




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2023

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

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (4.43 pm): I rise to talk to the budget bills for 2023. At the outset, I would like to talk about how wonderful the Theodore electorate is. Positioned in the northern Gold Coast, we are the green behind the gold of the golden sand beaches from Surfers Paradise to the Broadwater. We have the slopes of Mount Tamborine. We have theme parks. It is truly a beautiful part of the Gold Coast.

However, in recent years—it is gradually getting worse—we have seen more and more homeless people appear in our local parks, car parks and streets. It is a tragedy that this is happening in our First World, developed country, especially in the state of Queensland. The government talks about new social housing being built and properties being bought, but in my electorate and surrounding electorates on the Gold Coast I see tent cities appearing. The government talks about numbers of houses, but that is cold comfort to those who are living rough in their vehicles or in tents in parks. Government members may joke about it, but these are real people who are struggling.

We have a housing crisis in this state. We desperately need to open up more tracts of land. When it comes to social housing, the department should not be buying already developed houses. We need to build houses. We do not need to compete with the current rental market. That is forcing up prices even further and making it even more difficult for my local pensioners, who are at their wits' end. They are now being forced to move into houses with their family members because they cannot afford to live by themselves anymore. This is having huge ramifications for families on the northern Gold Coast.

Another issue that is cutting deep is the youth crime epidemic, which is strangling this state. I regularly hear from residents voicing their absolute frustration at the catch-and-release policies. The police are equally frustrated, because these individuals are on the streets before the ink on the paperwork is dry. Victims come from hardworking families. They own tradie vehicles and service vehicles. Their livelihoods are being stolen and ending up burnt out or crashed into another car.

Another disappointing aspect of this budget is that 95 per cent of the funding for Coomera Hospital is in the distant future. We will be lucky if it is built by the end of this decade, but we need those beds now. The problem is: by the time the hospital is built we will need a lot more beds. As the member for Coomera keeps saying in this parliament, we are the fastest growing region in South-East Queensland and one of the fastest growing regions in the country. We seem to forget about that.

Mr Bailey: Why didn't you do anything when you were in power?

Mr BOOTHMAN: That is a typical comment from the Minister for Transport. I will talk about his department a little later.

One thing I am passionate about is the education of students in my electorate and on the northern Gold Coast. In recent times I have been asking a lot of questions on notice of the Minister for Education, and I appreciate her responses. I want to talk about one aspect when it comes to Investing for Success funding.

ICSEA, which is the Index of Community Socio-educational Advantage, is used as a measure for many aspects of educational needs in our schools. What is ICSEA? According to the Department of Education's own website—

ICSEA allows for comparisons to be made between a selected school and all students with a similar background that are matched according to the socio-educational advantage ... and thereby allowing fair comparisons of NAPLAN results.

The website goes on to say—

ICSEA values are calculated on a scale which has a median of 1000 and a standard deviation of 100. ICSEA values typically range from approximately 500 (representing schools with extremely disadvantaged student backgrounds) to about 1300 (representing schools with extremely advantaged student backgrounds).

In a response to a question that I received from the minister she talked about the Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage as an indicator, but ICSEA considers methodologies that clearly indicate student economic and educational factors and geographical locations. Let us compare some funding in and around my region, and I am going to take Coorparoo State School as an example for comparison. Coorparoo State School has an ICSEA number of 1136, which is quite high, and receives \$419 per student. Cedar Creek State School has an ICSEA number of 989, which is below the average, and receives \$298 per student. Park Lake State School has an ICSEA number of 1027 and receives \$299 per student and Helensvale State School, which also has an ICSEA of 1027, receives \$311 per student. I asked the minister why Coorparoo State School is getting more money than some of my local schools and this is the answer from the minister—

In the case of Coorparoo State School, this commitment meant its 2022 I4S funding amount received a top-up of \$94,989 in order to match the school's 2015 GRG funding. This top-up brought its per student funding to \$419 ... Without this top-up, its 2022 student funding would have been \$302 per student.

Some \$302 is still better than the \$299 for Park Lake and the \$298 for Cedar Creek. I am sure that those schools also deserve a top-up, because let us not just aim for good results; let us aim for great results for these kids because every child is worth a decent amount of money to achieve their best. The minister needs to look into this and needs to change this because it is not fair on these children and it is not fair on their parents. They have a lower ICSEA number than Coorparoo State School, so why are they being penalised?

I also want to thank the Minister for Education for sending an email letting us know that there is \$1,152,000 spread across eight schools which equates to about \$144,000 per school, but Oxenford State School desperately needs a new administration building with better professional development areas to allow the staff to use their skills to create a better environment for their students and learn new strategies. Helensvale State School needs a refurbishment to its library and the school is very passionate about this.

I now turn to the department of main roads and QTRIP. On 14 October 2020 the Minister for Main Roads announced a commitment of \$975,000 to bolster the riverbank upstream from the John Muntz Bridge to create local jobs and improve flood resilience. Interestingly though, this no longer appears on QTRIP. Let us talk about this road. Some 18,989 vehicles cross the John Muntz Bridge daily. It is the main thoroughfare to areas in Upper Coomera, Maudsland, Wongawallan and up to Tamborine Mountain. When this road went out in 2017 it was devastating for my local community—devastating. Locals had to use roads which simply did not have the capacity to take the extra traffic and local businesses on Mount Tamborine almost went broke because people could not get up the mountain because Tamborine-Oxenford Road is the main thoroughfare to Tamborine Mountain and parts of Upper Coomera. Let us talk about the populations. Upper Coomera has 27,000 people, Wongawallan has 1,400 people, Tamborine Mountain has 8,100 people and Maudsland has about 8,000 people. That shows how many people live around this area and that road is the lifeblood and that bridge is the lifeblood. Residents are fearful that the next flood will sever the connection road again and we will be forced back into traffic chaos.

The budget talks about the massive cost blowout of the three rail stations planned for the Gold Coast. Many residents are still waiting for the minister to finally relent and give them the 500 car spaces they need at the Hope Island train station car park. If they do not get those car spaces, people will be forced to park in local streets.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: The minister knows that they will be parking in local streets and those local streets do not have the capacity.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: He may find that funny and he can laugh as much as he likes, but those residents—

Mr BAILEY: Mr Deputy Speaker Martin, I rise to a point of order. The comment by the member for Theodore that I was laughing is inaccurate and deliberately misleading. I find it offensive and he should withdraw.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I withdraw. Let me move on to sound barriers for the section north of Saltwater Creek on the western side of the Coomera Connector. The department is not planning any on the western side north of Saltwater Creek, so that means that the sound will boom through all of those houses around Helensvale and around River Links Estate, and that is not fair on those residents. The minister needs to address this because those residents have a right to have a life. They have a right to not have sound booming through their houses and through their bedrooms at night.

Mrs Gerber: I hope the minister's listening.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I would love to invite the minister out for a barbecue in that park right next to the Coomera Connector. I am sure we could cook a sausage sizzle and have—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Martin): Through the chair.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I can tell the minister that I am very good at cooking on the barbecue. I get plenty of practice in my local community. I again ask the minister to address this.

As I was saying earlier about the housing crisis that is enveloping our state, more and more families are moving into Maudsland together—that is, parents are moving in with children and pooling their money to reduce the cost of their house and to reduce their cost of living. The cost of living and power prices are continually going up. Whilst we welcome a nice little nest egg from the state, this is not going to help them in the near future when that extra cash dries up. They are still going to have those massive power rises. I ask the minister to put some bus transport in Maudsland because the people there need it as much as anybody else because more and more elderly people are moving into that area with their families because they cannot afford to live by themselves any longer.

(Time expired)