




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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

 **Mr DALTON** (Mackay—LNP) (10.32 pm): It is with great pride that I rise today to support the first budget delivered by the Crisafulli government and in particular the critical investments it makes in the Mackay region. This budget is more than numbers on a page, it is a commitment—a commitment to restore trust in government to deliver on our promises and put Mackay back where it belongs: front and centre in Queensland's story. For far too long—109 years, to be exact—our region was treated as an afterthought. Our infrastructure fell behind, our services were stretched and our communities were left to fend for themselves. That ends today. The budget signals a fresh start.

We have inherited a mess: over \$218 billion in projected debt, skyrocketing deficits and the major project blowouts across the board. Despite record revenues, Labor left Mackay with crumbling roads, an overstretched hospital and the worst ambulance ramping in the country. This government is cleaning up the mess with discipline, responsibility and vision. We are rebuilding Queensland finances and we are rebuilding faith in the people of Mackay who have waited too long for proper investment in their future.

This budget delivers on four key priorities Queensland voted for, and every one of them has a real tangible outcome in Mackay. On community safety, we are backing our police. That means 1,600 new police officers across the state. There will be \$560 million for youth justice and early intervention. There will be \$40 million in local safety infrastructure, including CCTV and better lighting. There will be \$9.3 million to upgrade the Mackay Police Station, delivering on modern facilities that reflect the needs of our growing community.

With regard to economic growth and lifestyle, this budget supports our local economy through jobs, infrastructure and opportunities. There will be \$23.5 million to upgrade the Great Barrier Reef Arena, making it ready for the 2032 Olympics. There is support for Mackay's sporting clubs, including: \$1.6 million for Mackay Netball; \$800,000 for Mackay Football Park; \$800,000 for Mackay Hockey; and \$450,000 for North Mackay Saints. There will be major road, rail and transport upgrades under a \$41.7 billion capital program, including work on the Bruce Highway and rail improvements which will benefit Mackay's connectivity, including the Mackay-Bucasia Road just outside in the Whitsunday electorate.

This budget delivers health services when you need them. There will be 128 new overnight beds in Mackay hospital under the Hospital Rescue Plan. A new multistorey car park which is long overdue will now be delivered with a helicopter pad on top. The abolition of the patients tax will make it more affordable to see a GP. It also delivers part of \$29.4 billion in core health funding with the Mackay HHS staff growing to nearly 3,000 frontline health workers.

The fourth key priority is a future focused state. This budget lays out foundations for Mackay's next chapter. One million new homes will be built by 2044 across the state, including 53,500 social and affordable homes, with strong delivery focus in regional hubs like Mackay. There will be full funding for Queensland's state schools, including anti-bullying and behaviour programs. Major upgrades to Mackay

State High School and Mackay North State High School will ensure students learn in modern, well-equipped environments. There will be \$1.1 million for Woodlands District Park, including new family friendly amenities.

This budget delivers cost-of-living relief that will make a difference to local families, including: \$100 Back to School Boost for every primary school student; \$200 Play On! vouchers to help kids get active and join local clubs; the Boost to Buy Scheme with two per cent deposits and price caps up to \$1 million to help Mackay families break free from the rental trap; stamp duty abolished on all new homes for first home buyers; and the extension of the \$30,000 first home owner grant, already making a difference for young couples building a future in our region. One of my own electorate officers and his wife made the move from Brisbane to Mackay with the goal of getting ahead and starting the family of their dreams. This extension brings that dream closer to reality for them and for so many others in our region.

We are not just investing in bricks and mortar; we are investing in what makes Mackay strong, including: \$5.2 million for the St Vincent de Paul Community Support Centre; \$1 million for supporting Chances House Mackay, feeding and caring for our homeless; \$450,000 to upgrade lighting at the North Mackay Saints AFL Club; and \$250,000 for the Mackay Musical Comedy Players Inc, supporting our thriving arts scene with a new rehearsal space.

These are not election slogans. These are real investments for real people, creating jobs, uplifting families and strengthening the spirit of Mackay. This is Mackay's moment. This budget proves that we are no longer just observers of Queensland's progress; we are drivers of it. It shows that when a government listens to regional Queensland and respects its potential, the results speak for themselves. We are delivering safer streets, better hospitals, fairer opportunities and a stronger Mackay for the next generation.

After years of being overlooked, Mackay is being seen and heard and prioritised. This is a government of action not announcements, of responsibility not recklessness and of real delivery not forgotten promises. I commend this budget to the House.