




Speech By
Kendall Morton

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

Record of Proceedings, 27 June 2025

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

 **Ms MORTON** (Caloundra—LNP) (5.50 pm): It is with great honour and great excitement that I rise today to speak to a budget that I am proud to be a part of. I am proud to be part of a team that is disciplined, motivated, responsible and delivering for the people of Queensland. Like many of us who form the LNP Crisafulli government, I became involved in state politics after watching the total destruction and economic mismanagement of our great state. Here we are today, and it is a great honour to be involved with a team that is focused on the needs of Queenslanders and the long-term future of our state.

This is the first budget we will deliver, and I congratulate the Treasurer on a sensible, future focused budget that is delivering for Queensland. I also thank the Premier and Deputy Premier for their vision, for listening to the people of Caloundra and for making up for the decades of underinvestment in our part of the world. I say to all of the individual ministers who have worked tirelessly in support of key infrastructure projects in Caloundra that they have done an amazing job, and the budget is certainly a body of work to be proud of. Delivering a fresh start for Queensland has been refreshing to support and everything we do is centred around what is important to the people of our state.

I say to the people of Caloundra: get excited! We have watched our population grow, and it continues to be one of the fastest growing areas in the country, with no sign of slowing. It is now our time. We promised a TAFE centre of excellence and it is coming. It is funded in the budget. This TAFE will have a focus on construction trades and will be located within our growing Aura community. A whole generation of kids and future generations will be able to access this education in Caloundra. Those construction trades will give our kids opportunities that they always had to travel to before and will equip our community with a skilled workforce to build the thousands of homes we need to address Labor's housing crisis. I say to the people of Caloundra: how exciting is it that we will have somewhere local to motivate and inspire a whole generation of our future workforce! Their futures certainly got a little brighter with this budget.

Also funded in the budget is a project that is near and dear to the Caloundra community. We have \$20 million for the urgent recommendations made in our Bribie Island and Pumicestone Passage inquiry. The community has driven this project, voicing concerns for decades. The former government was clear in their position: they would do nothing. Bit by bit we watched our island wash away until the Crisafulli LNP government said, 'We'll take action,' and we did. We commenced a comprehensive review, which was undertaken by experts in coastal erosion and leaders in their field. The terms of reference for the review included a scope for urgent recommendations to take action, and here is the funding in this budget. We now have the funding to undertake these urgent action items, including securing breakthroughs 2 and 3 and creating a channel for the safe use and passage for the coastguard. The commitment to this issue can never be understated for our community, and I thank my LNP team for listening and understanding. Their support for me and the people of Caloundra has potentially saved an entire suburb.

This budget funds the Turbine project, a project that could not have proceeded without this contribution. The Turbine project is the first of its kind in Australia. It is a food and beverage manufacturing hub that brings together emerging businesses to assist with and share the technology, education and resources for our brilliant manufacturing sector. Why is Caloundra the perfect place for the Turbine project? We have a strong, independent manufacturing industry in Caloundra, which includes businesses like HeliMods, Country Chef, Kilcoy Global Foods, Novacorr, ProtectorAI, Australian Off Road and My Teddy—to name a few. We are perfectly placed with those brilliant minds driving our manufacturing sector because they are generous with their wisdom and knowledge for the benefit of all.

This budget has funding for the Caloundra CBD town centre, which is part of the Create Caloundra precinct, and will fund the beautification of our city centre so we can continue to support our CBD businesses welcoming visitors to our town. People across the country have visited Caloundra for generations, and many Queenslanders have fond memories of happy days in Caloundra. Our local businesses in the CBD were hit hard by COVID, followed by a workforce crisis. We are now celebrating with them the investment into our town centre.

We have funded the VIRB Education Hub—an alternative access point for teenagers who have disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from mainstream education. The team at VIRB are having massive wins in addressing school disengagement and have offered a whole cohort of students a real chance at remaining engaged and supported in their learning.

Speaking of education, we have another win for Caloundra in this budget: a brand new school for our growing Aura community—a primary school with a capacity for 1,140 students. I am so excited to welcome the next generation of Caloundra locals to a fabulous new state school. It is so important that children can attend school in their local area. It makes life easier and communities stronger. We all know the important role our local schools play in shaping our entire lives. The former Labor government pulled the pin on this project, leaving that land vacant in Aura. They failed to deliver, but the LNP Crisafulli government has come to the rescue again for Caloundra. We value our young families and their education.

The Wave will be life-changing for our region—public transport is possibly the most exciting project for Caloundra! It will connect Beerwah to Nirimba, then Caloundra, Aroona and Birtinya, where the hospital is located. From there, our community will be able to jump on to the metro bus and travel to the Maroochydore CBD and on to the Sunshine Coast airport. I would like to reassure the member for McConnel that the people of Caloundra are in fact very excited by this plan. After listening to a 30-year conversation about Sunshine Coast rail, they know that we will deliver it.

I am so excited to be part of a government that can deliver mass transport solutions. As an individual local resident, a mother and a person who does not like driving, with five children at home—many with part-time jobs—I lap up and down those congested roads and I could not be more proud of this plan, which is committed to reducing traffic congestion. We will certainly have our livability and choice enhanced.

This budget has almost \$44 million for expanding social and community housing in our region to address Labor's housing crisis. Every single day I hear stories in my community about homelessness or the risk of homelessness. The size of the social housing waitlist is well documented, and I congratulate the LNP housing minister on the work he has already undertaken to address this crisis created by the former government.

This budget provides funding for shades and other upgrades that are so desperately needed at the Landsborough community kindy. We all know the important role our kindies play in our society, and Landsborough community kindy is a well-deserving recipient of this support.

We are also funding the Dicky Beach Surf Club for lifesaving equipment, local sporting clubs and the Twinnies pelican rescue. We are supporting our local emergency services, including \$17.5 million for a replacement fire station at both Caloundra and Beerwah. We are supporting those who keep our communities safe.

Here is the big one—the issue that my people have at the top of their minds every single day: traffic congestion on Caloundra Road. If the people of Caloundra check out QTRIP, they will see the Caloundra Congestion Busting Plan is listed as a project for the first time ever. The former government did nothing to address our growing community and congestion. We have been left in a mess and I will always be working on traffic infrastructure for our community, which is where we have been failed the most. This is our commitment to the main issue that affects the people of Caloundra. After years of neglect of our road infrastructure, this big project will take time. Thank you to the transport minister for addressing our concerns. Planning is underway and it is very exciting to see movement.

Lastly, I am thrilled to see funding for making 50-cent fares permanent. As I use the train to come to parliament, I fully support this measure, particularly as we are seeing increased public transport options for the people of Caloundra.

The axing of the GP patients tax is an enormous achievement, and I hate to think what could have been done under the former government if they were given the chance to reintroduce this tax, making it harder for our community to access a GP.

Once again I congratulate my colleagues on a fantastic first budget and thank them for their investment and commitment to Caloundra. This is a huge step towards our community catching up on a decade of neglect.