




Speech By
Glen Kelly

MEMBER FOR MIRANI

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

 **Mr G KELLY** (Mirani—LNP) (6.09 pm): I rise tonight to support the Crisafulli government's first budget. This is a budget for all Queenslanders, especially those of us who live, work and raise families in the regions. This budget begins the task of rebuilding Queensland and restoring trust that was lost in communities like mine, where Labor spent years turning a blind eye. For nearly a decade the electorate of Mirani was ignored, forgotten and taken for granted. There was plenty of spin and plenty of stunts but no outcomes. Let me tell you, Mr Deputy Speaker, that you cannot fake it in Mirani. You have to show up, plan ahead, roll up your sleeves and get things done.

In just eight months the Crisafulli government has done more for Mirani than Labor managed in 10 years. We still have a long way to go, but our people have not given up. They are still showing up, rain, hail or shine, because that is how we do things in Mirani. We are heads down, salt of the earth types, the type of people who keep this state running—quietly, reliably and without the fuss.

Mirani has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the state at just 2.2 per cent; Mackay sits on 6.4 per cent; and Rocky sits on 5.7 per cent. We punch well above our weight. We grow the food, we mine the minerals, we power the grid and we do whatever we have to without any dramas. But we have been overlooked for too long, and that is why this budget matters. It is not just a turning point; it is proof that someone is finally listening.

Take Stanwell Power Station, for example—my old stomping ground. I spent 16 years working there alongside locals who help keep the lights on across Queensland. Now, through the \$1 billion Electricity Maintenance Guarantee, this budget delivers vital upgrades and overhauls to Stanwell, supporting jobs and energy security for our state.

There is \$30,000 for the Sarina Progress Association to fund a feasibility study for upgrades at the Sarina Swim Centre. It might not sound like much, but it has already brought Mackay Regional Council to the table, finally giving Sarina the same support other pools get. That is what happens when government backs local ideas.

It is the same story in Mount Morgan. This budget includes \$50,000 for a tourism feasibility study. This town has been crying out for help for many a year. While we work to re-open the mine, we also need to back new industries, and this funding helps to do just that.

I have to celebrate the \$4.5 million going towards our Beef Week 2027. As a grazier, I know firsthand how much Beef Week means to our region—not just for the cattle industry but for jobs, tourism and regional pride. I look forward to welcoming you all to the beef capital in 2027.

This budget also backs grassroots sport through the Games On! legacy fund. We are delivering \$3.125 million to the Western Suburbs Rugby League Club—go the mighty Wests Tigers!—for new fields, new change rooms and four multipurpose courts. This is a once-in-a-generation upgrade not only for Rugby League but also netball, basketball, volleyball and more. Well done to Kingsley Theiber and the team at Wests! They had the vision and we are helping to bring it to life.

Many people in Mirani choose to live there for the lifestyle. Fishing is a big part of that. That is why the budget includes \$500,000 to upgrade the Inkerman boat ramp, improving safety and access for locals and visitors alike.

As I get around the electorate and speak with the locals, one thing is crystal clear: families are doing it tough. Whether it is groceries, uniforms or sporting fees, the pressure is real. The LNP government is backing families and delivering real relief with \$200 Play On! sports vouchers, a \$100 Back to School Boost, and free kindy health checks. That is real, practical support.

Families have also told me about run-down schools where maintenance issues have been left unattended for too long. Labor left regional schools on the backburner, but this budget delivers upgrades to Alligator Creek, Finch Hatton, Homebush, Marian, Marmor and St Lawrence state schools. These are the places where our kids learn, grow and build friendships. They deserve nothing less than the best.

Keeping our communities safe is the No. 1 concern of Queenslanders. After years of soft-on-crime policies, people have felt it in their streets, their homes and their businesses. The Making Queensland Safer Laws are starting to turn things around, restoring order and rebuilding public confidence. We still have a lot of work to do, and that is why I welcome the 1,600 new police recruits, including seven for Rocky, five for Mackay and one for Sarina, which is fantastic. We are also investing \$147 million for new frontline police equipment, including upgraded body worn cameras and new tasers. We are not just cracking down; we are acting early. This budget delivers \$560 million for early intervention and rehabilitation programs, because stopping crime before it starts is how we build safer communities.

We know that health and housing are just as important as community safety. This budget delivers major investments in both Rockhampton and Mackay hospitals, including: \$36.9 million for a new cardiac hybrid theatre in Rocky; \$91.9 million to expand the mental health ward at Rockhampton Hospital; \$2.2 million for a youth mental health facility; and 128-plus new beds and car parks for the Mackay Hospital. We are also backing grassroots mental health, with the Walk 'n' Talk men's hub in Rockhampton receiving \$200,000.

We are finally addressing the housing shortage. This budget delivers: 147 new homes in Central Queensland; 110 homes in Mackay and Whitsunday; \$1 million for Chances House Mackay to support vulnerable Queenslanders; and \$5.2 million for Vinnies to build a housing and support hub. We are also investing in frontline worker housing for teachers, nurses and police. In towns like Sarina this cannot come soon enough. Our schools are struggling with workforce shortages. It is not because people do not want to come; it is because we have nowhere to house them. It is the same story with police. We are recruiting, but they have nowhere to move into. This budget starts to fix that, and I will keep fighting to make sure it goes further.

This budget delivers where it is needed most: on our roads. Out here roads are not just a blacktop; they are lifelines. I have seen firsthand how a single flood can cut off a road to a community for weeks. There is no easy detour when you have to travel two hours to the next town. That is why Country Roads Connect matters. From Bruce Highway upgrades to remote road repairs, this budget backs the roads that keep Queensland moving because the Bruce is not just a highway; it is the thread that ties the state together.

Finally, I want to acknowledge what is not in this budget: the \$36 million Pioneer-Burdekin pumped hydro project—scrapped! It did not stack up financially, environmentally or socially. There was no consultation and no respect. The people of Eungella were treated appallingly by the former government, but we have made it right. The Premier and I stood in Eungella and told the community, 'This project is off the table.' To the people of Eungella: thank you. You stood your ground, you stuck together and you got the result you deserve—even though you are still left cleaning up the mess caused by Labor's chaos. This is a budget that restores trust, delivers outcomes and puts people first. It shows what happens when government listen to the regions and backs us in.