




Speech By
Bisma Asif

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

Record of Proceedings, 13 March 2025

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (SUPPLEMENTARY 2023-2024) BILL; APPROPRIATION (SUPPLEMENTARY 2023-2024) BILL

 **Ms ASIF** (Sandgate—ALP) (4.12 pm): Today I rise to speak to the Appropriation (Supplementary 2023-2024) Bill 2024. Labor governments are good economic managers. Not only are we good economic managers; we actually care about people whilst being good economic managers. We have policies that help people in our communities—policies such as the cost-of-living relief that the former Labor government delivered. We do not think of these policies as handouts, as this government does; we think of them as making real change for real people. When we talk to people and they are struggling, we think how it is that a Labor government can help give them some relief.

We have seen a lot of disaster in this last fortnight and I think, 'What if Labor was in government right now?' We would have provided cost-of-living relief to families who need it at the moment. I have come to parliament today after having a community lunch in Bracken Ridge and there are families who up until yesterday were not even able to apply for relief. How is this important in terms of this appropriation bill? It is important because that is what governments are supposed to do. Government money exists to help people—to help Queenslanders and to help people in my community of Sandgate.

I have seen firsthand how the measures that this appropriation bill speaks to have made a difference. They have benefited people not only in my electorate of Sandgate but also all across Queensland, including those in the electorates of those opposite, with measures such as the \$1,000 electricity bill relief that all of their constituents received. I am sure they appreciate that. I do not think a single one of them would say, 'I don't appreciate it,' so maybe those opposite should consider that. Maybe the government should consider giving \$1,000 electricity relief now, given that we have just gone through a natural disaster and families could use that assistance.

Mr Molhoek: It's great to hear a Labor member who actually cares about the people. We haven't heard that for such a long time in this House.

Ms ASIF: I do care about people. I care about the people in Sandgate and I care about Queenslanders, and I also care about the people in the electorates of those opposite who I think have benefited from these measures.

I have spoken to many families, including some in the suburb of Brighton, many of whom have really been suffering in the last couple of days due to ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. My thoughts are with the families there at the moment who have needed assistance. I spoke to a couple in Brighton during the campaign. At the time I was not the member for Sandgate; I was the Labor candidate for Sandgate. When I was doorknocking I spoke to them about what we could do for them and they said that any relief when it came to their household budget would be appreciated because they were really struggling and doing it tough. They were thrilled when I told them about the \$1,000 electricity rebate and the \$200 FairPlay sports vouchers. The family appreciated the sports vouchers because all of the children were now able to play community sport. It meant that they did not have to pick which one of the three kids was able to play community sport because they could not afford to put all three in community sport. That is a great measure which is included in this bill.

Another measure included in this bill is with regard to Queensland Health. Health funding is important. Included in this bill is \$217 million for health funding. That is helping people who need assistance. Queensland Health—

A government member: They're blowouts.

Ms ASIF: They are not blowouts; it is funding for health that is helping people—helping real Queenslanders who need surgery and who need assistance such as from the LifeFlight emergency helicopter service. This funding is going to their new agreement. It is going towards helping emergency medical service evacuations. Ensuring they are funded properly is crucial so that people get the assistance they need, especially the medical assistance they need.

What other measures does this appropriation bill address? It has funding for increased support for out-of-home-care services to address the ongoing pressures that our child protection service is facing. That is what is included in this bill, so let us look at what that means. That means safety measures for foster families who are supporting vulnerable children. This is crucial funding that communities need. It is funding that we need to provide as governments to support the people who are looking after our vulnerable children.

What else does this bill address? Part of this bill also includes transport. Transport is very important, as members would know. It is important to all of our electorates. A significant portion of this funding is offsetting the impacts of COVID-19, which was not too long ago. We all felt the pressures that COVID-19 placed on our communities. This bill ensures there is reliable and affordable public transport, which is essential for many people in all of our communities but especially in Sandgate. I also really want to talk about 50-cent fares. Labor's 50-cent fares have had a significant impact on people in my community.

Government members interjected.

Ms ASIF: They are Labor's 50-cent fares.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Members, the member on her feet is not taking your interjections.

Ms ASIF: Many people in my community have benefited from Labor's 50-cent fares. It is saving them upwards of \$40 a week. I have spoken to students who are now able to catch the Shorncliffe line—a great line.

A government member: They're now our 50-cent fares.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members, there will be no cross-chamber conversation. The next one will be warned.

Ms ASIF: This side of the House wants to make 50-cent fares permanent forever. What did we see today? We are not able to do that.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms ASIF: We think people should be able to have affordable public transport, especially if they live further out. People need to be able to catch public transport to get to work and university so I do support making sure we have affordable public transport for my people in Sandgate.

As I said in my maiden speech, education is one of the reasons I stand here today. It is the key to a good future—a future where people have the opportunity to prosper. Queensland children should have the opportunity to have the best education. This appropriation bill includes \$163 million for education. What does that mean? Sandgate has hundreds of dedicated teachers, principals and support staff in our schools. All of these people are working day in, day out to ensure that our students are getting the support that they need. This looks at the National School Reform Agreement, making sure that students with disabilities have the support that they need. I want to use this opportunity to give a big thank you to all of the support teachers in my electorate of Sandgate who do wonderful work making sure that our students and future generations have the support and education to make sure that they have a brighter future.

On this note I also want to say that many schools in my community have been impacted as a result of ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred. I want to thank the teachers, principals and members of our community who came around to help clean up our schools. It is incredibly important that we get our students back to school so they can get the education that they need. Brighton State School principal Steve Massey, thank you for the work you are doing. Thank you to Kurt Rose from Nashville State School; Robyne Harris from Bracken Ridge State School; Melissa Burke from Norris Road State School;

Rebecca Campbell from Sandgate State School; Scott Padgett from Shorncliffe State School; Mark Fisher from Taigum State School; Sarah McDonald from Sacred Heart Primary School; Brett Kitchener from St Joseph's; Ben Grey from St Kieran's; Michelle Lyons from Bracken Ridge State High School; Andy Stergou from Sandgate District State High; Britt Gurnett from St John Fisher; Stephan le Roux from Holy Spirit College; and Mrs Amber Hauff from St Patrick's College. Amber is the first female principal of St Patrick's College. I congratulate her on her appointment. She is doing a phenomenal job. She has been in the role for three months and has been hit with a natural disaster.

Mr Crandon: Didn't you get an adjournment speech this week? This is an adjournment speech.

Ms ASIF: I am thanking principals who are working—

Mr J Kelly interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McDonald): Member for Greenslopes and member for Coomera, you are both warned.

Ms ASIF: I want to thank the principals because of what we have gone through this last fortnight and highlight that there is education funding in this appropriation bill. What this funding does is support them. We want to support our principals and our teachers in the work that they do, not cut funding so they are not able to do it.

A couple of weeks ago I had a mobile office in Bald Hills. I had two teachers come up and talk to me about how they are scared that this government is going to cut their funding. All they want to do is provide support to our students and give them a good education. As I said, Labor are good economic managers, we care about our communities and we want to help them in their time of need.