



Speech By
Nigel Hutton

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL


Record of Proceedings, 26 August 2025

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; EDUCATION,
ARTS AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE, REPORT**

Education, Arts and Communities Committee, Report

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr O'Shea): The question is—

That the report of the Education, Arts and Communities Committee be adopted.

 **Mr HUTTON** (Keppel—LNP) (8.37 pm): I would like to start my contribution this evening by acknowledging the efforts of our dedicated committee secretariat and the Speaker, who diligently and with good humour and grace presided over the hours of our estimates hearings in 2025. Thank you also to the Clerk and the other Parliamentary Service staff, all of whom should be acknowledged for their assistance. I do wish to convey my thanks also to the members of the committee for their active participation in the estimates process and to the member for Redlands and the member for Moggill.

Our committee was visited by a number of shadow members throughout the estimates process, and, on reflection, I do wish to put on record my concern. Our committee has always sought to act in good faith and, as is necessary at times, we have disagreed agreeably. Unfortunately, this good faith environment, which has received positive feedback, including from committee witnesses and departmental officials who have said it was refreshing and beneficial to the process, was not able to be upheld by our visiting shadow ministers. Perhaps what was exposed through the hearing was not to their liking, or perhaps the minister's answers to the questions—fulsome and thorough as they were—passed beyond the sound bite responses that they wanted.

Estimates 2025 was the final chapter in the decline and fall of the former Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government. Former ministers who had failed Queenslanders, former ministers who had stopped listening, had their decade of decline exposed and contrasted to the first 10 months of delivery under our fresh start for Queensland.

Estimates 2025 saw the disclosure of some great challenges facing Queenslanders. In the education session, the committee heard how teachers, communities and students who had been calling out for investment in school infrastructure had been ignored under the former government. The *Comprehensive review of infrastructure renewal* report demonstrated how our hardworking teachers and our next generation of doctors, tradies, scientists, small business owners and public servants were learning in facilities that are struggling and below par. A decade of underinvestment has left Queensland schools with a \$414 million backlog in maintenance and one-third of school assets at the end of their life. Queenslanders were lucky to have the minister outline how the Crisafulli government is delivering and investing money in maintenance to fix the former government's mess.

In the second session, Queenslanders heard that the priority of the Crisafulli government has been to deliver tangible outcomes for Queenslanders. Whether it is securing the water needed for Woorabinda or reconciling the desire for home ownership on Palm Island, our focus is on delivering

tangible outcomes. We also heard that of the 19 Closing the Gap targets only five were met or were on track to be met under the former Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government.

In the final session of our hearing, we heard how the Crisafulli government has launched an inquiry into the broken child safety system—the system overseen by the former Labor government that grew to be a billion dollar residential care system, a system that saw our foster carers being treated with disdain and a system that traumatised a generation of our state's most vulnerable children. Tragically, Minister Camm also shared how under Labor, at its worst point, victims' calls to the Womensline were answered just 41.9 per cent of the time.

This estimates we learned again that the Palaszczuk-Miles Labor government left this state not with a bang but with a whimper. I wish to offer my thanks to each of the ministers for attending and for providing their answers to our questions. I wish to acknowledge, once again, the opportunity we had to ask questions around the investment in our electorates in the 2025-26 budget. Our communities matter and I am proud to be part of the Crisafulli government that is delivering a fresh start for Queensland.