

Speech By

Wayde Chiesa

MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK

Record of Proceedings, 26 June 2026

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE (COST OF LIVING RELIEF LOCKED-IN LAW) AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Mr CHIESA (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (2.43 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2026-27 budget. This is a budget that delivers relief Queenslanders can rely on, with no new or increased taxes. It continues repairing the state's finances, while investing in the services and infrastructure Queenslanders need. It delivers a pathway back to surplus, better services through a stronger economy and the largest infrastructure pipeline in Queensland's history. Most importantly for me as the new member for Hinchinbrook, this budget delivers on the commitments I made to the people I represent. At the by-election I said I would fight for safer communities, to get Northern Beaches traffic moving, to improve safety and flood resilience on the Bruce Highway, to get better health services, to have more housing-enabling infrastructure and for action on Port Hinchinbrook. This budget backs those commitments and it shows that the Crisafulli government does what it says it will do. After Labor's decade of decline, the people of Hinchinbrook are asking for a government to listen, understand the issues on the ground and get on with the job.

I want to start with roads, because roads are one of the biggest issues raised with me across my electorate. The Bruce Highway is the spine of our state and region. It connects our communities, carries freight, supports agriculture and tourism and links families to school, work, sport and health services. In Hinchinbrook road safety and flood resilience are critical. The Gairloch Floodway to Ripple Creek section is a clear example. Locals know what it means when that part of the Bruce Highway is cut. Freight is held up, small businesses are impacted and emergency responses become more difficult. This budget includes funding for major flood resilience and safety works between Gairloch Floodway and Ripple Creek on the Bruce Highway because this work is essential and locals have called for this for decades. It funds Bruce Highway safety upgrades between Ingham and Townsville and between Ingham and Innisfail, including pavement widening and safety works.

In the Northern Beaches growth has not kept pace with the infrastructure required. Families feel that every day in traffic. That is why investment in the Northern Beaches Trunk Road Infrastructure Package matters. It includes Svensson Road—another connection point to the Bruce Highway; the extension of North Shore Boulevard; and trunk infrastructure to support residential development and ease congestion on Mount Low Parkway. The Woolcock Street and North Shore Boulevard intersection is another pressure point that needs action. These works should have been started a decade ago, but this budget includes funding to start the detailed planning and get it done right.

There is a major commitment on Point Hinchinbrook. For too long the people of Cardwell and the wider region have lived with uncertainty, neglect and missed opportunity. After a decade of inaction, Port Hinchinbrook became a symbol of what happens when governments do not make tough decisions

or do not follow through. This budget changes that, with a total commitment of $64 million for the Port Hinchinbrook Revitalisation Project. That is real money, real action and real progress. Port Hinchinbrook is not just a marina; it is a gateway to Hinchinbrook Island, the reef, tourism, small businesses and jobs. Bringing it back to life has benefits well beyond Cardwell. It supports the tourism potential of the whole Hinchinbrook region and opportunities between Townsville and Cairns. It means confidence for local businesses, support for our tourism operators and better access for boaties and fishers, families and visitors. The community has been waiting for action for a very long time.

This budget also delivers for health. Ingham Health Service is receiving a new CT scanner so more people can access important diagnostic services closer to home. There is funding for staff accommodation at the Ingham Health Service because regional health care depends on a workforce. If we want doctors, nurses and health professionals in our communities, we need to make it easier for them to live there. For Hinchinbrook residents who rely on Townsville University Hospital, this budget continues our major investment in Townsville health services.

Housing is front and centre. In Hinchinbrook, investment in trunk infrastructure at Toobanna, Ingham and the Northern Beaches—including sewer pump stations and rising mains—will support future residential development. These projects may not sound glamorous but they are essential in enabling infrastructure that unlocks land, supports growth and helps deliver more homes.

The cost of living remains a real pressure for families and small businesses. This budget invests in the Energy Roadmap because affordable, reliable and sustainable power matters. Passing on lower power prices in full to Ergon customers means regional households are expected to see savings of around seven per cent and small businesses around eight per cent.

The budget includes the Back to School Boost of $150 for every primary school student and locks in the $200 FairPlay vouchers because in Hinchinbrook we love our schools, we love our small businesses and we love our sport. On community safety, this budget backs the commitments we took to the election for more frontline police, Polair services and upgraded police facilities. There are important local commitments across the electorate, including: Wallaman Falls; Cardwell land and sea rangers; works at TAFE; and upgrades to Vince Corbett Park and the Ingham tennis courts. Budgets are about priorities. This budget says Hinchinbrook matters. It says Cardwell matters. It says the Herbert River district matters. It says Tully matters and the northern suburbs of Townsville matter. Most importantly, it delivers on the commitment I took to the by-election.

