




Speech By
Hon. Meaghan Scanlon

MEMBER FOR GAVEN

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2023

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

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for Housing) (2.57 pm): It is so wonderful to follow the member for Everton. It was very interesting to hear the member for Everton say that actions speak louder than words—a bloke who was the LNP housing minister who saw social housing—

Mr MANDER: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I take offence at being called a 'bloke', and I ask that she withdraw.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Lui): The member has taken offence. Do you withdraw?

Ms SCANLON: I withdraw. Under the watch of the member for Everton we saw social housing go backwards by 428 homes, yet he has the audacity to come in here and talk about making sure actions speak louder than words. It is absolute rank hypocrisy. He also talked about some data, and that was the Report on Government Services. I want to be really clear, because I have heard the member for Everton spout some of these claims before. The data he is referring to is net recurrent expenditure. That does not include capital. Every time he talks about that, it is incredibly important for Queenslanders to know that that does not include capital expenditure.

We heard 10 minutes from the member for Everton. We heard around 56 minutes from the Leader of the Opposition. We heard essentially just slogans, no actual policies. The only new thing I heard today was that the LNP does not support us purchasing NRAS properties. They do not support our government purchasing over 300 National Rental Affordability Scheme properties that would help vulnerable Queenslanders—just like the week before last they owned up and said that they do not support us leasing properties from the private market that helps 2,000 people keep a roof over their head.

It was good to see those opposite finally support our \$2 billion Housing Investment Fund. Apparently, though, that memo has not gotten to Peter Dutton, because he is effectively blocking the very same fund at a federal level right now that is stopping investment to deliver 30,000 homes. Those opposite talk about community housing. This very fund would deliver more community housing. In fact, there has never been more money available to community housing than there is right now. Again all we heard were just slogans. Those opposite say that they want to see more community housing, but they have not articulated how other than what we are already doing.

What those opposite did neglect to say and what I note they often neglect to talk about is the public housing data. We know why that is, and that is because they have an ideological problem with public ownership in this state. They always want to privatise—off-load—assets on to other people. We know they do that because that is what they did last time. As I said, they saw a reduction in social housing by 428 homes. They talk about the fact that they want to see more social housing being built, but yet when they had their term in office they cut the social housing capital program by 90 per cent. It is a bit hard to build more social housing if you are cutting the very budget that delivers more social housing. We heard multiple times the Leader of the Opposition cherrypick data. I was also very

interested to hear him talk about public housing, as I said, and I think it is important for the House to note that Queensland is the only state that has seen public housing increase over the last 10 years—the only state. In every other state their public ownership of public housing has gone backwards, but because of our government's investment and our policy settings around public ownership we have increased that.

I was also very interested to hear the Leader of the Opposition's comments around the Closing the Gap targets, particularly given his recent comments that he does not support a voice. This is what I want to know: if he is that interested in Closing the Gap targets around overcrowding, where was his voice in 2018 when the federal LNP government cut funding to the national partnership around remote Indigenous housing? It went to zero dollars in the budget paper. That program was started by both a state and federal Labor government working together and saw overcrowding in remote Indigenous communities decrease. So I will not be lectured to about overcrowding by those opposite. I particularly will not be lectured to about it given that in this budget we are delivering an additional \$128 million for housing solutions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We have also heard a lot from those opposite about the cost of projects. You would have to be living under a rock if you did not acknowledge the escalation in cost associated with building projects at the moment. If those opposite do not want us to spend what it costs to deliver projects, the only solution they have is to cut, and that is exactly what they did last time. We are unapologetically investing what we need to deliver record investment in social housing—a \$5 billion spend. The Leader of the Opposition though had 56 minutes for his speech and could not say the words 'we support progressive coal royalties'. If they cannot support the very measures that will fund increased investment in social and affordable housing, then the only way that they are going to be able to fund projects is to cut them.

I want to also remark on some of the Gold Coast projects, because I find it very interesting hearing from those opposite about projects like the three new train stations as part of our Cross River Rail project, the Coomera Hospital, the Gold Coast University Hospital expansion, the mental health rehabilitation unit, the Robina Hospital expansion and a satellite hospital in Tugun. They get up and talk about these projects but fail to admit to Queenslanders that none of those projects would exist if they were elected to government because none of them on the Gold Coast committed to any of those projects. The only thing they committed to was a planning study for the Coomera Hospital—no actual money for the infrastructure that you would need to build the thing, just a planning study. There would be no mental health rehabilitation unit at our Gold Coast University Hospital, there would be no expansion there, there would be no expansion at Robina Hospital and there would be no Tugun satellite hospital. I know the member for Currumbin gets up and rants about that project, but it would not exist if her party was elected to government. Gold Coasters know that, and the *Gold Coast Bulletin* knows that. I table the front page of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* from the other day which says 'State's huge cash splash on coast health and transport'.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 14 June 2023, titled 'Hey Big Spender—State's huge cash splash on Coast health and transport' [869](#).

It is only Labor governments that are delivering in this budget for the Gold Coast, whether it be for the health infrastructure that our community needs, the housing that we need or cost-of-living measures that we know so many people need right now through power bill rebates and universal access to Kindy for All. This is a Labor budget that we are all incredibly proud of and I commend the bills to the House.