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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 6 June 2013

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THURSDAY, 6 JUNE 2013

The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Madam Speaker (Hon. Fiona Simpson, Maroochydore) read prayers and took the chair.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

Queensland Day



Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, you would all be aware that today is Queensland Day.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

Madam SPEAKER: I am sure that I speak on behalf of you all when I say we are proud to call Queensland home. While the events of last night on the sporting field may give us a measure of disappointment, we can be encouraged as we remember the wealth and opportunity of this state and that it is in her people who are represented here today. Our state motto, 'Bold but faithful', is a reminder of the way we can serve the people of Queensland. We are privileged to work in this beautiful building and across our electorates as we strive for the greater good. May we serve this state well.

APPOINTMENT

United Australia Party



Dr DOUGLAS (Gaven—UAP) (9.32 am): I would like to announce that the United Australia Party is now officially registered by ECQ in the state of Queensland. I am the leader of the United Australia Party in this parliament.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Wesley Hospital, Legionnaire's Disease



Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.32 am): I wish to advise the parliament on the situation unfolding at the Wesley Hospital. At least two Wesley patients, both undergoing cancer treatment, have contracted legionnaire's disease. Legionnaire's disease is a type of pneumonia. Only at-risk people are susceptible to legionnaire's infection, including those whose immune systems are suppressed due to illness or medical treatment. The first patient, a 60-year-old man, was diagnosed with legionnaire's disease on Tuesday, 27 May. That patient died subsequently. I offer my condolences and thoughts to his family.

Upon receiving the diagnosis, the hospital implemented infectious disease strategies. Air-conditioning cooling towers are checked for legionella bacteria on a scheduled basis. The results of those tests were reviewed. They indicated a clean status at the last scheduled test. Subsequent tests of pipes in the Wesley east block, where the affected patient was located, were found to be positive to legionella bacteria. The appearance of legionella bacteria in water pipes is less common than in air-conditioning systems. Contributing factors are the age and flow rate in the pipes and the temperature of the water. Recently, workplace health and safety considerations have required authorities across the world to lower the temperature in hot water systems to protect people from unintended scalds. As a consequence of that, it becomes more likely that bacteria can survive in the pipes.

Last night, the Chief Health Officer was advised by the Wesley Hospital that a second patient was diagnosed with legionnaire's disease. The 46-year-old woman is in an intensive care unit and is now increasingly unwell. She is located in the west wing of the hospital. That is a separate part of the hospital to the one where the first legionnaire's case to be identified was located. I offer my support to her family and also our prayers.

In response, the Wesley management closed the hospital to all new patients and ambulance bypassing was implemented. All current and recent patients from all parts of the hospital are being checked for symptoms. Access to water and showers for all Wesley patients was cut off and kits were being used to wash parents. The hospital management team is now considering all options and is being offered all assistance by the Chief Health Officer and Queensland Health.


Currently, there are 480 patients in the Wesley Hospital. Although not all of those are at risk, surgery at the Wesley has been cancelled. The number of recent patients to be contacted by the hospital is 1,400. A total of 2,300 Wesley staff have also been informed. Anyone who believes they may require medical attention or advice because of possible exposure should contact the hospital themselves on 3232 7316. I am advised that the Metro North Hospital and Health Service is preparing to accept the transfer of 12 obstetric patients from the Wesley, if required.

As a result of these events, I have requested the Chief Health Officer, Dr Jeannette Young, to conduct a full investigation utilising her regulatory powers. Dr Young will report to me on all aspects of the handling of this case and its notification, including all current requirements for scheduled testing of potential sources of bacterial infection. The Chief Health Officer will provide recommendations for changes arising from this case if any need to be recommended. I will table her report in the parliament.

Meanwhile, Queensland Health and Metro North Hospital and Health Service staff, including environmental health officers, will continue working with the Wesley to identify and address the source of this infection. This morning I have instructed the director-general of Queensland Health, Dr Tony O'Connell, to ensure that as a precautionary measure tests of water supplies to all our public hospitals are conducted this week, even though there is no evidence such a problem has arisen in this way ever before. I encourage all other hospital operators in the state to do likewise to ensure public confidence is sustained.

To provide more information on legionnaire's disease, Queensland Health has prepared a script for callers to 13HEALTH. Written details can be accessed from the front page of the Queensland Health website. Regular updates will be provided at this site and regular advice to the media will be provided, primarily through Wesley management and the Chief Health Officer. I have asked the Chief Health Officer to make herself available to brief all interested members of parliament. This will take place at 2 pm, the venue being Committee Room 2 on level 6 of the Annexe. I urge members to avail themselves of this opportunity to help direct constituents who may be seeking advice or reassurance.

