




Speech By
Peter Russo
MEMBER FOR TOOHEY

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

 **Mr RUSSO** (Toohey—ALP) (4.39 pm): It is my pleasure to rise to speak in support of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2023 and the Appropriation Bill 2023. I am grateful for the opportunity to be here as the member for Toohey and to speak about how these bills will strengthen the strong foundation the Palaszczuk government has created not only for my community but for all of Queensland. I thank Premier Palaszczuk and Treasurer Dick for their continued hard work and their commitment to envision, build and maintain a vibrant, thriving Queensland. Without their leadership, Queensland would not be in the sound economic position we all enjoy. I read through the budget papers with great interest, and I congratulate the Treasurer on providing a sound platform for Queensland's continued future growth.

I know that many Queenslanders are facing cost-of-living pressures. Household budgets are stretched and have at times broken due to price increases across the board. Family budgets just do not have the capacity to cover a bit more here and there. This budget will deliver key measures to ease cost-of-living pressures on Queensland families. The government is helping Queenslanders with an electricity rebate of \$550 for all Queensland households. Eligible concession card holders will be able to receive total relief of up to \$1,072 a year on their electricity bills. What a comfort to households worried about paying their electricity bills this year.

The list of ways to reduce cost-of-living pressures continues. Seniors and eligible concession card holders can receive a reduction in their vehicle registration, receive free basic prescription glasses and get access to free dental care. Eligible home owners aged 60 or over can receive assistance to make security improvements to their home or undertake critical home maintenance services. Small businesses have not been forgotten either, with a \$650 rebate on their electricity bills.

The QEII Hospital expansion will deliver 1,120 construction jobs during the build phase. The need for car parking at QEII has been included, with project planning underway for a multistorey car park at that hospital. Good car-parking facilities support the successful functioning of a hospital. Better facilities mean that better care is delivered where and when it is needed. The QEII facility will work in tandem with a bolstered workforce and the new satellite hospital at Eight Mile Plains. My electorate has been very fortunate to be included in the rollout of the new satellite hospital model of health care. While construction of the satellite hospital at Eight Mile Plains is still underway, I often visit the site to check on construction progress. Once completed, this facility will offer dialysis, chemotherapy treatment through the cancer day unit and allied health services including wound care and musculoskeletal treatments. It is clear that the Palaszczuk government is responding to the needs of the community.

Kindy is a place where all our little ones learn. They learn how to make friends, explore new environments, gain confidence and just have fun. There will be up to 15 hours per week of free kindy for all four-year-old Queensland children. Families will save up to \$4,600 a year. This is not only creating cleverer Queenslanders for the future; stay-at-home parents also will have the opportunity to return to the workforce and create financial security for themselves and their children. I commend the bills to the House.