




Speech By
Hon. Dr Steven Miles

MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA

Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2023

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

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Murrumba—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister Assisting the Premier on Olympic and Paralympic Games Infrastructure) (12.11 pm): After sitting through that for 56 minutes, the one thing we now all know for sure is that the Leader of the Opposition quite appreciates the sound of his own voice. I do, however, have some great news for the House.

Ms Palaszczuk: Tell us.

Mr Dick: Tell us.

Dr MILES: I take those interjections from the Premier and the Treasurer. I have some fantastic news for the House: hot off the presses new ABS labour force data confirming we have now ticked over more than 500,000 new jobs created here in Queensland since the election of the Palaszczuk government in 2015. In fact, to be precise—and we should be precise because every one of these is another Queenslanders in a job who would not be otherwise—520,949 new jobs have been created here in Queensland by the Palaszczuk Labor government because we put creating jobs as our No. 1 priority.

The Leader of the Opposition says that the best thing about his job is listening to Queenslanders, but I think we have just seen that he is a lot better at talking than he is at listening. He does not listen at all. In fact, he cannot listen—apart from maybe the occasional LNP branch meeting. All he knows is the LNP playbook and that playbook starts with personal attacks—dirty personal attacks. How unbecoming to use the privileged position of the Leader of the Opposition making a budget reply speech and having to correct the record after making a shameful personal attack. Do members know what stands out to me? These personal attacks are nearly always against women. They are nearly always men over there attacking women over here. Of course, it cannot really go the other way because there are not any women over there. They come in here and use that platform to make personal attacks on our Premier. That is all he knows how to do.

I will tell members what else: if the LNP leader listened to Queenslanders, he would know that Queenslanders love our state. They want a government that talks up our state, not one that talks our state down. Did members hear anything in that 56 minutes that said anything positive about our state? When I talk to Queenslanders they love our state, particularly at this time of year, but think about it: unemployment at historic lows, massive jobs growth, strong economic performance across every measure, record surpluses. However, if someone did not know all of that and all they heard was the 56 minutes of the Leader of the Opposition, they would think the sky was falling in. How extraordinary to spend 56 minutes and not once mention jobs. Not once did he mention jobs and not once did he mention the economy. This is the budget reply and the Leader of the Opposition did not mention jobs or the economy. How incredible is it that he took an hour to talk down Queensland without mentioning the economy!

If the Leader of the Opposition listened to Queenslanders, he would know that Queenslanders support our health workers. We think that our health workers do a great job and we are actually pretty sick and tired of the LNP criticising them every single day. They do not deserve to be attacked. They do not deserve to be called 'duds'. If he really listened to Queenslanders he would know that Queenslanders want the government to deliver the projects that our growing state needs and he stated repeatedly his insistence that the LNP would cut these projects back to their original budget. Let us think about what that means. Queenslanders know that building costs have gone up and that, when costs increase, to deliver the original project you need to increase the funding. If you refuse to increase the funding, either you need to cut those projects back to their original budget or you have to cut whole projects. In his speech he effectively confirmed \$11 billion of additional costs that would not be met by the LNP, and he pointed to Cross River Rail. If there is one thing I could say it is that Cross River Rail would have been delivered cheaper if it had not been cancelled the first time and if those opposite had not rejected the federal government funds that were on the table, there and ready. In fact, it would be built now. We would be catching trains on it now. They would be trains built in India, but that is a separate matter.

Here is where the test will be though: come the election in October next year, the actual cost of each and every one of these projects will be known. If the leader of the LNP is going to go to the election and say that he will not fund them at their cost, then it will be clear that he is cutting them. I tell members: I listen to Queenslanders and I know that they want those projects built. They want those projects delivered. I thought it was amusing that the Leader of the Opposition noted how many former mayors and councillors he had on his team, because he does not often like to recall how many former ministers he has on that team. Of course there are many, and he is one of them, and so he criticised us for not increasing funding to councils through Works for Queensland, which is our flagship funding program for local governments—

A government member: Which they refused to commit to at election time.

