



Speech By
Jim McDonald

MEMBER FOR LOCKYER

Record of Proceedings, 22 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

State Development and Regional Industries Committee, Report

 **Mr McDONALD** (Lockyer—LNP) (3.29 pm): It is a privilege to rise and speak about the estimates hearing before the State Development and Regional Industries Committee. I would like to thank my colleague, the member for Burleigh, for his assistance in the statement of reservation and also all of our shadow ministers—the member for Kawana, the member for Nanango, the member for Warrego and the member for Gympie who assisted us through that process. I would also like to place on record my thanks to the secretariat for the great work they did, particularly Margaret Telford for keeping an eye on the time and making sure that the time granted to the government and opposition was fair. We actually ended up ahead on the ledger in our committee hearing. However, I must say that whilst we received the extra time, the chair, Chris Whiting, did take the opportunity to repeat a few questions and take up some time.

The biggest issue that I have with the estimates process before I go into any detail about it is that the answers provided, particularly in response to opposition questions, are not always directly relevant to the question that is asked. We talked about the Dorothy Dixers that the government asks which are written by the department and asked by the government committee members, trying to promote the government's agenda. The issue I have, in regards to the questions that the opposition ask, is that the ministers are not held to account to answer those questions. I listened to our opposition leader's advice that we will reform the estimates process and we will see some fairness in that process to make sure those answers are being given correctly and properly.

There was a lot of disclosure through our committee. I mention the member for Kawana's questioning of the Deputy Premier and the \$2.4 billion of infrastructure that we talked about that was not going to be spent on Olympic infrastructure. I raised the issue of the north and south transport corridors, but I want to make sure that we see a western transport corridor also delivered as a legacy for the Olympics. Of course, as we heard through the estimates process, there is not a release plan for the infrastructure for the Olympics at this stage, which is very disappointing.

In terms of the other issues, particularly around planning and the housing approval numbers being the lowest on record since 2012, one of the biggest problems we see across South-East Queensland is the lack of available land able to be opened up. I heard the Deputy Premier announce again through this estimates the Caboolture West corridor. I think this was about the third or fourth time

that was announced. Let's see those infrastructure plans coordinated and see these large developments happen because it will then create housing supply that will assist in our housing crisis that our shadow minister, the member for Everton, so eloquently and passionately talks about.

In terms of the local government area, one of the biggest issues, as we had heard earlier, was around this gravel shortage. It was interesting to start off in the state development area, through the QRA, and we ended up with the director-general giving us an undertaking that they would be participants in the working group. During the estimates process, this was prosecuted and we found out that the DAF and resources were part of this working group. I stress to the government that we know the problem is about ILUAs and leases—we know that is the problem—but let's get this coordination group with decision-makers on it so that they do not have to take the time to go back. Get a delegation at that working group, make decisions and let's free up local government to build and repair the flood damage and disaster damage—up to \$7 billion under the QRA right across the state.

As we heard earlier from the member for Nanango, one of the issues was regarding water and particularly water security across the state and, with the Olympics pending, making sure there is enough water security for not only South-East Queensland but also for our farmers. I am pleased to hear that there are some plans coming out regarding that water security and around the use of recycled water. However, one of the biggest issues for my local area is the undetected leaks, and I must say that Rob Foster and Baba Brockman have been working with us to make sure that can be resolved. I thank the executive government who put that cost-of-living measure in place. That is what governments should do to assist our residents. There should be a lot more like them.

(Time expired)