




Speech By  
**Hon. Amanda Camm**

**MEMBER FOR WHITSUNDAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 June 2025

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE  
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. AJ CAMM** (Whitsunday—LNP) (Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence) (7.51 pm): It is a real honour to stand here today in the people's house and speak to the Crisafulli government's first budget delivering what we promised Queenslanders in October. We are doing what we said we would do. Such was the neglect and outright mismanagement of those ministers opposite, including the member for Bulimba who served as the failed child safety minister, youth justice minister and domestic violence prevention minister from 2017 to 2020 and then was re-anointed the youth justice minister, once again failing the state and our most vulnerable children, from 2023-24. It is because of my time in the last eight months carrying out a deep dive into the department that I recommended to the Premier and to cabinet a commission of inquiry was needed to independently investigate the systemic failures that have led to a billion dollar failed child safety system and residential care system leading to a generation of traumatised children. In fact, I look forward to the former minister who has just made a contribution being called before the commission of inquiry and giving evidence about the way in which she conducted herself and failed in her obligations as a minister of the Crown.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Ms CAMM:** At the heart of this inquiry are our most vulnerable children. Given all the interjections, I think those who are guilty are a little offended. Children in this state deserve better, as do thousands of loving foster carers, kinship carers, dedicated frontline staff who work in out-of-home care and in the child safety system and all who seek to make a positive difference in young people's lives. The Crisafulli government's Safer Children, Safer Communities election commitment was the most comprehensive taken to an election. We have been clear from the start that at the heart of that commitment is restoring community safety, restoring safety to children and making the tough decisions that those opposite were not prepared to make.

The Crisafulli government will deliver a range of policy commitments, including the design and development of a secure care model. Those opposite, including the former minister, failed to deliver that on the back of the Carmody recommendations. It is a model which is fundamentally about safety: safety for children and safety for the community. In this budget we will provide \$10 million from a total \$50 million capital investment over three years for a secure care residential facility for young people who are a danger to themselves, a danger to others and a system that does not exist currently in this state to support them. Over the next four years we will also deliver other measures across our Safer Children, Safer Communities plan, including reforming the residential care system which has grown significantly in size and cost, costing this state \$1.2 billion a year. It is outrageous and delivers poor outcomes for our most vulnerable children. This form of placement supports some of Queensland's most vulnerable and highly complex children who often have traumatic backgrounds.

The former Labor government has a disgraceful record. In December 2015 there were 650 children living in residential care and almost a decade later that number has grown to over 2,200, including over 100 children aged five and under. I have visited residential care facilities where babies are housed and those opposite should be ashamed. These figures are the highest of any state jurisdiction because those opposite, when they were in government, failed in policy and they failed in funding and implementing the recommendations of Carmody.

The Crisafulli government will restore respect and care back to families to ensure that out-of-home care and family-based care is a priority for vulnerable children. Most importantly, foster and kinship carers will be valued by the Crisafulli government. That is why we are funding \$28.8 million over four years to pilot a new professional foster care program for children with disabilities and complex needs who are currently in the residential care system. This recognises that there are children in this state in the out-of-home care system whose complex needs can be better met in family-based care and they deserve nothing less. They deserve permanency where it is possible, to give them security and the best chance of an upbringing with a family.

It is clear to me that carers need more support and were denied that support by those opposite. The budget also includes a \$1,500 boost for carers and guardians for children in care to participate in extracurricular activities, representing a total investment of \$70.1 million over three years. We know how important the sense of belonging and connection community sport and extracurricular activities like drama can provide. These payments will help support carers and children. The allocation of \$2.9 million in the budget will also start the move towards a dual carer model in residential care. I look forward to working in the sector to ensure those in the workforce are safe. This model has been specifically designed for those who raised concerns with me as the shadow minister for four years. The workplace in which many of these staff have had to work is concerning. No-one who goes to work should have themselves set on fire or be locked in a cupboard or a room, which is what has happened to youth and support workers across this state under the Labor government. We are well underway with the staging of this commitment as part of a \$10.9 million investment over four years.

