



Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Health and Environment Committee, Report

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (11.27 am): Without good health, life is difficult to navigate. I want to thank the committee, parliamentary staff, the department and ministerial staff for the preparation that went into a robust estimates hearing. The Mackay Base Hospital's RANZCOG accreditation has been restored. Mackay Base Hospital is anticipating the return of accredited obstetrics and gynaecological specialist trainees in 2024. The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, RANZCOG, has advised the health service that trainees in their third or fourth year of basic training are available to rotate through Mackay Base Hospital. I thank Chief Medical Officer Dr Charles Pain and his team for this great outcome for the Mackay Base Hospital. I take this opportunity to thank all health workers in Queensland for looking after Queenslanders.

Some very experienced health leaders have now joined the Mackay Hospital and Health Board. A new six-member board has been appointed to govern the Mackay Hospital and Health Service and board members bring a vast range of experience across fields of emergency medicine, business, nursing and law. I look forward to meeting with Helen Darch OAM, the chair of the board, tomorrow. Minister Fentiman is rolling out the Palaszczuk government's historic hospital and health infrastructure spend. This is only possible by distributing coal royalties to the whole of Queensland and includes the Mackay Base Hospital's \$256 million 128-bed expansion for paediatric, medical and surgical patients whilst also delivering more acute and subacute women's, children's and neonatal services in our city.

To take pressure off our Mackay Base Hospital, the services surrounding Mackay within the Mackay HHS are receiving upgrades and rebuilds. The Sarina Hospital's space for allied health and staff accommodation is nearly completed and, weather permitting, patients will begin using the purpose-built hospital on Brewers Road by the end of this year, and thank you to the team at Woollams for their commitment to this project. The Moranbah Hospital staff accommodation rebuild and the new helipad tender have been awarded. Planning is well underway and sod turning is not far off. The hospital planning reflects the needs of the local mining community, with an emergency department that can expand into the ward if there is a major mine accident. Medical imaging is next door to the emergency department and I know that everyone is excited about the helipad that will be built on the hospital grounds. Congratulations to the Moranbah community, led by Mayor Baker, for their campaigning to get this hospital built. The Proserpine Hospital will receive a refurbishment of its clinical and training areas, clinical assessment rooms and office space. Through the Rural and Regional Renal Program, it will begin renal services, saving patients from needing to travel to Mackay.

Since it was rebuilt, the Mackay Base Hospital has needed a new, improved car park and I am excited to confirm that it is on its way—a \$75 million multilevel car park with an additional 1,000 car spaces. The car park will be built and owned by the state government and managed by the Mackay Hospital and Health Service. This will ensure that parking fees will be kept to a minimum. The hospital and health service is currently consulting with local residents, staff, patients and visitors to make sure that it gets the parking right.

We know that the Queensland public health system is under pressure from increased demands for services as well as the shortage of a skilled workforce. The challenge of workforce shortages is particularly real for rural, regional and remote hospitals and health facilities. The Mackay HHS is no different and I welcome the \$5,000 payments available to nursing and midwife students to complete their final pracs in a rural and regional setting. When students experience life in the regions, they are more likely to apply for work outside the south-east corner on the completion of their study.