




Speech By
Hon. Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

Record of Proceedings, 11 June 2024

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Cost of Living

 **Hon. C MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (10.06 am): In the past few months I have had the absolute honour of travelling across Queensland as the Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. I have spoken with young people, seniors, carers, people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. I have listened to their concerns. I have heard their stories. I can tell you that top of mind for almost every one of them is the cost of living.

The Miles government's 2024-25 state budget will provide real, practical help and cost-of-living relief for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. We will be investing heavily in our child and family services. There will be more money for seniors and disability services and more funding for multicultural affairs. We will include additional funding for more foster and kinship carers so they can receive financial support to look after children with complex and high-support needs, as well as provide additional support for our Extended Post Care Support program. This is a program that is providing financial support for young people leaving care up to their 21st birthday. It has been an absolute game changer in the first year of operation.

The Putting Queensland Kids First strategy also features strongly, with a \$9 million investment over two years for our Safe Pathways trials for early intervention and support for young women with children at risk of becoming involved with the child safety system.

In the disability area, we will be announcing additional funding for better services and supports for our most vulnerable people and people with disability, and we will be giving our initial response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability and the NDIS review, with more to come.

Senior Queenslanders are also important when it comes to needing help with the increased cost of living. That is why this budget will include concessions and rebates on energy, utilities and rates bills, and our cost-of-living rebate. Seniors will receive \$1,672 off their electricity. This means that the majority of seniors and pensioners in Queensland in the next financial year will not pay one cent for their electricity. That news has been well received. I was recently with the member for Pumicestone on Bribie Island for one of our seniors expos. The 150 seniors present were very happy to hear about our incredible rebates.

This is a carefully considered budget providing practical help for Queenslanders doing it tough. We want to put more money in the pockets of all Queenslanders, and this budget will provide significant relief to just about every home in the state. It is a budget that recognises and responds to the challenges being experienced by our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Only a Labor government cares about our seniors and our vulnerable families and it is only a Labor government helping Queensland households.