



Speech By
Hon. Steve Minnikin
MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

Record of Proceedings, 27 August 2025


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation Bill

Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee, Report

 **Hon. SJ MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (Minister for Customer Services and Open Data and Minister for Small and Family Business) (4.59 pm): I rise to make a contribution to debate of the Appropriation Bill, specifically the report by the Local Government, Small Business and Customer Service Committee. I start by thanking the committee members and parliamentary staff for their contribution to budget estimates, and I thank the member for Southern Downs for his leadership of the committee. I reiterate my comments on the day and thank the Speaker and Deputy Speaker for their role in this year's budgets estimates process.

My department is new and at the time was just nine months old. As it is a new department, I welcomed examination by the committee. While my department is new, I am still surprised that those opposite failed to grasp the simplest of issues associated with customer services, open data and small and family business—the key focus areas of my department. Nowhere in the title or remit of my department does it mention energy, yet the member for Lytton opened with questions that should have been on the member for Waterford's list of questions for the Treasurer, Minister for Energy and Minister for Home Ownership more than a week earlier. The same thing occurred in the second session, when the member for Lytton started asking questions that should have been directed to the health portfolio. Ignorance is bliss—totally and utterly clueless. It is no wonder the member for Cooper is stalking her for her job. It is incumbent on those opposite, truly, to be more prepared and ensure they do their homework and ask questions to the right portfolio committee. This distinct lack of interest or understanding is not surprising, given the Leader of the Opposition did not once even mention small or family business in his budget reply speech—not once.

For the benefit of those opposite in the House, my new department is responsible for some key priorities of the Crisafulli government—in particular, how we are putting small and family businesses first and how we are putting the building blocks in place to become Australia's most customer focused government. These vital goals require a dedicated and professional approach—something sadly lacking from those opposite.

I thank the committee for their examination of the more than \$130 million allocated for our Small and Family Business First Action Statement. It delivers for small and family business owners with initiatives like free cybersecurity support, through a partnership with the Crisafulli government and Cyber Wardens, delivered by the Council of Small Business Organisations Australia known as COSBOA. It

fixes Labor's botched \$15 million appointment of a company that went broke before it delivered any small business cyber training. In fact, many questions are still to be answered by the members for Bundamba, Springwood and Murrumba—and the involvement of the member for Woodridge. We will come back to that in future sessions. I thank the committee for their examination of the Small Business Support Network and the Crisafulli government's additional \$16.8 million to reverse Labor's decision to simply axe the program on 30 June this year. They were going to cut it—unbelievable.

The Crisafulli government's first budget also tackles an important element of Labor's crime crisis, with our \$40 million Secure Committees Partnership Program. The member for Lytton's question on small business payments and the Crisafulli government's On-Time, Every-Time Payment Guarantee was again in the wrong session completely. I reiterate: it is important for the opposition to do their homework.

Having a minister responsible for customer services is a first for Queensland. One department—my department—is now coordinating more than 240 outlets across Queensland to deliver face-to-face customer service on behalf of multiple government departments. In addition to customer service, the Crisafulli government will also end the piecemeal, short-term thinking that is Labor's legacy when it comes to delivering and upgrading digital systems over the past decade. We have invested \$1 billion in a Government Digital Fund, which is a first for Queensland.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr MINNIKIN: The opposition says it is a bold agenda. Yes, it is. After a decade of Labor's failure to invest in ICT systems, a bold agenda is well and truly required. It is bold indeed, but we will take a calm, methodical and professional approach to tackling the number of internal and customer-facing ICT systems that need to be renewed, updated or replaced. The reality is: when it comes to the items that were before the committee, the member for Lytton was absolutely missing in action.