




Speech By
Charis Mullen

MEMBER FOR JORDAN

Record of Proceedings, 26 June 2025

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

 **Ms MULLEN** (Jordan—ALP) (9.15 pm): ‘When I say something, it means something,’ the Premier said. Boy, he must rue the day he said those words because he also said energy bills would be cheaper under his government. He said debt would be lower under his government. He said there would be 2,200 new hospital beds by 2028 under his government. He promised that Queensland government consulting would save \$757 million by 30 June under his government—he has a few more days for that. He said heavy rail would be delivered all the way to Maroochydore by 2032—no ifs, no buts, no shortcuts. He is now literally riding the ‘Wave’ of dishonesty and disappointment to the people of the Sunshine Coast.

The 2025-26 state budget is everything we knew it was going to be. This is a budget that delivers very little for the people of Queensland when it comes to genuine cost-of-living relief. Let’s be very clear: the only cost-of-living relief that is really being offered in this budget is all in the form of Labor initiatives such as 50-cent fares, something the member for Chatsworth called a con and something the member for Pumicestone said was not in their plan. However, they know that to cut what is a signature Labor government initiative that is supported by so many Queenslanders would have been political suicide, so they have reluctantly kept them. Even the transport minister can barely keep a straight face when he talks about 50-cent fares being their policy. He can barely keep a straight face—even now. It is the same with the government’s so-called Play On! vouchers. No-one is fooled by the name change. Queenslanders know that the \$200 FairPlay vouchers were, once again, a Labor initiative. They know that the LNP government was dragged into supporting the vouchers after we ran a campaign calling for them not to be cut which, again, was supported by so many Queensland families and community sports clubs.

There is no energy price relief for most Queenslanders in this budget. I guess it is a bit hard when they do not actually have an energy policy. Vehicle registration will once again be hiked up 3.4 per cent per annum—no discounts and no freeze for working families. It is a bitter disappointment to those in our communities who are just seeking a little bit of extra support from their government.

I am very proud to see the expansions of both the Ipswich and Logan hospitals. These are good Labor projects that are being delivered in the regions I represent and I know what a difference they make to our communities. I am also pleased that these projects were thankfully progressed far enough that they hopefully cannot be cut or delayed by the LNP government. They will complement the significant investment that our Labor government had made in health services in both those regions. In Ipswich that included stage 1 of the Ipswich Hospital expansion, the Ripley Satellite Hospital, the Ripley subacute facility, the acute mental health facility, the alcohol and other drug withdrawal management and rehab facility, and the new public hospital in Springfield.

I recognise that the LNP government think they have a gotcha moment about the operational funding for the Springfield Hospital, but I can say that no-one is fooled. No-one believes them. No matter what the LNP government tries to say, they will never be able to reconcile the fact that the Springfield

public hospital is and will always be a Labor project, supported by Labor, delivered by Labor for the people of Greater Springfield and the broader western corridor. Our community knows this and Mater knows this, even if it looks like members opposite are holding them hostage in a photo-op.

I am really looking forward to seeing the line item for the operational funding of the new Coomera Hospital. I have not quite found it yet in the budget papers, but it must be there if we are providing operational funding to hospitals that are still under construction or not yet built.

Education continues to be vitally important to the people of Jordan. I represent one of the youngest electorates in the state and I am proud to represent 18 schools—soon to be 19 with the delivery of St Bonaventure's Catholic College. This could become 20 schools with confirmation of progress for a special school campus in the Springfield-Redbank area in this year's budget. Planning for a special school was a process begun under Labor. However, finding suitable and available land for the school has been an issue for the Department of Education. While I understand a solution is on the cards, it has been most disappointing for our families in Greater Springfield that this has dragged on and that land was not made available within the Springfield Structure Plan for this much needed school for our communities.

Speaking of land, I note that there is an education budget line for land acquisitions and we once again implore the Minister for Education to use some of that funding to acquire land for a new Greenbank high school. The minister through recent media comments and statements in the parliament seems to be seriously misinformed of what is happening in the Greenbank area and I would encourage him to maybe visit the area. The minister stated in the parliament on Tuesday that the member for Logan and I should have delivered this school in the last 10 years. 10 years ago the area in question was farmland and rural acreage blocks. It is now significant housing developments under the Greater Flagstone Priority Development Area. It has taken 10 years for the population to grow in this area and also for the student numbers to grow to a sustainable level, and as local members we know our communities well and we know what the timing for a new high school should be. That is why we made the commitment to purchase land for the school in the 2024 election, not the 2020 election as the minister was quoted as saying in the media recently—again misinformed. Some 858 local residents in Greenbank and New Beith agree with us and they have signed our petition calling for the Crisafulli LNP government to purchase the land because they want to see the education department get ahead of this significant growth and begin the planning for a high school in their area. We will not give up on this. We will keep pushing the government to act because Labor made the commitment and we would have delivered it.

