




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (8.28 pm): I rise tonight to speak on behalf of the hardworking people of the Mansfield electorate—the nurses, doctors, teachers, police officers, university staff, child safety workers, small business owners, lawyers and public servants who are all the backbone of my community. They are working parents, raising families with busy lives, supporting our economy and relying on the government to make life more affordable and services more accessible. What matters most to my community is clear. It is access to quality health care close to home, properly resourced and high-quality schools that support every child and their learning—education is valued deeply—and relief for the growing cost-of-living pressures that we all experience.

These are not luxuries: they are the basic expectations of a fair, decent and equitable society. What we have instead is a budget that strips away cost-of-living relief for millions of Queenslanders. What we have is a budget that slashes billions from vital congestion-reducing infrastructure, a budget that will leave people waiting even longer for medical care, a budget that does nothing to solve the shortage of social and affordable housing, and a budget that fails to invest in growing our frontline police force. It is a budget that will make getting around Queensland so much more difficult. It is a budget that will make it harder for Queenslanders to get ahead in life. Working families are now being left behind while essential services are stretched thin. What this budget does deliver for everyday working Queenslanders is higher energy bills and higher car rego.

Despite these broken promises, this budget delivers some important outcomes for my community. I am proud to say that many of them are the result of years of my advocacy and broader community support. There is \$30 million to upgrade the Mount Gravatt Police Station, with \$1 million allocated this year to begin planning.

Mr Ryan: You are spot-on. You were a big advocate for that.

Ms McMILLAN: I take the interjection from the former police minister. This is something we had planned for for many years and I thank him for his work and his advocacy. This will improve frontline safety and resources for our hardworking police, which is something that we have fought for, as I said, for many years.

There is: \$4.4 million for a new multipurpose court and ramp at Wishart State School, ensuring inclusive, modern facilities for students; \$2 million for the Mount Gravatt Men's Shed, a project supporting mental health, social connection and community wellbeing; a \$200 million investment in the QEII Jubilee Hospital and \$57 million, including a hospital expansion and a new car park. This is vital for meeting the demand across Brisbane's south. We know how important more quality public health services are for our community. The Crisafulli LNP government promised to deliver critical health infrastructure on time and on budget, and I will be holding them to account. There is also: \$600,000 for Lovewell Cafe, a social enterprise supporting women rebuilding their lives; \$200,000 for MacGregor

State High School, which supports families across the Mansfield and Toohey electorates; \$62.5 million to continue Labor's FairPlay vouchers—now under a new name, Play On! vouchers—and 50-cent public transport fares, a great Labor policy.

These wins do not just happen. They happen because I work with my Labor colleagues, local community leaders, parents, small businesses and sporting clubs to make sure our community's voice is heard. However, a lack of investment in public education is my deepest disappointment. As a former school principal, I know exactly how much our public schools stretch every dollar to support their students. That is why it is so disappointing personally and professionally to see how many of our schools were left out of this budget.

Mr J Kelly: They got nothing.

Ms McMILLAN: I take that interjection from my good friend, the member for Greenslopes. They got nothing. In 2024-25 Labor invested nearly \$9 million into Mansfield schools infrastructure. We funded classroom upgrades, administration refurbishments, car parks and science labs. Since being elected in 2017, I fought hard for the more than \$200 million worth of investment in our local schools. The Mansfield electorate expects world-class local public schools. It is the reason families move to my electorate. Local parents are educated. They understand the importance and the value of a quality education. As a principal, I spent many years advocating for safe, inclusive and future focused learning environments. As a member of parliament, I will not accept this failed investment in our local schools. Our young people deserve real investment into their futures. Our community has grown to expect this. Families in my electorate will not be happy.

The budget fails to deliver information on the critical local projects our community has asked for and been waiting on. Importantly, I cannot see information on the Ham Road and Broadwater Road intersection safety upgrade. This is an intersection that sees thousands of students and families move through every day. It has been a top local concern for many years. As the local member, I proudly secured \$2.5 million from the former Labor government to get this project off the ground. Funding was in place. The commitment was made, but under the LNP—nothing. No confirmation, no clarity, no timeline, despite the LNP candidate matching my commitment. My community would like to know about the progress of this project and where that funding is.

Beyond this, I have not identified funding for the Mount Gravatt Showgrounds, Vultures AFC, the Mount Gravatt Bowls Club, the Mount Gravatt Hawks, Easts Leagues Club or C&K kindy. The funding commitments that I made are not just wish lists; they are the backbone of community life in the Mansfield electorate. When they go unfunded we all feel the loss. This budget delivers a mixed result for Mansfield. Many of the good outcomes are Labor's legacy, and it is my continued advocacy that will ensure schools, sporting clubs and families in the Mansfield electorate are not left behind. We do not just need infrastructure; we need heart. We need a government that listens, that acts and delivers—not just for headlines, but for real people. I will keep doing what I have always done, which is showing up, speaking out and standing up for the people of the Mansfield electorate.

