




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR INALA

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

 **Mrs NIGHTINGALE** (Inala—ALP) (4.02 pm): I rise today to speak on the Appropriation Bill. Let me be clear from the outset: this is not, as the government would have us believe, a boring budget; it is a bad budget. That is not to say there is nothing good in it—there is—but those good parts are overshadowed by what is missing, what has been delayed and what has been deliberately left behind, like the people in my electorate of Inala. The promises made before the election have now been left far behind too, and Queenslanders are paying the price at the hands of a government with no direction and no destination. I will speak more about that later.

First, I want to speak to the good parts of the budget because there is actually a lot in this budget that we agree with, and I will tell you why: all of the good parts are thanks to Labor. For the benefit of the House, I will go through the Labor hits in this budget: 50-cent fares—Labor policy; Help to Buy—Labor initiative; health checks for kids—Labor; FairPlay vouchers—Labor again; and the capital program—a version of ours but theirs is smaller and slower. Every single good idea in this budget was inherited. Queenslanders expected bold thinking, but what they got was a watered-down, repackaged knockoff of the real deal wrapped in blue. Meanwhile, the issues that really matter were quietly pushed aside.

Let's talk about cost-of-living relief. This is a budget that blows away cost-of-living relief support for millions of Queenslanders. Before the election, the member for Broadwater promised he would deliver relief for as long as the crisis lasted. The crisis is still here, but the relief is not. It feels like the moment the last LNP campaign sign was pulled from a front yard the LNP promises went with it. All of that talk of delivery and relief is now just slogans packed up with the corflutes and tossed in the bin with the fresh start that is now rotting alongside it all. It is one broken promise after another.

We will have a budget deficit this year of \$8 billion, despite a promise to Queenslanders of lower debt. It is a budget that will make people wait longer for medical treatment. It has no clear housing plan, cancelled projects and growing waitlists quarter after quarter. Here is the kicker: their solution to the growing social housing list is to kick people off it. That may fudge the housing waitlist numbers but it will not help with homelessness. It is a budget that does nothing to solve the shortage of affordable and social housing.

My electorate is one of the poorest in Queensland. I speak with people every week who are struggling to feed their families. There are parents skipping meals so their children can eat. There are charities turning people away because the demand is simply too high. This budget gives them nothing. That is why Labor is proud to reaffirm its budget reply commitments. Unlike the government, these are promises Labor actually intends to keep: extend the build-to-rent 50 per cent land tax concession indefinitely to increase supply and drive investment; and provide \$10 million in additional funding to community services, neighbourhood centres and food charities to meet growing demand and improve food storage, refrigeration and delivery.

We will advocate for the national adoption of the Activate Australia's Skills campaign because unlocking people's skills and qualifications will see more people in secure, well-paid work. This is a fantastic project, especially in a multicultural community like mine where people have the skills to do the job, just not the recognition of the credentials. This is what Labor does. We do not make excuses; we make progress.

I also want to raise an issue I campaigned on directly. During the election, I committed to repurposing a disused school dental clinic at Durack State School into a flexible learning space and multicultural community hub. This would be a small investment with a huge return, helping disengaged students stay connected to school and giving multicultural families a safe and welcoming place to access support, education and opportunity. Early intervention like this is how we stop youth crime before it starts. Like so many local priorities, this does not appear to have made it into the budget either.

I went looking in the budget documents for signs my community was even on the radar. I did a word search for the number of times 'Inala' was mentioned. It was not—not even once, zero. I also searched the budget for 'Forest Lake', one of Queensland's largest suburbs. It is home to more than 25,000 people, but I found nothing, not a single mention. In fact, all of the suburbs in my electorate were overlooked in this budget, with brief mentions only for Wacol for upgrades to the air handling units at the Tick Fever Centre, for operations at the youth remand centre, for increased capacity at the Arthur Gorrie prison and for a rebadging of Labor's funding for the Queensland Police Academy. There has been no word of extra resources to fix the overcrowded working conditions at the Inala Police Station.

Although I welcome any expenditure in my electorate, this bad budget fails the areas most in need. There has been no mention of money for schools, for transport upgrades, for new health facilities or for community infrastructure. This is a budget that ignores the very real and growing needs of my community. People in my electorate are working longer, paying more and getting less in return. This is a budget that will make it harder for Queenslanders to get around. It is a budget that will make it harder for Queenslanders to get ahead.

