



Speech By  
**Hon. Leanne Linard**

**MEMBER FOR NUDGEЕ**

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Record of Proceedings, 20 August 2024


**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL**

**APPROPRIATION BILL**

**Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

**Appropriation Bill**

**Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee, Report**

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Innovation) (7.50 pm): I rise to speak on the Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee report following the 2024-25 budget estimates process. I would like to begin by thanking the committee chair, the member for Thuringowa, for his excellent stewardship of the estimates hearing again this year. I also thank all members of the committee, committee staff and parliamentary staff who supported the hearing. Again, as I did in the hearing a number of times, and as I do all the time in this House, I acknowledge the work of my director-general, Jamie Merrick, and my department across the environment, science and innovation portfolios. They go to work every day serving the interests of Queenslanders and I think they do an extraordinary job. I welcome the committee's recommendation that the proposed expenditure be agreed to without amendment.

The 2024-25 budget includes an almost \$1.2 billion allocation for the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation—one of the largest funding allocations in the department's history. Through this significant budget allocation, our Miles Labor government is continuing its track record of protecting Queensland's internationally recognised protected areas, waterways, landscapes and wildlife. This includes an investment of \$48.3 million to grow, maintain and enhance Queensland's protected area estate. The amount of \$39.2 million has been provided to enhance Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service's fire management capacity and capability, including: \$18.1 million to purchase additional fire vehicles, fire units and support equipment; upgrade road and fire line networks; and recruit 39 specialist personnel to help the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service manage bushfire risk.

We are also investing \$23.5 million over four years and \$6.3 million annually ongoing to continue implementation of our Threatened Species Program, as well as an additional \$31.3 million over four years and \$8.4 million annually ongoing to continue actions under the South East Queensland Koala Conservation Strategy.

We are continuing to advance Queensland's science and innovation sectors on a global scale and increase the pipeline of STEM talent across the state. This includes investing \$89.7 million over five years across government to deliver the Queensland Quantum and Advanced Technologies Strategy and the Queensland Quantum Academy. At estimates I released the Future Queensland

Science Strategy 2024-2029, which provides the strategic vision for Queensland to be world leading in the translation of science for economic impact and social and environmental outcomes. That is the reality of our budget and these are just some of the facts in relation to our 2024-25 budget.

Demonstrating that they will not let the facts get in the way of a good story, or I think a poor story, let me turn to the statement of reservation. This was a stretch. I appreciate that there was not much they could write about because the agency and our government are investing so heavily across the portfolio. I do note the top line here that apparently our government is 'more interested in announcements than action'. I will give my opponent one thing: we are interested in announcements, because in the past 15 months we have seen our emissions reduction target, Lake Eyre Basin protections, Great Artesian Basin protections, gillnet reforms to protect threatened species, the largest ever expansion of protected area estate, Cape York tentative listing in the World Heritage List and an adjacency principle for a project on Curtis Island for ecotourism in national parks. We do make a lot of announcements. That is because we are making a lot of investments and taking a lot of action.

The member for Bonney did not have much to write about, but he did focus on the 17 per cent target. I do want to comment about that and to provide some factual information. He is right: 8.6 per cent is protected in Queensland. For a bit of perspective, there are 193 countries in the world and Queensland is larger than all but 16 of them—not Australia but Queensland. Queensland is extraordinarily large. The fact is that we also have the largest private protected areas in the country. We do have a very ambitious target.

**Mr O'Connor** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Lister): Member for Bonney, order!

**Ms LINARD:** It must really be difficult for the member for Bonney because those opposite have no target. They have no policy, no plan. The absence of a position is not a position, yet it is the only position those opposite take with regard to the environment. There are 66 days until the election and those opposite have a one-page document that does not mention the word 'conservation' once, does not mention traditional owners, does not mention rangers. They have absolutely no vision for Queensland, and Queenslanders should know it. Only a state Labor government will protect our precious environment.