




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGEES

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2023

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

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (11.57 pm): I rise to speak in support of a fantastic budget. I am proud to be a member of a government that has listened to the community and that uses this budget to make significant investments in the areas that really matter: cost-of-living relief, housing, health and community safety. I thank the Treasurer for this excellent budget that benefits all of Queensland. The Big Build that only a Labor government will deliver provides the infrastructure needed for Queensland today and provides for where we are going as a state into the future. There is record investment in hospitals, schools, housing and roads and the highest value cost-of-living relief in the country—a budget that delivers for all Queenslanders as only a Labor government will.

As Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs, I am also proud of the significant investments made in my portfolios in this budget. My department plays a vital role in protecting, restoring and promoting Queensland's natural environment, its cultural heritage and its cultural diversity. Whether it is through scientific research, policy programs or the management of our national parks, the department makes a significant contribution to our state's current and future prosperity and wellbeing.

Much of what we do is at the heart of the much sought after lifestyle our great state of Queensland is renowned for. We are proudly recognised as a global biodiversity hotspot, with 50 per cent of species who make their home in Queensland found nowhere else on the planet. The decisions we make today matter for what our children inherit tomorrow. From the reef to the rainforest and to the outback, our unique biodiversity and natural beauty underpins our thriving tourism industry, attracting visitors from across the globe and generating tens of thousands of jobs for Queenslanders.

Our national parks are central to our efforts to conserve our environment and recover key species, including those that are listed as threatened. Queensland's entire protected area estate covers an area double the size of Tasmania and includes five World Heritage areas, and we are committed growing that even further. That is why we are continuing to invest in expanding our network of protected areas with a further \$30 million for land acquisitions allocated in this budget. That is on top of the historic commitment of \$262.5 million in last year's budget.

While we are expanding our protected areas, we also need to ensure we manage these areas to protect their high ecological values, enable world-class experiences and support our tourism industry. We are investing \$51.9 million over four years to improve visitor experiences in our national parks which drives tourism and supports regional small businesses and employment for First Nations people.

We are committing \$38.6 million over five years and \$11.9 million ongoing to continue to deliver world-class protected area management to benefit all Queenslanders for years to come. A huge part of how we deliver that management is through our park rangers—a workforce which our government has rebuilt to be 800 rangers strong and one which will grow by an additional 30 positions in QPWS thanks to the funding provided in this budget.

Our government has also committed \$49.9 million over four years and \$16.4 million ongoing for the continuation and growth of the Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program, a program that will increase the number of Indigenous rangers to 200 by the end of this year. These rangers undertake culturally appropriate conservation and land management, while gaining accreditation to progress further career pathways in the sector.

Our partnerships with the traditional custodians of this beautiful country are a clear highlight of this year's budget for environment. These partnerships promote respect for culture, honour native title rights and progress active co-stewardship of country, allowing us to walk side by side with one another as we protect and care for our precious lands and waters. That is why we have committed \$38.6 million over four years and \$10.4 million per year ongoing to honour these commitments. We are ensuring true partnerships with the Quandamooka people of the lands and waters of Mulgumpin and Minjerribah by investing \$31.9 million over four years in world-leading protected area management, including new fire management programs and new ranger posts.

In my electorate of Nudgee, I am pleased to see my schools will benefit from this year's record \$17.8 billion investment in education, with \$300,000 allocated to Nundah State School through the School Infrastructure Enhancement Program, to name just one of those benefiting. There are also fantastic budget outcomes for local sporting clubs in my electorate, with \$250,000 allocated to Zillmere Eagles for much needed upgrades to their change rooms and nearly \$150,000 to North Brisbane Rugby Union Club in Wavell Heights to enhance their lighting. I thank the sports minister for coming out and making the announcement in the electorate of Nudgee in that regard. These are just a few of the wins for my beloved electorate of Nudgee, and I look forward to delivering on these commitments in the coming year.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the remainder of my speech has been reviewed and approved for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated into the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

Speaker, ensuring our precious wildlife and people can safely exist side by side is a priority for this Government.

We are committed to effective crocodile management that delivers appropriate public safety while enabling the survival of estuarine crocodiles in the wild.

Likewise, we are committed to working with Local Councils to manage urban flying-fox roosts that can cause significant concern in communities.

That's why we are investing \$6 million over four years and \$300,000 per year ongoing for these two critical public safety programs that are underpinned by collaboration and leading science.

Speaker, protecting our wildlife, and our lands and environment also means moving Queensland to a zero-waste society—and we remain strongly committed to our targets in this regard.

A zero-waste society involves reducing the amount of waste we generate, repairing and reusing items where possible, recycling properly, and only sending what is absolutely necessary to landfill.

Keeping more waste out of landfill creates nearly three times as many jobs, when compared to putting it in the ground as landfill.

A circular economy will drive investment in Queensland's resource recovery and recycling industry, develop new markets and support businesses to grow their bottom line.

That's why we are continuing to invest in the Palaszczuk Government's \$2.1 billion waste plan, to transform Queensland's waste and resource recovery industry.

This Budget includes an additional \$234 million as part of our waste and recovery package, increasing our commitment to support councils in implementing regional waste and resource recovery management plans.

\$94.4 million will be allocated to waste recovery projects, like Circular Economy Initiatives and State-wide Behaviour Change Programs which will help move us forward on our goal to a zero-waste Queensland.

We are also bringing forward \$139.6 million of payments to local councils to support reducing waste through our waste levy, helping to meet resource recovery targets and importantly reduce impacts on households.

This will help councils to partner with industry to build new infrastructure and equipment to improve their waste management and recycling outcomes.

Speaker, just as our waste and resource recovery industry transformation is critical to our State's future economy, our science capability is also critical in positioning us to take advantage of the knowledge-based industries of the future.

The Palaszczuk Government understands the importance of investing in science to grow our State's economy and position us to be competitive on the global stage.

We continue to work with researchers and industry to grow a thriving science sector that allows us to secure strategic international partnerships.

We've committed \$5.2 million over four years and \$1.5 million per year ongoing to continue our investment in science engagement and strategic international partnerships.

There is much Queenslanders can gain from international partnerships as well as cultural diversity, both for our economy and on a more personal level.

Queensland has a vibrant and diverse culture. Our State is home to people from many backgrounds, starting with the rich cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples over the past 60,000 years.

Now people from over 220 countries and territories call Queensland home.

And our cultural diversity is increasing, with over 21 per cent of Queenslanders born overseas.

It's just as important as ever that we invest in a community that values diversity, inclusion, equity and respect.

The Palaszczuk Government is committing increased funding of \$4.7 million over four years and \$1.2 million per year ongoing for multicultural projects and events that engage people from diverse backgrounds and the wider community to contribute to a unified, harmonious and inclusive State.

Speaker, the Department of Environment and Science is committed to ensuring Queensland is celebrated as one of the world's most diverse natural environments, for our world-leading science and our welcoming and inclusive communities.

The budget for the 2023-24 financial year will ensure that the department continues its important work to deliver these outcomes.

I commend this Budget to the House, and I look forward to the benefits it will deliver to the people of my Nudgee electorate, and indeed to all Queenslanders.

Debate, on motion of Ms Linard, adjourned.