Wesley Hospital, Legionnaire's Disease; Queensland Day

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.38 am): I note the comments that the minister has just made in relation to the situation with legionnaire's disease at the Wesley Hospital. It is a very rare situation but one of great concern. I reinforce everything that the minister has said. In particular, I offer my condolences to the family of the patient who has, sadly, passed away from this infection. I offer my best wishes to the second patient who has been diagnosed. Indeed, the issue has touched my office this morning. We have a staff member who was in that hospital only a few days ago. Our thoughts are with her and her newborn baby in the hope that they do not have anything to worry about.

Today we acknowledge the birth of our great state as a separate colony in its own right. All those years ago, back in 1859, Queen Victoria authorised Queensland's separation from New South Wales, confirming our status as an independent colony, and we have never looked back. Queensland has now been free of New South Wales for 154 years, which is a great reason to celebrate! As Premier of Queensland, I often speak about our past achievements and our future aspirations. We have much to look forward to. Today we are encouraging workplaces to get involved in a new initiative—Queensland Day in the Office—to celebrate what makes us the best state in Australia. Some offices are holding morning teas, some are being decorated in maroon and others are holding barbecues. All registered events go into the draw to win \$2,000 worth of coffee credit thanks to Di Bella Coffee. That would keep the Treasurer going for only about week. In another great display of Queensland pride, tonight a number of our great city landmarks will be lit maroon to mark this special day.


Throughout Queensland Week we have celebrated the achievements of some great Queenslanders, reflected on what it means to be a Queenslander and celebrated our own unique spirit. As I mentioned earlier in the week, the Queensland government is hosting a series of programs

and events in celebration of our state's birthday. We started Queensland Week celebrations last Saturday, 1 June, with a citizenship ceremony at Brisbane City Hall which was then followed by the announcement of the 2013 Queensland Greats at Roma Street Parkland on Sunday, 2 June.

To conclude an exciting week of events, the Great Queensland Week Adventure Trail will be held this Sunday, 9 June. Teams will solve clues and find checkpoints scattered around inner city Brisbane for the chance to win great prizes. I encourage all to be involved.

I know there are a few disheartened souls around the place today following last night's State of Origin game, but we really should not lose heart. In our seven-year domination of the State of Origin, Queensland has triumphed on six occasions with 2-1 series wins. After all, we have to let the cockroaches enjoy themselves a little bit. We have to give them heart. We have to give them some sense of hope—false though the hope may be. I am sure that when we play on home turf at Suncorp Stadium on 26 June we will even the score and set the scene for another Queensland series win this year. We are a great state, with great opportunity and a great future. With that in mind I wish everyone a very happy Queensland Day.


Queensland Olympic Council, Presentation

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.41 am): I am pleased to inform the House that as patron of the Queensland Olympic Council, I will today be making a special presentation to the Queensland Olympic athletes who attended the 2012 London Olympic Games. I will be presenting life memberships and order of merit awards to the many Queenslanders who have made an extraordinary contribution to the Queensland Olympic Council. It is fitting that we are recognising these sporting achievements on Queensland Day.

Every Queenslander should be immensely proud of our home grown athletes and what they achieved in London last year. Queenslanders made up 25 per cent of the team yet they won 41 per cent of the medals. We have a very proud and long sporting history and it is an honour to have the opportunity to present life membership and order of merit awards to a group who have given so much to the Olympic movement.


Getting to the Olympics is a magnificent achievement and one that requires a lot of time, dedication and commitment on the part of the athlete and, of course, they need a very supportive family. As a government, we understand the financial pressure that this can place on families and that is why in the 2013-14 budget we are tripling the funding of our highly successful Get in the Game initiative which encourages participation in sport so that kids from an early age get involved in sport and discover their potential, without such a large financial burden on families. We look forward to seeing our fellow Queenslanders compete in the 2014 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Queen Elizabeth II

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.43 am): Sunday, 2 June this year marked the 60th anniversary of the coronation of Her Majesty the Queen. Her Majesty's coronation took place at Westminster Abbey on 2 June 1953, nearly 18 months after she succeeded her father, King George VI. On that occasion, the Queen solemnly promised to govern the peoples of the Commonwealth, including Australia, according to our respective laws and customs.

In the 60 years since the coronation, Her Majesty the Queen has shown great interest, compassion and affection for Australia in her 16 visits, including eight visits to Queensland. During her most recent visit, the Queen requested an opportunity to meet with Queensland flood and cyclone victims and emergency response workers. On behalf of the people of Queensland, I would like to thank our sovereign for 60 years of extraordinary service and devotion to the Commonwealth, but especially Queensland.

