




Speech By  
**Nigel Hutton**

**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 26 June 2025

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

 **Mr HUTTON** (Keppel—LNP) (3.17 pm): Having participated in 10 local government budgets, there are three things that I think all budgets reflect. No. 1 is that all budgets are about people. We talk about money and we talk about service delivery, but budgets ultimately are about people and, in our case, this budget is about the people of Queensland. Also, all budgets have to temper the ambition of the government of the day with the responsibility to balance and to maintain the services that a community relies on. Thirdly, and the one that is the most pressing for many people to learn when they open up their rates notices, is that, while not every line in every budget will be important to everyone, every line that is in a budget will be important to someone from some community somewhere. When we look at this budget we can see the investments that are being made right across Queensland are important to someone in their community, that invests in their backyard and serves communities that may or may not have missed out over the last decade.

Budget 2025 sets the strategic framework for the Crisafulli government to deliver on the promises that were made in 2024. It lays the foundation for a fresh start for the finances of Queensland. It was a fresh start that was desperately needed, remembering that Queenslanders, after a decade of the Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government, had a debt that had gone from \$72 billion to a forecast \$218 billion by 2027-28. Luckily for Queenslanders, under our new government, with a sensible and serious approach to financial management, debt will be \$27.5 billion lower over the forwards.

With a projected growth rate of just over two per cent, Queenslanders need their Treasurer to take a calm and methodical approach to the management and monitoring of taxpayers' hard-earned dollars. I believe that in the member for Toowoomba South we have the Queenslanders for the job. This is in stark contrast to the economic vandalism that we have experienced over the past decade.

The Crisafulli government is made up of Queenslanders who, each and every day, turn up to work. It is made up of people who understand how hard it is for members of our communities who work day in and day out. It is made up of people who understand the value of the tax dollars that we collect from Queenslanders. Those dollars are raised; they are not earned. They are the valuable contributions of Queenslanders and should not be considered government money but taxpayers' money. Our government respects the hard-earned dollars of Queenslanders. This budget is the instrument of the government of the day to invest taxpayers' money in the causes, the work and the infrastructure of the state. To my mind, it is no accident that in October 2024 the people of Queensland chose hope over fear, people over politics and respect over scare campaigns.

This budget, the first Crisafulli budget, is working for Central Queenslanders to address the issues that lay at the heart of my community's concerns. Today I will speak to just a few: crime and health. Our budget is delivering safety where you live, it is making our communities safer and it is turning the tide on Labor's youth crime crisis.

The budget includes funding for more police and more investment in the resources our police need such as new tasers, vests and safety equipment. This is incredibly important to my local police. They have been doing the hardest of jobs in the hardest of circumstances yet, each and every day, they have kept turning up. I offer my thanks to those officers and, as is seen in this budget, I want them to know that we have their back. This budget funds 1,600 police recruits who will help our thin blue line become a little bit thicker, allowing our brave men and women to continue to work to keep our communities safe.

The budget also invests \$560 million in comprehensive early intervention and rehabilitation programs across the state to reduce youth offending and to reduce the number of victims in Queensland. This includes the Regional Reset programs, one of which will be hosted in Central Queensland. That program will give our young people yet another opportunity to re-engage and to chart a new course. I am a strong believer in these programs and have seen the impact that they can have on the lives of young people. We will give them a second chance and an opportunity to see a future for themselves beyond what they may have today.

Further, the budget includes funding for the Secure Communities Partnership Program. As we know, small businesses and local governments have faced many of the financial consequences of the crime crisis we have seen over the past decade. These grants aim to give those same small businesses and local governments the opportunity to implement measures that improve community safety and add to the prevention of crime in public, commercial and business precincts. This investment helps and I commend it to the House.

Central Queenslanders were the front line of the health crisis. We had record ramping and we had growing surgery waitlists. The Rockhampton Hospital was bursting at the seams due to a lack of clinical space and there was a demonstrated need for a health workforce pipeline. Our budget sets out to heal the health crisis by providing health services when you need them. There is \$1.7 billion to provide more paramedics and hospital ramping reduction initiatives. That is especially important to the residents of Rockhampton. We saw huge increases in ramping under the former government and lived those experiences. It is also incredibly pressing when so many of our local paramedics have been working extraordinary hours to try to meet the needs of our community, often to the detriment of their own long-term health. They do so because they want to be healers; they want to help in times of crisis. Further, this budget includes \$1.7 billion to ensure more elective surgeries occur. Those surgeries change the lives of Queenslanders.

There is \$8.7 million to recruit more security officers for our health facilities to ensure that our frontline workers can focus on healing the sick in safe work places. If you work in a regional hospital where just two or three members of staff work during the evening or overnight, the capacity for extra security is incredibly important. That is something that I have heard about directly from the people in my community. I am glad to see that investment in this budget.

The \$61.1 million Rockhampton TAFE Excellence Precinct adds capacity to the Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service. It adds capacity by creating more space on the hospital campus for clinical activity. It allows nonclinical activities to occur in the former southside TAFE campus. It is not a long-term fix but it does make a difference in the short term. It is vitally important that we add that space to reduce the burden on the health facility.

Most exciting for the future of our health services in Central Queensland is the budget commitment to the CQ Health Sciences Academy. That \$95 million facility will allow more young Central Queenslanders from schools across the region to access the subjects and the skills they need so we can build our own homegrown health workforce for the future. With early-year medical studies and very successful registered nursing, enrolled endorsed nursing and enrolled nurse training as well as paramedicine and allied health training, we are providing opportunities for our local kids to grow and to learn in CQ. We are allowing more of our homegrown talent to gain the skills that they need without needing to leave the region and the support and comfort of their families, and without the extra costs. We know that students who train in the regions stay in the regions. That is how we will grow the workforce of tomorrow in CQ.

This budget provides the foundations for the fresh start that Queenslanders voted for at the 2024 election. I commend the Treasurer, the LNP team and all of the hardworking Queensland public servants who worked diligently to make sure that, as they developed budget 2025, we could provide a clear closure to the final chapter of the Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government's economic vandalism, economic incompetence and, ultimately, economic mismanagement. I have said it before and I will say it again: I believe that Queensland has great potential and it is the greatest place to live. However, we were let down by the former government. It was desperate and it said and did anything to try to cling to power. Alas, in the end, they had no respect for our money, they had no plan and Queenslanders were left with the bill to cover up for their mistakes.

I commend the first Crisafulli government budget to the House. I commend the Crisafulli government for working each and every day to ensure that Queenslanders get the fresh start that they voted for. Finally, they have a government that respects their money.