




Speech By  
**Hon. Glenn Butcher**

**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**

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Record of Proceedings, 27 June 2025

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

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (11.24 am): I rise today as not only the proud member for Gladstone but also a deeply disappointed representative of a community that has been ignored and left behind by this new LNP government. This is a budget that delivers absolutely nothing for Gladstone—no new infrastructure, no new funding and no support for the industries of Gladstone that keep the region and the state moving forward. The message from the LNP to the people of Gladstone is loud and clear: you are not a priority for this government.

Gladstone has powered Queensland for generations. We have been the engine room of this state, driving energy production, exports and also manufacturing. We have earned our seat at the table. When this government finally had the chance to deliver for regional Queensland when they handed down their first budget in over a decade, Gladstone got scraps: no support for industry diversification; no boost for apprenticeships and training; no funding for clean energy jobs or major community infrastructure in Gladstone; no support to progress the replacement of the Gladstone Hospital or for the upgrades that have been needed; no investment in the sports facilities our growing region needs; no relief for council on the bin tax; and no infrastructure investment for our police, our fires or our ambos.

What makes it worse is that we are not asking for handouts. We are just asking for fairness: for investment that reflects the contribution Gladstone makes to Queensland's economy every single day; and for a plan that recognises our people, our industries and our potential in Queensland. Once again, the LNP have looked away from Gladstone. It is not just neglect; it is deliberate. If this government were truly serious about building Queensland's future, they would be investing in Gladstone, not leaving us in the rear-view mirror. This budget is not just a missed opportunity; it is a betrayal of every single worker, every family and every small business in my electorate, and I will not stand quietly while Gladstone is sidelined.

The first budget from an LNP government since 2014 was supposed to show us a new vision. It was supposed to be a blueprint for Queensland's economic and energy future. Instead, it delivered a stark and damaging message to regional Queensland: you are all on your own.

Gladstone has long been the beating heart of Queensland's energy system. From coal and gas to solar, wind and now hydrogen, we do not shy away from big changes. We do not run from a challenge. We take pride in powering this state and driving its exports. This budget contains nothing for Gladstone's energy future—not one major renewable energy project, not one clear commitment for hydrogen, not one major piece of infrastructure to support the transition and not one real investment in the people and the workforce who are ready to build what comes next.

Instead, the LNP has turned the clock back, scrapping Labor's renewable energy targets—targets that provided certainty and also momentum for the people of the Gladstone region, targets that sent the right signals to investors and industries and targets that gave communities just like Gladstone a road map to the future. Gladstone is not just a powerhouse of Queensland; it is one of the most strategically important industrial hubs in the country. Under Labor, it was on track to become a global

player in hydrogen and green energy exports. We had commitments from international companies. We had land secured in the state development area. We had port access planned. Most importantly, we had certainty—certainty created by legislated renewable energy targets which were backed by billions of dollars of investment. All of that is now under threat.

This LNP budget says almost nothing about hydrogen. There is no support for the Gladstone hydrogen hub, no fast-tracking of infrastructure, no framework for any training and no clarity for any of the industries in the Gladstone region. The LNP's message to those hydrogen investors is: wait until the end of 2025 for a plan. That is 18 months of hesitation, of confusion and of lost momentum.

I ask the Premier and the Treasurer do they seriously believe that hydrogen investors around the world will wait for them to work this out. Do they think international energy companies are sitting around waiting for this lazy LNP to decide whether it even believes in an energy transition? They will not wait. They will go where the vision is clear, where the government is a partner and not a road block. That used to be Queensland under Labor. Now it is slipping away under the LNP.

**Mr Head:** We welcome business. If they want to spend their own money, they can go for it.

**Mr BUTCHER:** When you have boofheads across the chamber like that yelling at you, it speaks volumes.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Furner): Member for Callide, your interjections are not being taken. You will remain silent.

**Mr BUTCHER:** The budget also projects debt to reach \$205 billion by 2028. Despite all that borrowing, there is still no serious investment in the industries that will grow Queensland's clean energy future—no renewables, no hydrogen, no advanced manufacturing and export infrastructure. Those are the jobs of the future. They are the jobs that Gladstone is ready to do.

Let me remind this House that, under Labor, we had a vision, and we certainly acted on it in this state. We delivered the Central Queensland Renewable Energy Zone. We backed and funded the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline. We partnered with industry and unions to develop the hydrogen economy. We invested in skills and training to prepare our workforce for the future, particularly our kids who are currently in the high school system. Gladstone has been seriously let down by the L-plate LNP.

I am now going to spend some time talking about my shadow portfolios of police, corrective services and sport. The LNP have cut funding for essential police station upgrades across Queensland, breaking promises to communities like Bundaberg and Winton. Instead, they redirected funds to a small LNP electorate station, prioritising politics over community safety. Despite promising to be tough on crime, the LNP have lowered the youth justice targets and extended reporting periods, weakening that accountability. Their actions show a government more focused on headlines than real community safety improvements.

