




Speech By  
**Amanda Camm**

**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE  
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL; STATE FINANCIAL  
INSTRUCTIONS AND METWAY MERGER AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Ms CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (5.53 pm): I will begin my contribution to the Appropriations Bill by taking a look at the portfolios I hold as opposition spokesperson: firstly, child safety, in particular residential care. In the past 12 months we saw a review into residential care. We need to remind Queenslanders that the reason for the review is that there are increasing numbers of children in residential care. In fact, the number has grown by 80 per cent over the last five years. No other jurisdiction in the nation has experienced this growth. Almost one in three children in residential care in Queensland today is under the age of 12. There were community concerns about links to youth justice issues and increasing incidents within the residential care system. There were complaints arising about the sexual exploitation of young people in residential care. There were complaints about the quality of care, in particular around unregulated providers and unlicensed providers operating. We saw this government embark on a review into itself that was meant to address the increasing number of young people in care.

The recommendations outlined in the residential care review do not fully address the increasing number of children under the age of 12 in residential care. QFCC modelling of residential care shows there are currently 1,829 young people in residential care, 308 of whom are under the age of 10. QFCC modelling of residential care further sees an increase of 2,766 places by 2018. This is an extraordinary number of young people in residential care. This means that babies who wake up are being cared for by different individuals throughout the night. This Labor government should be ashamed of how it has treated—and how it has allowed a system to be created for—the most vulnerable in this state. The government has failed to take responsibility for what has occurred on their watch. Residential care workers have been assaulted; young residents have been assaulted. The government is not even tracking data to consider the real impacts on young people. The residential care road map does not deal with one of the fundamental issues of residential care, which is why is there a growing number of children being placed in residential care? The child safety system is at crisis. We have a workforce with record vacancy rates that is under enormous pressures. In my own community of Mackay and Whitsunday, child safety officers are dealing with caseloads in excess of 40! It is disgraceful. We are just waiting for a time bomb. A child will fall through the gaps and we will see another preventable death under the watch of this state government.

I also cover domestic and family violence prevention. After meeting with DV Connect recently, I was distressed to hear that in the last quarter alone 7,000 calls to that service have gone unanswered under the watch of this state government. The 20 per cent uplift that has been proposed by the government, while welcomed by the sector, will not even deal with the demand they are facing now without the impact of the coercive control legislation that was introduced. Every time a phone goes unanswered a woman's life is put at risk. The referral waitlist for the men's line is sitting at 3,000. How does the cycle of violence stop and change when this state Labor government cannot even fund the

frontline services that are there to work with perpetrators? I was in Cairns last week, and the services up there are reporting to me that waitlists for the perpetrators' program are in excess of 100, yet we see no action by this Labor government. We have seen a slow rollout of the *Hear her voice* recommendations and continued advocacy by the sector. I thank and recognise them for their service, but they need more in relation to resourcing.

I will now turn to my electorate. What a fantastic announcement today by the Leader of the Opposition to secure our housing foundations. I know it will be very much welcomed by my community of Mackay and the Whitsundays, in particular the growth areas of the Northern Beaches, Cannonvale and Proserpine. If an LNP government is elected in October, we will abolish stamp duty for new builds. This is good news for young individuals and families wishing to purchase their first home. This is an incredible incentive that will address supply and market conditions as well as ensure young people and young families can realise the great Australian dream. I have already been in contact with both Mayor Ry Collins of the Whitsunday Regional Council and Mayor Greg Williamson of the Mackay Regional Council. They very much welcome the LNP's policy commitment of \$2 billion over four years to fund infrastructure that will bring forward housing development. I know they have projects ready to go and we look forward, if elected in October, to working with local government proactively and collaboratively to deliver greater housing supply on the ground, because they have been screaming out for a state government that supports the development of their communities.

I have looked at some of the announcements in the budget that impact my community. I have been calling for the Hamilton Plains connection between Cannonvale and Airlie Beach through to Proserpine to be upgraded. That is the only road connection to our hospital. It is the only road connection to our state high school and children travel every day on that road. Last season it became a flood crisis within hours with the increased wet weather. This government has announced that the project will proceed. However, it comes with a caveat—that it is post-business case stage with cost and timing subject to confirmation following market engagement and consideration. I have zero confidence that the fine print outlined in almost every project in my region in QTRIP will actually see them delivered for the people of the Whitsundays. However, they will have a clear choice come October: will they support an LNP government which will get on and deliver those road projects? I look forward to welcoming the shadow transport minister as he drives from Cairns down to South-East Queensland. He will be visiting those many road project sites in my community, including Hamilton Plains, Shute Harbour Road, the Paluma Road to Valley Drive upgrade and also the Valley Drive to Tropic Road upgrade. If the project proceeds, we will see the lanes duplicated into Airlie Beach—a much needed project to meet the growing demand.