Dr MILES:—which they refused to commit to at election time. He did not note all of the extra funds in the budget to ensure sustainability of remote Indigenous councils and certainly did not mention that when he was the local government minister he said that the state government could not afford to give local government any more money and that they should find new ways to fund themselves. I found this 56 minutes of hypocrisy quite incredible. He again attacked our satellite hospitals, and I will tell members: I have been in a few of these satellite hospitals now and if he listens to Queenslanders after they have been to these satellite hospitals he will not be criticising them anymore. He criticised our performance on recycling when the reason Queensland still lags on recycling is that we are catching up to the other states that did not have a reckless LNP government come in and abolish the price signal that drives investment into recycling and waste recovery. We continue to recover. We continue to catch up from that highly irresponsible policy delivered, in part, by the Leader of the Opposition when he was the local government minister.

Let me turn to the very few new policies that were included in the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. The first one, which was in the paper today, was the insistence that they will freeze consultants and overhaul the Public Service. I thought his choice of words was amusing. He said they will freeze consultants and overhaul the Public Service 'like never before'. It is probably an appropriate choice of words because the last time they said it they did not do it either. In 2012 when they went to the election with a commitment to freeze spending on consultants and said that public servants had nothing to fear, the next thing they did was bring in Peter Costello—a consultant—to give public servants a hell of a lot of things to fear. They went on then to spend \$100 million on consultants from the top end of town to plan their sale of our assets. The Leader of the Opposition himself paid KPMG to lead the council deamalgamation process. That is one of the very few new announcements those opposite made—the same one that they promised in 2012 and never delivered on.

The second big announcement was that they would stop buying homes for homeless people. What do you say to the hundreds of people living in homes right now built with those funds who would not have homes?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Lister): I understand that there is some provocation, but the interjections from my left are too many and too loud.

Dr MILES: Let us return to the claims of the Leader of the Opposition that he listens. If he really listens his speech would have set out a detailed plan to address cost of living, like our budget did, but did we hear one? We did not. In fact, all we heard from them was reported electricity price increases without consideration of the rebates, without including the impact of the rebates to bring those bills down. To walk in here and say that bills will go up where for most Queenslanders bills will go down, and

for pensioners probably down to zero, is so disingenuous and dishonest, particularly to those pensioners. He pointed to the impact of the explosion at the Callide Power Station. Let us make it very clear that if the state government did not own the Callide Power Station it would not be being rebuilt right now. If those opposite had sold it off, a private sector operator would never rebuild it. It would have been shut, in fact, years ago. The impact of that would have been massive, as one can see in other states where privatised electricity generators are choosing to close their assets.

Finally, the big test that was set for the Leader of the Opposition was whether he would keep our progressive coal royalties. I want to point this out because he was very careful with his language. He said he would support them in this budget, but he never said he would keep them. This goes to the deal that they have done with the Queensland Resources Council to cut coal taxes if they are elected. They have not ruled out cutting coal taxes if they are elected.

Jobs are at the heart of what this government does and they are at the heart of what we have funded in my agency in this budget. The Big Build will create jobs over the next four years—\$89 billion over the next four years, supporting 58,000 jobs in the next year alone. That takes our total infrastructure already delivered or committed to a total of \$185 billion. Queensland is embarking on our biggest decade of infrastructure delivery and it is the Palaszczuk government that is funding this big build. We are expanding the services Queenslanders rely on, building more hospitals, more satellite hospitals, increasing hospital spending, more schools, we are delivering Cross River Rail and Bruce Highway upgrades, we are making trains in Maryborough again where they should have always been made. This Big Build will generate jobs, improve services and improve our lifestyle. We are delivering the projects in the Renewable Energy and Jobs Plan: the SuperGrid, \$1 billion for Pioneer.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Kawana, order.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members to my left. I will start warning members under the standing orders.

Mr Crisafulli interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are skating on thin ice.

Dr MILES: Our \$80 million in land acquisition in Gladstone will allow us to continue to create new jobs there; \$45 million in the Regional Industrial Land Improvement Program will give trunk infrastructure to new estates in Mackay and in Gladstone.

Can I finally say how proud I am that this budget delivers for my community in Murrumba. It delivers better health services, better schools and jobs in our community. We are delivering the operational funding for the Kallangur satellite hospital. Despite the opposition of those opposite, I am incredibly proud of that new facility and the services it will be able to deliver, things like renal dialysis closer to home, oral health services closer to home, outpatient services like geriatric assessments and a rapid access clinic. We are delivering a new clinic at the Dakabin State High School that will service both the high and the primary school and new classrooms are funded for Kallangur State School and Griffin State School. People in Murrumba are most excited about free kindy. There are so many kids in our community and places like Dakabin and Kallangur that have not been able to access kindy will be able to now because we have made it free. This is a great Labor budget.