



Speech By
Adam Baillie

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee, Report

 **Mr BAILLIE** (Townsville—LNP) (5.19 pm): I rise to speak to the 2025-26 budget estimates on the Appropriation Bill 2025 which I was fortunate enough to participate in on the last day of a two-week-long process as a member of the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee. The estimates process is an important process and is an opportunity to interrogate the budget and ensure accountability and transparency when it comes to the planned government expenditure. I want to thank the Speaker and Deputy Speaker as well as the Clerk and the Parliamentary Service staff for their assistance in keeping the estimates process running, as well as all of the departments and public servants that put in a power of work to support the estimates process. I want to thank all of my parliamentary colleagues for their participation in the estimates process—in particular, the Leader of the House, whose contribution was even recognised by the Manager of Opposition Business, who said—

In our estimations he has probably set a record for the most time in attendance at estimates hearings by any MP ...

I think that speaks volumes to the Leader of the House's commitment to the estimates process.

This was my first estimates process, and I understand that this may have been a bit of a different process to what has been carried out in previous years. I did find it bemusing that a member of the now opposition—a member of the former government for several terms—suggested to me that, really, there was no need for government questions during the estimates process and we should consider just having opposition questions as it would be a better use of time and resources. True story. I am reliably informed that, during its decade in government, Labor never initiated an estimates hearing process where only the opposition was afforded the opportunity to ask questions.

Thankfully, as government members did have the opportunity to ask questions, I took the opportunity to dive a bit deeper into the budget and ask questions about what it meant for my community. For example, I asked Minister Minnikin, in his role as the Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business, about the \$40 million allocated to the Secure Communities Partnership Program, which recognises the impact Labor's youth crime crisis has had on small businesses and their staff in Townsville and which includes funding for enhanced security measures for small businesses such as CCTV and bollards. It is a program that was launched in Townsville with around 200 small and family business representatives, and I can advise that it has been

extremely positively received in Townsville. Given the recent news coverage of small businesses targeted by crime just this week, this support cannot come soon enough.

In addition, as a former small business owner I was particularly interested in the \$44.7 million investment over five years to help small and family businesses with a suite of initiatives including cutting red tape, simplifying procurement processes, standardising contracts and delivering a five-business-day On-Time, Every-Time Payment Guarantee, with immediate payment for invoices under \$10,000. This will make a real difference to the strength of small businesses in Townsville and, indeed, right across Queensland, because we know how important cash flow is for small and family businesses.

In the afternoon of our hearing I asked Minister Leahy, in her role as Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers, for an update with regard to what is happening with Townsville City Council and about the continuing support to North Queensland's recovery efforts following the historic rain and flooding earlier this year, and I thank the minister for the insights she provided during that hearing. For years Labor did not care about the regions. Labor's idea of regional engagement was to issue a press release from Brisbane. Labor was all about the headlines, and it appears nothing has changed. I say that because it appears that Labor confused the estimates report and its statement of reservation with its scrapbook, with newspaper clippings, cobbled together and proudly attached, of the few baseless newspaper articles it could accomplish. That is just another reason Queenslanders voted for a fresh start. After a decade of decline under Labor, a fresh start is what this budget delivers. It delivers the resources to deliver safer communities, stronger small businesses and enhanced disaster response and resilience. That is why I commend this report to the House.