



Speech By
Jonty Bush

MEMBER FOR COOPER

Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2024


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Community Safety and Legal Affairs Committee, Report

 **Ms BUSH** (Cooper—ALP) (8.21 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the discussion on the estimates process this year. I start by acknowledging all of the incredible people who make up Queensland's Public Service, particularly those in the portfolio areas of justice and Attorney-General, police, corrections, fire and emergency, disaster recovery and all of the associated statutory officers who contribute to a safer, fairer and just Queensland.

Estimates is always a great opportunity to reflect on where our government is prioritising funding in Queensland. To begin with, I was really heartened by hearing of the prioritisation of funding in the area of domestic and family violence. At this time, a woman is murdered through intimate partner violence every four days in Australia. As someone who has worked in the field for a really long time, I am even shocked by that number. Thousands more women are having their lives destroyed by intimate partner or sexual violence. We have heard from the Attorney-General that since 2015 our government has invested \$1.9 billion in working to end all forms of domestic, family and sexual violence and that this focus will continue throughout the 2024-25 period. Services are under pressure. We have provided additional funding directly to frontline domestic, family and sexual violence service providers every year, equating to a 20 per cent uplift in core funding.

During estimates, the Attorney-General announced the release of the government's Broadening the Focus strategy that will target people using violence in domestic and family situations and how to support behavioural change. This strategy is a major milestone towards eliminating domestic and family violence. I have long said this is not a women's issue; it is an issue for men and an issue for us all. The Broadening the Focus strategy strengthens our system and community responses to actively hold people using violence responsible for their harmful attitudes and behaviours, and support them to change. Importantly, it has a focus on identifying and working with children and young people using, or at risk of using, violence so we can continue to break that cycle of violence.

The Attorney-General particularised continued and greater support for victims through Victim Assist, the establishment of community response pilots for areas impacted by tragic events and the appointment of the Victims' Commissioner and the Independent Ministerial Advisory Council for victims of crime. These reports can only be five minutes a day which means a lot of content gets left on the

editing floor, but each year I do speak to the investment that this government makes in supporting Queensland's victims of crime community. We are a community who often do feel overlooked in the system. It is so critical that the funding provided is targeted towards helping victims to participate, to be heard and to recover from an act of violence. I do commend the government's continued focus on prioritising services and supports to victims of crime.

We heard also from the Minister for Police and Community Safety about this year's total portfolio record budget of \$4.36 billion for the Queensland Police Service, State Emergency Service, Marine Rescue Queensland and the Officer of the Inspector-General Emergency Management.

Recruitment within the Queensland Police Service continues to interest us all and our constituents. We heard during estimates that the Queensland Police Service is, in fact, leading the nation with its recruitment, that the attrition rate has fallen, and that Queensland is one of the few jurisdictions in the nation delivering positive recruitment growth. Of course, it is not just about funding and numbers; it is the programs, people, culture and training that actually make all the difference in keeping our communities safe.

Again it was great to hear the minister announce another innovative program establishing the pilot of a new groundbreaking perpetrator visibility project. It is a great project. We heard it is a collaboration between Microsoft, Griffith University, DVConnect, Domestic Violence Action Centre and the Queensland Police Service. The project will help keep people who use violence accountable and visible to support and response systems by sharing information in real time.

Members would know that I continue to take an interest in the use of watch houses to detain young people, and I was pleased to learn that the Police Commissioner has appointed Deputy Commissioner Cameron Harsley to lead a piece of work that will look at the people and culture in Queensland watch houses. I have had the opportunity to work alongside Cameron Harsley before, and I think he will do an excellent job of that project and really look forward to its findings.

I would like to thank my committee colleagues and all of the bodies and statutory office holders, CEOs and directors-general who attended this year's estimates process. I commend our committee's report to the House.