




Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 21 August 2024

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL
APPROPRIATION BILL
Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)
Appropriation Bill

Housing, Big Build and Manufacturing Committee, Report

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (2.50 pm): I am proud to be a minister in the Miles Labor government, which is focused on cost-of-living relief, creating jobs and delivering lasting infrastructure for Queenslanders. I always look forward to estimates. It is a chance to talk about the achievements in my portfolio that are changing lives and businesses and growing regional communities.

At estimates, the LNP are forced to actually ask me some questions. They do not ask me any decent questions during a sitting week in question time. It was disappointing, as per usual, to see the member for Nanango use the estimates process as an opportunity to continue to talk down train manufacturing here in Queensland. I actually told the member to go to Maryborough and see what train manufacturing is. She forgot what train manufacturing is about because those opposite sent the building of trains overseas. I was encouraging her to get in a car, head to Maryborough and even meet with Bruce Saunders, the Assistant Minister for Train Manufacturing, to have a look at the trains being made here in Queensland. Safety comes first for the member for Nanango and, unfortunately, her meeting had to be cancelled because asbestos was found.

The statement of reservation was predictable; I think it was just copied and pasted—the same as every year since I have been the minister. The LNP have been running a desperate campaign about Paradise Dam, talking about things being ‘torn down’. The member for Nanango keeps going on and on about it. What did she come up with when she was the minister responsible? She came up with \$25 million to fix Paradise Dam. That was it. We have spent four times that just to make the dam safe.

During estimates I confirmed that \$109.6 million was budgeted for the geotechnical work for the new wall, which is continuing to this day. The member for Bundaberg is so passionate about this subject. He did not have to ask me questions about this in estimates because he knows what is going on. He spends time there. He knows exactly what is happening with that project and that we are going to rebuild the wall. That is exactly what the local member should be doing. As I have said, so far we have invested four times more in that project than the LNP did, and we are investing another \$109 million.

When it comes to the noise that comes from the LNP, especially when they start to talk about costs and overruns, we know exactly what that means: they will cut. They will cut and they will run. We know that. The member for Nanango and the LNP candidate for Bundaberg have not once said that they back our project and the funding that goes with it—not once.

The opposition and the member for Nanango must come clean about their plans for water security for regional Queensland. It is fair enough for them to walk around the countryside, but they actually need to commit to some of the fantastic water infrastructure programs that we have funded in our budgets in the past—to the tune of billions and billions of dollars. Where is their promise to regional Queensland communities on water security?

How do they plan to fund anything when they do not support our progressive coal royalties? You cannot build big water infrastructure when you do not have the money in the bank. What they are saying over there in LNP land is fanciful. They say, 'We're going to build four dams. We will put the member for Nanango in charge of building four dams.' Now is the time for the member for Nanango to tell us about the four dams that the Leader of the Opposition has challenged her to build if she ever becomes Queensland's water minister.

Let's look at some of the beautiful infrastructure that has been delivered by this government. Rookwood Weir has been a fantastic project supporting hundreds of jobs in both local businesses and big businesses in Rockhampton which in turn support those communities. We are raising Burdekin Falls Dam by two metres. There will be more water at Burdekin Falls Dam than the combined total of the three major dams in South-East Queensland.

I am very proud to say that we are supporting the Cairns Water Security project. The Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline will deliver water security to that region. The Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline, which everyone knows is a passion of mine, is about securing water for Gladstone for the future, particularly with hydrogen moving forward. More importantly, the Mount Morgan community has suffered for many years with no water and this Labor government is delivering a pipeline. I made sure the opposition knew that during the estimates process.

We are supporting not only water security here in Queensland but also manufacturing. The member for Nanango often forgets that she has 'manufacturing' in her title. We will support water. We will support manufacturing. We will support the regions.