The LNP promised a new Townsville police academy with \$100 million, yet only \$45 million is budgeted for Kirwan station. Stage 2 is missing in action. The Townsville community deserve transparency and they deserve full delivery of this critical training facility for our police recruits. The LNP pledged 1,600 new police recruits, but their budget only supports 424 new staff. Numbers do not add up. Queenslanders deserve honesty and real investment in frontline police, not smoke and mirrors. We need real growth in police numbers, not just maintaining the current levels which is exactly what the LNP are doing in this budget.

Polair capabilities are now extended to Moreton Bay and will continue in Cairns and the Sunshine Coast. When you look through the budget papers, Wide Bay cannot be found anywhere when it comes to Polair support. Does this omission mean that Polair will not cover Wide Bay anymore? I ask that question of the police minister. What does that say about equitable law enforcement coverage across all Queensland regions?

The LNP is spending \$31 million to continue Labor's police and liaison officer high-visibility patrols but has cut funding from \$12.5 million to \$10.4 million a year. Despite millions allocated to watch house infrastructure, the government still has not released the long-awaited review. Where is it? Queenslanders deserve to know the outcomes and see action, not more delays and not more secrecy from this LNP.

**Mr HEAD:** Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My colleagues have brought something to my attention. I have just looked at the live stream. The member for Gladstone used unparliamentary language directed at me. I want to draw that to your attention. I have just reviewed the tape. It is on record. I ask you to get him to withdraw that. I also take personal offence at those comments by the member for Gladstone, who regularly uses insulting comments.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I did not hear any unparliamentary language. I will just check with the Clerk.

**Mr BUTCHER:** I withdraw.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Proceed, member for Gladstone.

**Mr BUTCHER:** While the budget extends the use of the Caboolture watch house hub for young offenders until 2028-29, where in the budget papers does it mention the impact on Queensland's watch house network? Are they going to turn it into a youth detention centre? There are no answers to any of these things in the budget.

This budget has revealed another unintended consequence of the LNP's rushed youth crime laws. QPRIME is incompatible with the new children's criminal history legislation, requiring millions and millions of dollars in manual workarounds and another million dollars for the solution to fix it. Queenslanders are paying for their incompetence and for their lack of preparation for that bill.

I also see that \$10 million has been allocated to Daniel's Law in the 2024-25 financial year, but there are only five days left in the financial year and there is still no legislation before the House. Time is ticking for the LNP.

I will now move on to corrective services. It is understood from the SDS that the LNP have cut over 200 staff from corrective services despite rising prisoner demand, as we know. It is a reckless move that weakens safety and increases the workload of current staff. Queenslanders deserve better than frontline cuts hidden in budget fine print.

Billions were announced for prison expansions, yet key details like bed numbers or new facility planning are missing in the budget. The LNP must explain to Queenslanders how money without planning helps manage prison demand. The Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre is completely absent in budget papers Nos 3 and 4. The budget includes no capital funding for low-security prison uplift. Labor started this work and now the LNP has stalled it. Without proper infrastructure, overcrowding worsens and rehabilitation of offenders suffers. Talk of safety means nothing without real investment.

Creating opportunities for kids in communities should be central to the sports portfolio. This government talks about the Olympics and legacy infrastructure, but where is the support for community sport and local facilities in Gladstone? Where is the investment in our junior sports clubs, our playing fields, our female facilities and our sportsground upgrades?

The LNP have once again shown they have no original ideas when it comes to sport, copying Labor's successful FairPlay vouchers program, as we have heard today, after years and years of criticising it. This is a program Labor introduced to help families with the cost of living here in Queensland. I want to thank Labor members for running a statewide campaign to make sure that this government kept Labor's FairPlay vouchers.

We all know sport is more than just fitness. It builds community pride, it builds social cohesion and it creates opportunities for kids. Labor understands that, so we made strategic investments in regional sport infrastructure in all seats, not just Labor seats—in all seats across Queensland. What a contrast with this LNP who have put politics above Queenslanders.

In reviewing the sports budget, I noted one glaring omission. Shockingly, it seems that the LNP have cut SwimStart vouchers. The LNP's decision to cut SwimStart vouchers is a disgrace and a direct attack on water safety for our young Queenslanders. SwimStart gave families \$150 to help those children aged 0 to 4 access vital swimming lessons in Queensland—skills that we know save lives. That is why we introduced that legislation. After rebadging Labor's FairPlay vouchers as their own, the LNP have now walked away from SwimStart entirely. It is a short-sighted, dangerous cut that puts children at risk and it shows how little this government truly cares about families or community safety.

In conclusion, this is a budget with no vision, this is a budget with no heart and this is a budget with no respect for regional Queenslanders. Gladstone will not be taken for granted—not now, not ever! I commend my remarks to the House.