop offs.

In other news, the announcement that we are removing the Kuraby level crossing is very popular in my electorate. For the many people who use this crossing it will be a great improvement. On behalf of my community I thank the Minister for Transport for committing to this important upgrade.

This project also includes upgrades to the Kuraby station which we also look forward to.

Other

Its great to see continued funding for Kyabra Community Association. So that they can continue to deliver their important community services. The team at Kyabra do an amazing job supporting and strengthening individual, family, and community life. They provide a range of services to people and children in need and are strong advocates of social justice and equal rights. They work to ensure that everyone no matter where they are from has equal access to opportunities in life.

This budget also sees record investment in housing. Our big social housing build will see a 67 per cent increase to our capital program in the next financial year alone, with an additional \$1.1 billion to help deliver 13,500 new homes. Every Queenslanders deserves a safe and secure roof over their head. Across Australia, housing pressures are having an impact including here in Queensland, with tens of thousands of people migrating here from interstate. Its understandable that people want to move to our great state. And this budget is a budget that supports growth and looks to the future.

This budget is also one that delivers for community safety. Delivering a record operating budget of \$3.281 billion for the Queensland Police Service. It includes \$101.6 million to boost police resources and combat youth crime, \$87.5 million for police recruitment initiatives, and \$56 million for PCYC initiatives and infrastructure.

This is great because it means more police, more facilities and more vehicles and more equipment for out frontline. I am very pleased to see funding for PCYC which means more services, new clubs, refurbishing existing buildings and replacing old ones. These programs keep young people active and engaged in worthwhile activities—helping prevent crime before it happens.

On this note Mr Speaker I wanted to conclude by saying that this is a great budget for Queensland and a great budget for the people of Stretton.