I now turn to areas of my shadow portfolio. I will deal firstly with child safety. This budget does not deliver what the government promised. While it nods towards election commitments, it is worryingly light on detail, particularly around one of the government's headline pledges to boost the number of child safety officers by 20 per cent. Is this another undercooked election commitment that cannot be followed through? Workforce and staffing shortages remain one of the biggest challenges facing the child safety sector, yet this budget lacks details to show there is support for planning or genuine workforce development.

I have spoken to university leaders across Queensland who report that this LNP government has not consulted with them about the pipeline for the child safety workforce of tomorrow. Nor have they spoken to them about contemporary research or evidence-based policy. The LNP government appears to have no plan and no foundation for building a sustainable and skilled workforce.

In their response to the budget, PeakCare notes that this budget provides no mention of increased support or allowance rates for carers. These carers are vital to the system, especially in reducing reliance on residential care. The government says it values carers, but it is failing to invest in them. Meanwhile, the New South Wales Labor government has just delivered a 20 per cent increase in the foster care allowance. Queensland should not fall behind. You cannot increase the number of frontline officers without also investing in the support staff they require. This is a short-sighted approach, and ultimately it is the most vulnerable children of Queensland who suffer. The government also promised to support carers and families by introducing an independent complaints escalation process. That was a clear and specific commitment, yet there is no dedicated funding, no implementation timeline and no details.

The government promised \$383 million for their Safer Children, Safer Communities election commitment. For child safety, this budget delivers less than half of that—around \$164 million for their Safer Children, Safer Communities promise. Where is the rest of the funding? It could be used to fund additional child safety officers, to implement the dual carer model or to create the promised independent complaints process. The LNP came to the election with the promise of a 24-hour dual carer supervision model for residential care, but instead of delivering dual carers this budget delivers a plan for a framework. Queenslanders are being told they will need to wait four years for a framework. This is another plan instead of real action.

First Nations children, who are significantly over-represented in the child safety system, have been overlooked in this budget. This budget includes no mention of targeted investment in early intervention or prevention programs for First Nations families. Despite the rhetoric of holding ministers to account for delivering their Service Delivery Statements targets, they remain virtually unchanged from the previous year. Ministers say they are committed to high standards, but this budget does not reflect that.

Sadly, the budget fails to address three significant primary preventive approaches: firstly, whole-of-family case management; secondly, collaboration between youth services, homelessness services and Child Safety; and, thirdly, there is no vision or contemporary approaches to deal with the clear, evidenced link between domestic and family violence, school attendance, disengagement from school and children in care.

I turn now to domestic and family violence. Of note, no significant new funding has been announced to boost frontline services. The Queensland Council of Social Service has stated, 'While police capacity is being bolstered, the workforce that supports victim survivors has been left to deal with increasing demand, without proper funding.'

I acknowledge the funding provided to the DVConnect Womensline and Mensline. The opposition will be watching closely to ensure the outcome of the inquiry into DVConnect strengthens these critical services. I commend the federal Labor government for their ongoing support to the national partnership agreement on family, domestic and sexual violence responses and the Queensland government's \$75 million matched contribution.

We note the lack of detail in the budget on implementing the recommendations of the Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and well-researched reports by leading specialists, stakeholders and those with lived experience. These recommendations cannot be forgotten. We do not need another review or report; we need real action, real investment and the full implementation of the remaining recommendations of the *Hear her voice* reports 1 and 2. Women's and children's lives are at risk.

While details were not available in the budget, I hope that the minister confirms funding to services such as The Bangle Foundation and the Red Rose Foundation. These localised services do incredible work that is supported by both sides of this House, and I want to make sure they are not forgotten. The opposition will continue to advocate for greater investment in: primary prevention; early intervention; school education programs specifically dealing with power imbalance, pornography and misogyny; crisis support; behaviour change; and healing services. These measures are essential to breaking the cycle of domestic and family violence in our communities and addressing its widespread impacts across Queensland.

I turn to the communities portfolio. Neighbourhood Centres Queensland have made it clear that they need funding for 10 new neighbourhood centres. From what I can see, the budget provides for just one new neighbourhood centre that Labor had not already committed funding to. I acknowledge that the government has committed to continue the Labor initiative of the \$200 FairPlay vouchers, rebranded as Play On!, and that is a positive thing.

On a final note, I want to acknowledge the absence of designated funding for LGBTQIA+ organisations in this budget, including the LGBTQIA+ Alliance. This alliance plays a vital role, and I urge the government to ensure it continues to receive funding and support.

We on this side of the House will continue to hold the government accountable for not just making promises but delivering real outcomes for Queenslanders, especially for those most vulnerable Queenslanders across the state. This blue budget fails to articulate a vision for a future Queensland. This blue budget fails to deliver for our most vulnerable Queenslanders. This blue budget fails to respond to the most significant issues facing the Western world, and that is the growing gap of inequity and inequality.