What would I like to see in this budget? Let's start with: proper investment in public transport for our growth suburbs like an additional bus service on Blunder Road or extra parking for Richlands station; funding for school infrastructure and resources for students, like more teach aide time because \$100 per student just will not cut it, and respect for teachers and their EB; community health and support hubs, especially where youth mental health, housing stress and domestic violence need is on the rise; funding for homelessness and housing services like Inala Family Accommodation Project; and more funding for drug and alcohol services in my community, where the need is urgent.

Families are being torn apart by addiction. It is driving family breakdown, fuelling domestic and family violence, pushing young people into crime and putting enormous pressure on our already stretched health and child safety services. I hear it from local police. I hear it from school principals. I hear it from parents who are desperate for help and simply cannot get it. There is no excuse for this government to turn its back on a crisis that is playing out every day in our suburbs. Youth crime will not be solved by ignoring these drivers.

There is a lot in this budget that tells us exactly what this new LNP government cares about and, unfortunately, it is not people doing it tough. It is not the battlers. It is not the families living week to week in my electorate. It is certainly not the carers or the volunteers or the community organisations who prop up the safety net this government is letting fall through the cracks like MND Queensland.

I have spoken in this House before about the incredible work this great organisation does for people living with motor neurone disease, for their families and for their carers. They are a small organisation doing massive work, yet the Crisafulli government could not find a single dollar for them, not a single cent. In a media release, MND Queensland said they were 'extremely disappointed' by the government's decision to exclude them from this year's budget. Their acting CEO Alicia Edwards called it 'disheartening and short-sighted'. She was right. I table that media release for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Media release, dated 26 June 2025, by MND Queensland, titled 'MND Queensland deeply disappointed by State Budget decision' [825](#).

What makes the lack of funding for MND Queensland even more galling is this: under Labor, we had committed \$600,000 to support this vital organisation—seemingly the same amount this new LNP government has quietly spent on taxpayer funded polling in just five months, polling they now refuse to release. Labor's \$600,000 would have gone to helping people live with dignity. It has been reported that the LNP's \$650,000 went to secret focus groups and marketing spin. They will not even tell Queenslanders what they asked or what they learnt.

Thanks to the Crisafulli LNP government, Queensland is now the only state in the country whose MND organisation receives no government support. Even New South Wales—yes, the Blues—fund theirs. I know we like to rib them during State of Origin, but on this issue the Blues have us beat. At least they know when to fund something that is vital. Meanwhile, here in Queensland the LNP did not fund MND Queensland but they did find money to change the coat of arms from maroon to blue.

If this government loves blue so much, I will give them a tip. Cornflowers are blue. That is the official colour of MND awareness. Instead of changing coat of arms and colour palettes, how about spending money on something blue that will fund equipment for people with MND—equipment people need to live? Instead, it went to blue bunting and colour palettes. It is absurd, it is offensive and it is a slap in the face to those who actually need help. That money could have gone to MND Queensland or Meals on Wheels or any number of food banks or community organisations that are stretched to breaking point.

I ask the new members in this place to reflect on these decisions. It just is not right. Sadly, these decisions show a pattern. This government is more focused on rebranding Queensland in its party colours than feeding families, housing people or easing the cost-of-living crisis. It is clear that this is a vanity project from a government that does not know how to put people first.

While the LNP is busy ignoring the Inala electorate and what matters for Queenslanders, I will not and Labor will not either. I will fight every single day in this parliament to make sure our community's voice is heard, to make sure the needs of Inala are not ignored, not shelved and not treated as optional because we matter and our kids matter, as do our workers, our carers, our pensioners—they all deserve better.

While I keep fighting for our fair share, the very least I expect is a budget that shows us where our money is going. This budget has so little detail it is almost insulting. When I was on the P&C, we had to produce better budget documents than this. We had to account for every dollar—show where the money is going and why. I have seen more transparency in a school tuckshop budget than in this one. Somehow the Queensland government, with billions at its disposal, thinks vague, glossy pages and missing timelines will do. It will not. Higher energy bills, higher rego fees, higher debt, broken free TAFE promises and failing to deliver cost-of-living relief will not do either.

It is clear that the LNP promised Queenslanders a kind of budget you would see on a Pinterest-perfect vision board—pretty colours and polished promises—but look closer and it is all style, no substance. It is full of design flaws like a staircase that leads to nowhere—built for likes, not for lives. This bad budget is filtered, framed and fake—styled for the feed, not for the future. Queenslanders deserve better.