



Speech By
Hon. Ann Leahy

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

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

 **Hon. A LEAHY** (Warrego—LNP) (Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers) (5.09 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the budget estimates committee report for the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee. I do want to thank all members of the committee and also the committee staff for their work with estimates.

What we see after 10 years of Labor decline is that in 10 months of the Crisafulli LNP government, we are delivering for local government, water, fire, disaster recovery and volunteers. Despite our government's efforts to significantly increase the time for questioning and budget scrutiny, Labor overlooked vast sections of the portfolio. Very few questions were asked by Labor on water policy—issues such as the bulk water pricing, water pricing relief for irrigators or clean drinking water for Indigenous communities. There were no questions from Labor on local government partnerships and funding or disaster infrastructure and there were no questions on vital support for our frontline fires and volunteers such as the \$15.7 million investment in the presumptive workers composition scheme. Labor did not fund this. This selective absence speaks volumes about Labor Party members. We did not even have a question from the member for Lytton about the fires and her electorate includes Whyte Island, the major training facility for our fires. She did not even represent her electorate.

While the Crisafulli government delivers outcomes and infrastructure for communities, the Labor opposition are trying to run away from their 10 years of decline. Labor's misrepresentations in their uni politics, ChatGPT statement of reservation is a new low.

Mr Lister: It looked like it was out of a scrapbook.

Ms LEAHY: I will take that interjection from the member for Southern Downs.

When it comes to the fire station builds Labor claimed they were committed to building the second Bundaberg fire station. However, Labor forgot to look up their final 2023-24 budget, which does not commit a single cent to this station. Contrast this with the Crisafulli LNP budget: an increase of 2.6 per cent on Labor's last Queensland Fire Department budget.

Further, Labor prefers to manufacture the vision rather than focus on service delivery. My office updated our plaque guidelines to ensure acknowledgement of country is not incorrectly included when land claims have not been determined. This is about ensuring respect. I note the member for Springwood lost his temper and had to withdraw while we were discussing this matter in estimates. In

terms of our plaque guidelines we worked with firefighters to include a dedication to our fallen firefighters whose legacy we seek to protect. The exact words are, 'This station is dedicated to the memory of Queensland firefighters who gave their lives in the line of duty.' Labor's appalling disrespect for our fallen firefighters was on display in the estimates committee hearing. Yet Labor dived further into their hall of fame of failed projects with the retrofit deluge systems. The key word here is 'retrofit', the step that had to happen only because Labor commissioned appliances without deluge systems in the first place.

Extraordinarily, the former minister for disaster recovery appeared unaware that state recovery coordinators were not required to be on the state recovery coordinators register and attacked their performance. It seemed that Labor forgot that they had appointed state recovery coordinators who were not on the register. One of those just happens to be the current CEO of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority, yet Labor members continued an offensive line of questioning that was directly critical of current public servants.

So eager to jump the gun on the volunteers inquiry after Labor's 10 years of decline in the volunteer sector, the opposition sought to pre-emptively discredit our response to the inquiry. This is totally inappropriate and disappointing for all those volunteers who have volunteered their time and effort to inform the inquiry. No wonder the volunteer numbers declined under Labor in the last 10 years. We will let the inquiry do its work.

When it comes to local government, Labor could not bring themselves to talk about the equal partnership in the sector. They could not talk about red-tape reduction or depreciation. Labor could not even talk about the Works for Queensland program that we have made a permanent program. Labor presided over 10 years of decline. The Crisafulli LNP government in 10 months have focused on delivery.

(Time expired)