It was disappointing, but not surprising, that zero dollars have been allocated to the Mackay-Bucasia Road upgrade. There is no funding for the most congested and most busy road in the Mackay local government area where population growth has exploded. Residents in my community sit in traffic for 45 minutes to travel five or six kilometres to access school, to get to work and to access our industrial sites on the other side of town.

I do welcome the million dollars that has been allocated for safety upgrades at the Glendaragh Road-Bruce Highway intersection that I, along with many residents who contacted my office, fought so strongly for after a fatality at that intersection last year. I also welcome and recognise the Ngaro Trail that will continue to receive funding as part of ecotourism in the Whitsundays. It is an iconic trail in our region and, in fact, in the state. However, it is disappointing that the Whitsundays Skyway project, which has been under the stewardship of multiple tourism ministers, has failed to be supported by this state government. It continues to be held up by the department of environment. Proponents have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars preparing that, ticking all of the boxes and doing all of the studies, yet there has been no support by the government when it in fact asked my local proponent to undertake this incredible signature project. I certainly will continue to support that project. I see incredible merit in tourism infrastructure in this state in the lead-up to the Commonwealth Games, and that is part of the legacy that an LNP government hopes to support and to deliver as we move towards the Olympics.

After the leader's announcement today and confirmation that an LNP government will not proceed with the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro, I say to Mandy Tennent and to Save Eungella, 'Keep going,' because a vote for the Labor Party or a vote for the member for Mackay risks our iconic rainforest—the Eungella National Park. It risks this government proceeding with its hydro hoax project—a project that Glen Kelly, our LNP candidate for Mirani, has been advocating for on behalf of the community; a project that was announced with no business case and no funding attached after a fly-in fly-out visit by the previous premier on National Police Remembrance Day. It was the most disgraceful act. She turned up late to the service and then took off to announce the pumped hydro project that Premier Miles is so proud now to lead. This is a project that does not have the support of the Yuwi people, the traditional owners of the land, and it does not have the support of the Mackay Regional Council. The businesses

of Paget, the industrial estates of Mackay and the Chamber of Commerce knew from day one that this was nothing but a hoax to win votes in South-East Queensland. It is a fake renewable project that will cost billions and billions of dollars more than what was initially estimated.

I certainly look forward to working with our Mackay candidate, Nigel Dalton—Citizen of the Year in 2023, a decorated police officer, a man of integrity and a gentleman who is well regarded and respected by all people across our local Mackay community. As a police officer who has worked in crime prevention, he has spent the last 10 years visiting every primary school and every high school. Those young people who know Nigel cannot wait to vote for him in October. He ran programs in partnership with CQ University's Safety Circus and Choices and attended Schoolies Week in Airlie Beach. Nigel is part of the Sinkers masters swimmers and the Shed Happens men's program. He does an enormous amount of work in crime prevention and promoting and supporting men with their mental health. He was also recognised in 2023 by the Australasian Neighbourhood Watch, receiving the Police Commissioner's award for service. We have had a great response since announcing Nigel's nomination, and I know that he will be a great advocate for the Mackay region.

We have seen funding cut and no further investment in disability advocacy support in Mackay. The community legal service has reached out to me. YIRS—the youth service—has reached out to me, as has Relationships Australia which works in harm minimisation from gambling. All of that funding has not increased and in fact has been cut under the watch of the local member for Mackay.

I look forward to ensuring the people of Mackay, come October, have a clear choice—that is, an LNP government that has the right priorities for Queensland. An LNP government will stand up for the women of Mackay who are still traumatised by the incidences that they endured at Mackay Base Hospital and the lack of representation from their local member. The health minister announced funding for mental health support for women who are going through postnatal depression but left out Mackay. As a result of what this state government put women through in Mackay, women will now travel to Brisbane to have their babies because they have zero confidence in the health system in Mackay because of the failings of this current Labor government. I look forward to standing up with our candidate in Mackay so that people will have a clear choice. Our region of Mackay and the Whitsunday matters and deserves better. We look forward to showing Labor the door in 2024.