



Speech By  
**Stephen Bennett**

**MEMBER FOR BURNETT**

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE, REPORT**

**Primary Industries and Resources Committee, Report**

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

That the report of the Primary Industries and Resources Committee be adopted.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (7.36 pm): At the outset, I want to remind the chamber of one simple fact: this budget delivers. It delivers record funding, targeted investments and measurable outcomes for Queensland's farmers, fishers, foresters and miners and regional communities. Labor, unable to mount a coherent argument against it, has instead slapped together a statement of reservation that is long on rhetoric and short on substance.

Labor claims there is insufficient transparency in allocations. Every dollar appropriated is published in the budget papers and examined through estimates, and the opposition had every opportunity during estimates to ask their questions. The answers were provided: they were clear and detailed and are now on the record. For Labor to now suggest that the process lacks accountability is nothing more than political theatre, designed to undermine confidence and to continue their scare campaigns.

Labor's statement of reservation criticises the timeline for the recruiting of 100 new biosecurity officers, but they conveniently ignore that recruitment is already underway, with regional roles filled and training programs in place. The truth is that these are positions Labor never funded, never prioritised and never delivered while they were in government. It is this government that has invested to protect our state from invasive pests and diseases.

Labor warns of delays in implementing independent onboard monitoring and fisheries regulation, but, again, the facts tell a different story. This government has engaged industry stakeholders, is undertaking consultation and is implementing reforms in a practical and workable manner based on science. Contrast that with Labor's record of regulatory and policy chaos—confusing everyone, alienating industry and leaving stakeholders uncertain. The government's reforms are steady and evidence-based. I thank the minister for the response to my question on saving the Spanish mackerel fisheries. Many of us love Spanish mackerel.

Labor questions whether Queensland can reach its \$30 billion primary industries output target by 2030. We need to be clear: under this government, we are already on track and forecast to exceed \$24 billion in 2025, despite many challenges. The opposition's views are nothing new. They doubt, they criticise and they undermine, but they never offer solutions. When in power, they presided over stagnation in the very industry they now claim to champion. Labor raises concerns about balancing agricultural land with other uses, yet it is this government that has introduced statutory protections, engaged with stakeholders and prioritised long-term sustainability. Labor's approach is to talk about balance but deliver none, lurching between green groups and industry without a clear strategy.

The statement of reservation is not a serious reflection of the estimates process, a process that needed reforming. It is a political attempt to rewrite history and an attempt to deflect from their failures over the last 10 years. Labor seeks to cast doubt and to scare Queenslanders when confidence is needed and to score cheap political points. Queensland's farmers, fishers, foresters, miners and regional industries deserve more than whining from an opposition that time and again failed to deliver when they were given the chance. This budget is a responsible, forward-planning, forward-thinking plan that strengthens our industries, protects our biosecurity and secures jobs for Queenslanders into the future. Labor's statement of reservation should be recognised for what it is—empty words and unsupported claims. More importantly, we have good news and a good story to tell. The appropriation talks about a clear investment in Queensland's future that prioritises primary industries, regional economies, the resource sector and manufacturing.

The Department of Primary Industries has been allocated \$817.2 million, a very significant investment that lays the foundation for prosperity and resilience in our state's agricultural sector. This level of funding reflects our government's commitment to the long-term strength of the sector. There is \$88 million over four years for the Shark Control Program to ensure community safety across our iconic Queensland coastlines. Manufacturing is supercharged with \$80 million over three years to power the Transforming Queensland Manufacturing Program. In resources and exploration, the budget includes \$8.5 million to support the Queensland Resources Common User Facility, along with \$5.1 million to accelerate minerals exploration and up-to-date geoscience data. Nature conservation gets nearly \$120 million over four years to boost natural resource management and biodiversity programs—investments that underline our commitment to sustainable practices.

I commend the rigorous work of the Primary Industries and Resources Committee and the secretariat for all the work they did in the hearings. Upon public scrutiny, the Appropriation Bill stands as a testament to a responsible approach to accountable governance. It is truly a fresh start for Queensland. More importantly, I want to quickly address the issues that have been raised. The questioning and criticism of points of order is clear. If these guys and girls put some effort into questions that really challenged the government on issues you would not need a point of order. We will always stand up for the processes of the Queensland parliament. It needs to be reflective and it needs to be concise. The questions that were asked were completely out of line. If I had my chance over again I would call more points of order because we let them get away with a lot more than we should have. We had 10 years of decline; we have had 10 months of delivery—that is what Queenslanders deserve.