



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH

Record of Proceedings, 23 August 2023


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Transport and Resources Committee, Report

 **Mr KING** (Kurwongbah—ALP) (11.38 am): Today I rise to speak to the estimates report tabled by the Transport and Resources Committee, this report being No. 38 of our committee. The committee's estimates hearing went from 9 am to 8.15 pm, and it is always a long day. Once again some visiting opposition members spent most of their time attacking rather than analysing expenditure, but that is nothing new. It was, however, disappointing to me that the member for Chatsworth, whom I have always found quite effective as a shadow minister, was largely sidelined for the first session while the deputy opposition leader and the member for Maroochydore came in to deliver a purely political attack line. The members had no regard for standing orders and should both know better. They constantly complain about the estimates process and times and then completely waste time.

As it was, I gave the non-government members considerably more time in all sessions. They could have genuinely used the time for legitimate questions, but chose not to. I was also quite disappointed in the way they spoke to public servants on the day. After the sideshow ended some civility returned and some interrogation of the budget occurred. It was good to hear there is money put aside for the Torres Strait marine infrastructure program. We learned during an inquiry conducted by this committee's predecessor in the last parliament that this program was necessary and it is good to see it starting. In my area, Burpengary station is getting an upgrade. Work has started. As this is something I have campaigned for since my success getting funding for upgrading Dakabin station, I am particularly pleased with that news.

From the session with the Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement we were provided more details on the rebuild of QBuild, which is providing funding for more apprentices and the rapid accommodation and apprenticeship centres in both Eagle Farm and Cairns. We received more detail about clean energy hubs and the huge employment opportunities in the energy supply industry from the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, as well as our pumped hydro projects. We heard how the CopperString powerline from Townsville to Mount Isa will open up the resources sector there, as well as helping towns along the way.

The minister for resources finished up and we heard about the value of the Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy which will see \$245 million in investment to accelerate growth in our critical minerals sector. We are moving on from digging and shipping raw materials to processing and refining critical minerals and manufacturing high-value products—making it in Queensland for Queensland. We heard about the two critical mineral zones, one in Julia Creek/Richmond and the other in Mount Isa, and the \$75 million investment to support this proactive and coordinated approach to the development of critical minerals projects.

I always make a point of allowing just about every question to proceed to ministers and officials despite the imputation and arguments in a lot of them. However, this year there were a few questions from visiting members that were loaded statements rather than questions. I had to ask they be rephrased, sometimes quite a few times. I felt at the time almost like a kindergarten teacher. It is very disappointing when you consider I was chairing a proceeding that should be comprised of professional, educated adults and I wish some would act that way.

Finally, on the opposition's statement of reservation—or rhetoric—they whinge and whine about the massive investment in our energy system yet they fail to ever reflect on the fact we would not have an energy network to invest in if they were in government. They would have sold it off. Thanks to our government's investment in energy we have a stronger, cleaner network that pays tangible dividends to Queenslanders—hundreds of dollars in dividends, in fact. While we are helping Queenslanders pay their bills the opposition is not even sure how it would pay its own bills in government; with such a clear division about sharing the wealth of our resources sector—like we are—to benefit all Queensland communities.

I would like to finish by thanking the members of the Transport and Resources Committee and visiting members like the members for Chatsworth, Condamine and Warrego, who were mature and sensible in their approach. Once again I would also like to thank our extremely hardworking secretariat team, Hansard and all the parliamentary, ministerial and departmental staff who worked so hard to make estimates happen. People do not acknowledge just how much work goes into the process. I, for one, appreciate it. I commend the report to the House.