The most disappointing aspect of this year's budget would have to be infrastructure and particularly funding for road and transport projects for our part of the world. The Centenary Highway is critical for the people of the western suburbs and the Ipswich areas of Springfield, Redbank Plains, Whiterock, Ripley, Deebling Heights and Yamanto. The Centenary Bridge upgrade—a project championed and started by Labor—is the only funding that I can see in this year's QTRIP for the Centenary Highway. The QTRIP references the Centenary Highway Darra to Yamanto section, but only through vague planning references with no funding attached. We need to see literal movement on this section of the Centenary Highway. The population growth in Springfield, Greenbank, Redbank Plains and Ripley suburbs demands it. Labor already funded the planning for this section. We have been advised that the corridor preservation work is basically done, so what are the next steps? QTRIP and the budget tell us nothing—no funding allocated and no details. Our communities deserve to see a public-facing master plan for this section of the highway—one that specifies the upgrade projects along the corridor and prioritises them. We have done the planning. The minister can get on now and do the prioritisation. We are waiting for him to do it. We are pretty much in constant congestion on the southbound lanes of the Centenary Motorway from exits 31 to 33 every day. This section of the Centenary Motorway must be prioritised. We need an upgrade to exit 31 and the duplication of the section between exits 31 and 33. It is the single biggest issue facing my electorate at this time and it must be addressed, especially given that there has been a massive landslide at exit 33 which has closed that exit for almost seven months now. We really need to get on with it.

We also want to see rail projects in our region advanced. The Ipswich to Springfield rail line is in limbo. Labor funded the options analysis. Where is it? We funded the detailed business case. When is it starting? We have vague references to late 2025 for planning. What does that mean? Ipswich has effectively been ignored by the Crisafulli government, which clearly lost interest when it lost Ipswich West after a minute, but the people of Ipswich will not forget the disregard the LNP is showing them with no real Olympics investment and limited transport and road infrastructure investment. No wonder the LNP mayor has gone into hiding over the state budget. The Salisbury to Beaudesert rail line is another critical transport project for the people I represent in Greenbank, Flagstone and New Beith. Again Labor at both the state and federal government levels funded a business case, but again QTRIP is light on detail—no funding allocated this financial year and again a vague comment on late 2025

planning. We were told by TMR last year that consultation would begin this year with our communities on the rail corridor and the train station locations. Our communities are expecting this and they deserve to know what is happening with the project. I am pleased to see \$6 million allocated for the Ipswich bus service growth infrastructure improvements—again, a Labor initiative—but of course these bus services have been delayed to later this year. These services should have started by now. Overall, this has been a very disappointing budget for the people of my electorate of Jordan with no real cost-of-living relief, limited investment in education and transport and road projects pushed to the never-never.

I also want to comment on a few matters within my shadow portfolio areas. The Crisafulli government seems to have cut government employee housing. I want to table these documents—that is, page 40 of this year's Capital Statement 2025-26 and page 58 of the Capital Statement from 2024-25.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents, undated, regarding the Capital Statement 2024-25 [812](#).

There is an \$18.9 million funding cut—funding that ensures critical Queensland government frontline services staff have access to secure, cost-effective accommodation in regional and remote areas of Queensland where they are needed most. These are our ambulance workers, nurses, police officers and teachers. The LNP government has claimed to be doing what is right for frontline services. It has claimed to be backing the regions, yet when pen hits paper it has let them both down. Last year David Crisafulli promised Queenslanders he would deliver a plan that improved housing affordability and availability and yet now he expects our nurses, teachers and police officers to take up the very few rentals that are left in remote and regional Queensland. These areas have some of the tightest vacancy rates across the state and that is now only set to get worse under this LNP government. This is very concerning. At a time when the government seems to be backing away from its election commitments to give our nurses and teachers nation-leading pay and better working conditions, it seems it now also wants to reduce their living conditions as well.

It is also unclear what the future looks like for QBuild's rapid accommodation and apprenticeship centres. The minister's recent response to a question on notice seems to indicate a clear lack of interest or drive to see the RAACs supported to succeed. The former Labor government's Modern Methods of Construction program was lauded by the national Productivity Commission in its recent housing construction productivity report, yet the LNP government does not seem to see any value at all. No wonder the minister refused to allow me access to the RAAC in Cairns, but we will continue to watch this space carefully and the future of QBuild, which of course we know was decimated when those opposite were last in power.

In the multicultural affairs space, I am pleased to see the LNP government match Labor's commitment to fund the Ethnic Communities Council of Queensland as the peak body for multicultural organisations. This is something I championed as the minister for multicultural affairs. ECCQ is an important voice in advocacy for our multicultural communities. Its research is invaluable and it deserves to be funded appropriately. Something that I do not believe has been funded appropriately is the LNP government's new Community Connect grants—\$5 million over four years to build or upgrade facilities for multicultural organisations. That is \$1.25 million per year to build or upgrade infrastructure. If organisations apply for the maximum \$500,000 grants that will be available, then we will effectively see 2.5 organisations receiving funding each year. I am also not sure if the government can use BPIC as an excuse for these projects but I am not sure you can build a lot with \$500,000, but it is all good because right at the bottom of the LNP's political media release spruiking the commitment it sneaks in the fact that you must have matched funding—something that many organisations will not have realised.

In last year's election Labor committed \$30 million for the inclusive communities infrastructure fund for multicultural group facilities that would have seen more projects funded and community expectations met. Again, I will be watching the LNP's infrastructure program very carefully because I believe this program is simply lip-service and will not deliver anything meaningful to our multicultural communities. I also welcome the Leader of the Opposition's announcement in his budget reply speech today of our Labor team's support for the Activate Australia's Skill advocacy campaign that recognises that during a national skills crisis almost half of all permanent migrants in Australia have skills that are not fully harnessed. I wish to thank Settlement Services International, SSI, for its significant work and leadership in this space. Queensland can also be a leader in support for the solutions needed to reverse this skills mismatch, to activate the potential that is currently being underutilised, to address skills shortages and to provide a significant economic opportunity. What is clear is that the 2025-26 budget is full of deceptive figures, delusional narratives, disappearing projects and general disappointment—exactly what we expected from this inept LNP government.