Last time we were in this House I spoke on the connection between domestic and family violence and children entering the child safety system. Sadly, reported incidents of domestic and family violence continue to rise across the state, with an almost 220 per cent increase in the past decade. This is why this budget is delivering the foundations for landmark domestic and family violence reforms. I will not be deterred by the scaremongering of those opposite about the legislation that we will introduce into this House. From a total investment of \$379 million in 2025-26 we will begin to roll out our election commitments to better protect victims and hold perpetrators to account, something those opposite failed to do. In addition to this, we are funding the introduction of 150 GPS trackers later this year for the monitoring of high-risk domestic and family violence perpetrators. I am pleased to be leading, on behalf of our state government, the new way in which we will deliver GPS monitoring devices in a whole-of-government approach. We will also invest around \$27 million in this year and \$114.5 million over six years on other measures to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence. Those opposite never invested in prevention. I have gone back and looked at the figures. It is true: it did not exist. They did not invest in prevention. We can see where we are now.

The capacity of the state's 24/7 domestic and family violence crisis helpline will be doubled. I have already commenced work with DVConnect to ensure that their performance is lifted and victims are put first. Thanks to \$11.5 million of funding this year and \$31.3 million over the forwards, we will see more victims assisted and a new North Queensland place-based design that will deliver for North Queensland communities and in particular our First Nations communities with a nuanced approach that is culturally appropriate to First Nations communities, their families and individuals.

We have in place the systems and the policy that will deliver outcomes and now we have agreed to fund it, including hope hubs to support recovery. That will mean more families can access integrated support because recovery is the best form of prevention.

Alongside the Treasurer, I was pleased to support funding for Protea Place in Toowoomba after the devastating effects of the alleged murders that have occurred in that community. Sadly, the member for Southern Downs, James Lister, is not here as he is unwell at the moment, but with him I was pleased to support funding for WillowTree 37, which will receive \$1 million over four years. Those women do incredible things across the Warwick community.

Our neighbourhood centres do a wonderful job as do partners such as mens' sheds, Stationery Aid and food banks. I heard the Leader of the Opposition talk about food distribution. The other day I was pleased to open an incredible distribution hub for Queensland. I look forward to working with all of those providers, particularly on the back of community recovery and disaster recovery activities. This government has been able to successfully manage three back-to-back disasters in the interests of Queenslanders and they have been critical partners to that.

I have to give a big shout-out to my electorate. I do not get to sit in this place without the confidence and support of my constituents. I believe there is no greater place in Queensland than the Whitsunday electorate. From the tourism powerhouse of the reef and our beautifully stunning beaches right through to the wonderful agriculture sector with beef production, sugarcane farming—

**Mr Stevens:** Hamo!

**Ms CAMM:** I take that interjection; Hamilton Island is the jewel in the crown of the Whitsundays. The Whitsunday Skyway project shows that ecotourism is alive and well in this state. I am pleased that we have given Whitsunday Skyway a commitment of \$5 million. That project will be approved and it will be delivered, which is something those opposite could not achieve in eight years. Elizabeth Hackett stuck with this government and she stuck with her commitment to tourism. We will deliver that funding. It will be an incredible showcase that will come online with the 2032 Olympics when the Whitsunday hosts sailing.

There is plenty in the budget for locals, including funding for the upgrade to the Mackay Bucasia Road. The member for Bundamba visited our electorates of Mackay and Whitsunday but he cannot pronounce the name of the road. He has probably never been on that road and has no idea. He is not welcome back in my community; I can assure you. We have made it clear that we will tell the truth to the locals. We have committed \$20 million to congestion-busting upgrades.

We have committed funding to grassroots clubs including Eimeo Surf Life Saving Club, the Proserpine Rugby League football club, Dolphins Football Club, Mackay Northern Beaches Bowls Club, Airlie Beach Bowls Club and the Proserpine and Bowen pool and we will be working with local governments. I give a shout-out to all the fishermen from across the Whitsunday electorate. For four years, I stood in this House and explained to multiple transport ministers the poorly designed and inept boat ramp facility in the Whitsundays. It is a joke and an embarrassment. The Crisafulli government will deliver a new four-lane boat ramp facility at Shute Harbour. That commitment was well received by the community. It will be co-designed with local government. We will do the things that we said we would do. I congratulate the Treasurer on his budget.