




Speech By
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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (11.00 pm): This week we mark the first budget of the Crisafulli LNP government—a budget that was pitched as a vision for Queensland's future but instead reads like a list of broken promises, cut corners and community neglect. From this week forward the Crisafulli government owns every decision, it owns every budget cut, it owns every austerity measure, it owns every failed policy, it owns every frontline sector worker sacked, it owns every public sector pay dispute, it owns all the economic data, it owns the economy and no more relying on the ridiculous political spin and hyperbole like we saw in the first 100 days of its office—all words, no responsibility. Now that its first budget has been delivered, there is no more trying to pin its failures on the previous long-term, incredibly successful Queensland Labor government. No, what it has now is ownership. There is a reason the LNP has governed for only a handful of years in Queensland in the last three decades. The electoral reality is that it only really fell over the line after a decade out of power, winning 52 seats out of the required 47 for a majority. There is a reason it is not the natural party for government in Queensland, because all it offers is pain, all it offers is austerity, all it offers is cuts. It is no grand visionary. There is either the status quo or there are cuts. That is all it has.

Those opposite can carry on all they like. They are excited, and fair enough: it is their first budget in a long time. They have spent the week reading out their rehearsed lines from the Premier's office. One would have thought, however, that with 10 years of spruiking superiority they would have delivered a truly remarkable budget. However, the honeymoon is over. When they climb down off their high horse and the dust settles on this budget, they will come to see what the community is seeing. We are seeing the early signs of another LNP oncer government just like Campbell Newman—a one termer, a oncer—that had an opportunity to build and advance Queensland but fell back on a comfort zone of arrogance, sneakiness, lack of consultation and cuts. One would think that those opposite would have learned from the past, but have they? No.

What a budget this is. It is not a boring budget; it is a bad budget—a budget from a Treasurer who cannot deliver on the most basic promises. What did the Treasurer deliver this week? There was no grand vision for the state. The LNP is spooked—spooked by the ghost of Campbell Newman, too scared of his own shadow, too timid to govern in its own right, too timid to lay out a vision for the state. The Treasurer was more worried about getting a drilling from the media, so what did he give Queenslanders instead? The Treasurer's budget speech mentions Labor 12 times—no mention of serious cost-of-living relief, no mention of a grand vision, just bagging the former Labor government. The irony of all of this is that the only good and decent things in this budget—and there are some—are the policies, infrastructure and programs that are being continued from the previous Labor government such as the rebranded \$200 FairPlay vouchers; health checks for kids—a Labor policy; the continuation—for now—of 50-cent public transport fares—a Labor signature transport policy; the capital programs, Labor's. As the opposition leader quite rightly said yesterday, 'It is just a Temu version of what we had planned.' Everything good in this budget was a Labor plan, albeit some of it watered down

or delayed, and yet the Treasurer still tries to play the blame game. This LNP blame game, however, only gets one flicker—one shot in the locker—and it has used it in this budget. Just like a honey bee, it is only one stinger before it takes the inevitable path to its demise—so too the LNP blame game and so too the fate of this government.

Let us be blunt: this budget blows away cost-of-living support for millions of Queenslanders. It is a budget that cuts billions of congestion-busting infrastructure, a budget that offers no clear timeline for health projects, no certainty for housing and no genuine support for small businesses. It does not address the issues that actually matter to Queenslanders. It is a budget with more political advertising than action, a budget with record debt but no record investment. Under the LNP, it is all pain and no gain. The Treasurer handed down an \$8 billion deficit while letting the state debt balloon by 2028, and what do Queenslanders get in return for this staggering figure? No relief at the check-out, no guarantee of cheaper electricity and no concrete plans to address housing shortages.

Let us turn to education. Fee-free TAFE provided tuition-free training places for eligible individuals. The program aimed to address skills shortages and boost the workforce in key industries like care, construction, manufacturing and nursing. Under Labor, fee-free TAFE and core apprenticeships programs were incredibly successful—something that we started in 2021—and yet, shockingly, young Queenslanders researching TAFE training today are faced with a webpage telling them that free TAFE has run out under this government—another broken promise.

In health, the picture is just as bleak. The government promised 2,200 hospital beds by 2028. This has now changed. Apparently we are going to get 2,600 beds but with no due date, no clarity and no plan. The PA Hospital's spinal unit was set to be delivered under Labor but now it has just gone, the Robina Hospital will lose 114 beds and they could not even be bothered to include the delivery timeframes for their big hospital build. But it is not just hospitals; it is funding for important health programs. Many members will know of motor neurone disease, championed by the current Australian of the Year. This is what MND Queensland had to say about the budget—

Despite a strong and well-evidenced pre-budget submission shaped by the voices and experiences of our MND community, no dedicated funding has been committed to supporting people with MND in our state. This is in stark contrast to other states, where MND associations receive financial backing to deliver critical care services.