In November the Hinchinbrook community voted for a seat at the government table, and this budget is what that looks like. This is a budget that proves we are listening, acting and doing what we said we would do.

The Speaker has reviewed and approved the remainder of my speech on the budget for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*.

The speech read as follows—

Speaker, that is the high-level summary of what this Budget means for Hinchinbrook, but I now want to drill further into the detail.

The strength of this Budget is that it does not just announce big statewide figures and expect regional Queenslanders to be satisfied. It backs practical projects, local services and regional infrastructure that make a real difference in people's lives.

We have talked about investment in major works on the Bruce Highway between Gairloch and Ripple Creek, as well as targeted safety upgrades between Townsville and Innisfail, but this Budget also recognises the importance of disaster recovery and resilience, including reconstruction works on Mount Spec Road.

We live with floods, cyclones, heavy rain and road closures. Stronger roads and better recovery works mean communities can reconnect faster, businesses can get moving again sooner, and emergency services can do their job more safely. I want to thank the residents of Paluma and Hidden Valley for their patience, and I look forward to works continuing and being completed.

The same principle applies to transport planning in the Northern Beaches. The Northern Beaches has grown quickly, and infrastructure has not always kept pace. That is why the work around Svensson Road, North Shore Boulevard and the wider trunk road package matters. These investments support housing growth, reduce congestion, improve safety and provide better connections to the Bruce Highway. They are practical, growth-enabling investments.

Housing is another area where the detail matters. The Residential Activation Fund has been doubled to $1 billion, with half of that going to regional Queensland. I look forward to projects in Hinchinbrook being funded to help increase land supply in what is one of Queensland's fastest growing regions.

Housing supply affects every part of regional life. It affects whether young people can stay in their home towns. It affects whether local businesses can attract workers. It affects whether hospitals can recruit staff. It affects whether families can build a future in the communities they love.

Health is another major focus.

Along with the new CT scanner at Ingham Health Service and staff accommodation in Ingham, I also welcome the increase to the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme.

For regional Queenslanders, health care is not just about whether a service exists somewhere in the state. It is about whether people can actually get to that service when they need it. Patients in communities like Hinchinbrook often need to travel to Townsville, Cairns or Brisbane for specialist appointments, treatment, surgery or follow-up care.

That travel comes at a cost. That is why increasing the fuel subsidy from 34 cents to 45 cents per kilometre is a practical and important step. It recognises the reality of living in regional Queensland and helps ease the burden on patients and families.

For the many Hinchinbrook residents who rely on Townsville University Hospital, this Budget also continues major investment in Townsville health services. Townsville is the major referral centre for North Queensland, and investment in its capacity supports patients across the region.

Community safety is also a priority.

During the by-election, people raised crime and community safety with me regularly. They wanted stronger consequences, better support for victims, and police with the resources they need. They also understood that stronger laws must be backed by a system with the capability to enforce them.

This Budget supports that broader safety agenda through more frontline police, POLAIR services, remotely piloted aircraft systems, essential equipment and upgraded police facilities. Stage two of the Kirwan Police Facility is especially important for North Queensland, because strong police infrastructure in Townsville supports surrounding communities as well.

Community safety is not just about one announcement. It is about stronger laws, more police, early intervention, better rehabilitation, victim support and community confidence. This Budget invests across that system.

I also want to acknowledge the smaller local projects in this Budget, because they matter.

Investment in Wallaman Falls visitor facilities supports one of our region's great natural attractions and helps strengthen tourism. The Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger Program in Cardwell supports environmental stewardship, local knowledge and care for country. School maintenance and minor works across Hinchinbrook schools support students, teachers and school communities. Ingham TAFE maintenance supports training and skills. Support for the Ingham Tennis Association and upgrades at Vince Corbett Park strengthen local sport and community life.

Speaker, these projects may vary in size, but they all matter because they all contribute to stronger communities.

This Budget says regional Queensland matters. It says Hinchinbrook matters. It says our roads, our hospitals, our schools, our housing, our police, our tourism assets and our local communities deserve investment.

At the by-election, I said I would be a strong voice for Hinchinbrook. This Budget shows that work is underway.

There is more to do, and I will keep fighting for our fair share. But this Budget is a strong step forward. It delivers relief Queenslanders can rely on. It invests in safer communities. It strengthens health services. It supports housing. It backs roads and infrastructure. It delivers for regional Queensland.

Most importantly, it delivers for Hinchinbrook.