




Speech By
Dr Christian Rowan

MEMBER FOR MOGGILL

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL;
GOVERNANCE, ENERGY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE, REPORT**

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (12.22 pm): I rise to address the debate on report No. 11 of the Governance, Energy and Finance Committee titled *2025-26 Budget estimates—Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2025*. I note that there was one recommendation of the committee: that the proposed expenditure as detailed in the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill be agreed to. From the outset I wish to acknowledge the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and the Clerk of the Parliament as well as the Deputy Speaker for their participation throughout the estimates hearing.

The estimates committee hearing process this year saw new reforms being delivered as promised by the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government. Thanks to these reforms, what we saw during this year's estimates was a stronger, fairer and more accountable process than what Queenslanders had seen for years under Labor. For the first time in years, Queenslanders saw a return to a calm and methodical examination of the state budget, with ministers and senior public servants given the opportunity to provide detail and fulsome answers to a wide range of questions.

These reforms introduced by the Crisafulli LNP state government were considered and meaningful. Most significantly, these reforms saw the Speaker and Deputy Speaker chair the estimates committee hearings. This provided assurance to all participants that proceedings would be conducted impartially, fairly and in accordance with the standing orders of the House. Their calm and fair stewardship was widely acknowledged as a success, bringing balance and credibility back to the estimates process. I want to commend and thank the Speaker and the Deputy Speaker for their diligence and significant work undertaken in chairing each and every respective hearing.

Another important reform was the addition of an extra day to the estimates schedule, together with an additional four hours of questioning, ensuring more time was available for scrutiny. This gave members of parliament the time needed to focus on the issues that matter to Queenslanders. I note the commentary provided in Labor's statement of reservation and wish to highlight a few matters. On an indicative count—and I note further analysis will be provided—I am advised that Labor and the crossbench had the vast majority of both time for questions and number of questions asked. I am advised, in fact, in relation to question time allocations during estimates that the final split of government and non-government time was 60 per cent non-government, at 2,207 minutes, and 40 per cent government, at 1,488 minutes.

The reality is that the Labor opposition failed to use their time effectively. Perhaps prior to these estimates hearings the Labor opposition should have taken their own advice that if they want better answers they should ask better questions. Asking better questions starts with questions that are within standing orders. Too often Labor's questions were irrelevant, contained imputations, were argumentative or fell outside standing orders. Frequently Labor would ask about matters outside the scope of the committee altogether.

Mr de Brenni: How many points of order were upheld? Not many.

Dr ROWAN: It was telling that, when asked to rephrase, Labor shadow ministers and Labor members could not adapt and simply moved on to the next scripted line, and that is the point. When it comes to those opposite and the Manager of Opposition Business, who is interjecting, Labor could not ask questions that were within standing orders or were relevant to the committee at hand. That is not the mark of a credible opposition but of a disordered and weak one—a Labor opposition that is lacking strategy, agility and aptitude.

Despite having more hours, the Labor opposition squandered their opportunity and are now seeking to blame others for their incompetence. That being said, the real story of this year's estimates is not about Labor's shortcomings but the success of the Crisafulli Liberal National Party state government's reforms. The estimates hearings of 2025 demonstrated that accountability in Queensland has been restored. We have a stronger, fairer and focused process which is firmly based on the people of Queensland.

As Leader of the House, I wish to acknowledge all committee members, ministers and departmental representatives for their work through what is one of the most rigorous sittings in the parliamentary calendar. I also thank parliamentary staff, attendants and precinct staff for their professionalism and dedication not only throughout estimates but also in the work they do each and every day.

Before I conclude, I also take the opportunity to acknowledge Dr Jonathan Shirley, who is in the gallery. Dr Shirley is a senior consultant anaesthetist here in Queensland. He has made an important contribution to health care in Queensland and I welcome him to the parliament today. I commend the report to the House. I commend the reforms that the Crisafulli LNP state government has implemented in relation to the estimates process for 2025.