Queensland's the only state without such support. This lack of investment will result in poorer outcomes for Queenslanders living with MND. Our team continues to do everything we can—but without government support, our reach and impact are significantly constrained.

It does not get more damning than that. Queensland MND sufferers have been kicked to the kerb, and they are not alone. There is a desperate need to expand health services in the Brisbane bayside and the previous government—my previous government—was set to deliver a business case to expand important health services at the Wynnum-Manly Community Health Centre, Gundu Pa, but the LNP did not even bother to assess that as an option. Did they? I know the answer. They do not care about Baysiders. They are partisan. They do not govern for all Queenslanders. They say they are governing for all Queenslanders but they are governing for headlines.

Let us turn to small business, a sector I am proud to represent as shadow minister. I am also a former small business owner. In the last six months I have been listening to small business owners, peak bodies, chambers of commerce and stakeholders from across Queensland. The biggest issues are labour skills shortages and rising costs. As I stated earlier, when young Queenslanders are researching TAFE training today they are faced with a webpage telling them free TAFE has run out under this government. Where will this massive injection of apprentices come from? Where will the desperately needed skilled workforce come from? How will the government tackle this skilled labour shortage? Small businesses deserve investment, capability building and trust. What do they get from this budget? Neglect! There is no certainty around future grants and no visibility to date on customer service improvements or digital access. We will be watching very carefully what improvements will be made. If the government's new time lagged Open Hospitals portal is anything to go by, Queenslanders will be in for a roller-coaster ride over the next few years when it comes to customer service.

Small businesses have carried Queensland through floods, fires and pandemics. They are the backbone of our economy, employing over a million people and contributing \$131 billion to our state's economy. They are not asking for handouts, they are asking for leadership. This government's refusal to actively engage and invest in digital transformation, cyber readiness or skills development is short-sighted and damaging. It is just more evidence of an L-plate government chasing headlines and trying to build a political narrative instead of applying actual, tangible solutions that will help the small business community. The Sunshine Coast Business Council stated in the media yesterday that it is time the government stopped talking about reducing red tape and just did something about it. This budget does not do anything. It does not do enough to support and stop small business closures. What does red tape busting actually look like?

In contrast, Labor backed small businesses with real programs, real grants and real pathways to growth. We made Buy Queensland a priority, we supported innovation and we understood that small businesses do not just create jobs; they build communities. That brings me to my community, the electorate of Lytton. I have listened to the contributions by government members spruiking their achievements in delivering this program and that program for constituents and telling the House how wonderful they all are delivering all these things and how clever they are. Baysiders feel rightly done over by this budget. There is zilch in this budget for Baysiders. The closest commitment in my electorate is \$15,000 to Carina State School, which is about 10 kilometres outside my electorate.

Under the Campbell Newman government the Bayside was punished and it looks like we are being set up for that again. We are a proud, diverse, hardworking community, but this budget offers us next to nothing. Where in the budget does it outlay future capital investments for Manly State School or Wynnum State High School, local school maintenance and upgrades and major infrastructure at Darling Point Special School? I did see a media release announcing a new campus at Manly Road for Darling Point Special School, but it is not even mentioned in the budget. There are no answers for the future of 24-hour primary care at Gundu Pa, let alone an expansion of services, as I said earlier, or the delivery of palliative care at Blue Care Wynnum. There is no guarantee of ongoing support locked in for major local events like Wynnum Fringe festival, which brings thousands of visitors and tens of thousands of dollars in local spend each year. There is absolutely no clarity around the department of transport's spending. My electorate has many projects underway, including the Lindum railway station upgrade, the Lindum park-and-ride upgrade, the Lindum level crossing signalisation upgrade, finalisation of the Pritchard Street cycleway, the business case for the finalisation of the Murarrie to Lytton Moreton Bay Cycleway and the Manly Harbour master plan. It is not clear what is happening with these projects or even the hugely successful War on Wrecks, which cleaned up and protected waterways across Queensland. There is nothing in QTRIP where I can find details of this.

This budget is not about building; it is about backing away. It is not about vision; it is about retreat. It is not about Queenslanders; it is about politics. To every family wondering why their child's school did not make the list, to every parent waiting for a bed, to every small business looking for support, to every community staring down a funding shortfall, this is your wake-up call. Queenslanders are smart. They can see through the spin. They understand that a real government delivers more than slogans: it delivers services, it delivers infrastructure, it delivers hope. Labor has a very long and proud history and legacy of delivering for Queenslanders and we will do it again. This budget fails the test of leadership, it fails the test of vision and it fails the test of fairness. I say to the Premier and Treasurer, 'The opposition will be watching, we will be questioning and we will be standing up for the Queenslanders that you are leaving behind because they deserve better.' My community deserves better. Small businesses deserve better. Queenslanders deserve better. I think that Thomas Jefferson would be rolling in his grave. I do not think that he meant this mob over here would be the elected government, because this mob are incredibly disappointing and are letting Queenslanders down every day.