Great Barrier Reef

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.44 am): In June 2011 the UNESCO World Heritage Committee requested Australia undertake a comprehensive strategic assessment of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area to ensure its outstanding universal value was protected. The World Heritage Committee also requested that Australia prepare a long-term plan for sustainable development. In response to this, the Newman government set out to undertake a strategic assessment under the EPBC Act which will direct and assess the way Queensland's planning and development processes identify and protect matters of national environmental significance, including the Great Barrier Reef.

These are genuine questions we need to address to support the most efficient and strategic use of our ports to grow the four-pillar economy, while ensuring we uphold the highest standards of environmental management and protect the Great Barrier Reef. The long-term plan for sustainable development is being progressed by my department to provide a combined state and federal government approach to ongoing protection and management of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area.

Unfortunately, a number of groups advising UNESCO on the Great Barrier Reef have sought to condemn our efforts. These groups include people from the World Wildlife Fund and the Australian Marine Conservation Society who always oppose any plans at any time for any economic growth or any port development. These people oppose everything all the time. But the apparent ready acceptance of their views by UNESCO has caused widespread concern among other stakeholders, including the North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation who wrote to me on the issue. I table a copy of their letter for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 31 May 2013, from Peter Milton, Chairman, North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation, to the Deputy Premier, the Hon. Jeff Seeney, regarding the UNESCO World Heritage Committee's consideration of Great Barrier Reef World Heritage status [\[2854\]](#).

They said—

Among our concerns are:

- UNESCO's process and the largely dismissive commentary on the work being done by the State Government;
- UNESCO's acceptance, seemingly without verification, of third party information from organisations which are very public in their opposition to resource sector activity, seemingly on any basis;
- The imbalance in commentary around the impacts from ports and shipping in the GBR; and
- The significant risks posed for new port development and existing port operations if balance is not brought to the debate and UNESCO's deliberations.

The letter goes on to say—

The UNESCO Agenda Paper draws heavily on the WWF/AMCS information to the point where it would appear to have been given priority over the official government information in the State Party report. This begs the question:

1. Does UNESCO have a premeditated view on the GBR's environmental health, management and future World Heritage listing?
2. Are the formal government protocols being ignored or diluted, in favour of external assessments/activist lobbying efforts?

A government member: Good questions.


Mr SEENEY: They are good questions. I take the interjection from my ministerial colleague.

The letter concludes—

Our ports remain a major contributor to the State and national economies and we have an excellent and hard earned track record in environmental management within the GBR. That reputation is being eroded at present by sustained campaigns aimed not so much at genuine concerns and respect for good GBR environmental management, but rather as a vehicle to hinder, damage and ultimately stop coal and other resource activity which are serviced by the GBR ports.

I could not agree more with the sentiments expressed, but our government will not let this dishonest and deceitful campaign go unchallenged. We will ensure that the truth is told about the Great Barrier Reef and our determination to protect it for future generations.

Trade and Investment Queensland, Review

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.47 am): I am pleased to announce Trade and Investment Queensland will become a stand-alone statutory authority based on the advice of the independent review into trade by Mr Geoffrey Thomas and the Hon. John Mickel. For the benefit of the House, I should remind members that Mr Thomas is a successful Queensland born international businessman with interests in Australia, the US, Indonesia and Thailand. In 2001 he was appointed Special Commissioner to North America by then Queensland Premier, Peter Beattie. He continues to act on behalf of the Queensland government as an honorary advisor in the US. Of course, the Hon. John Mickel served as a member of the Queensland parliament for almost 14 years, during which time he spent three years as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and held numerous ministerial portfolios, including trade. He retired from politics at the March 2012 election.

Today I will release the independent review into Trade and Investment Queensland and the government's response to that review. I can inform the House that the government has accepted the key recommendations of the review. The creation of a new statutory authority provides an exciting

and renewed focus for Queensland's trade and investment activities. Trade and Investment Queensland will be resourced to have a greater capacity to identify in-market trade opportunities and have greater flexibility to operate in a global business environment to support Queensland businesses.

With economic growth in our major trading partners forecast to remain below the annual average of 3.7 per cent in the decade prior to the GFC, the government needs to act to support Queensland businesses in developing export opportunities. In the budget I announced a boost in resources to the government's overseas network which will enhance its capabilities, enabling it to identify business opportunities for Queensland exporters and promote brand Queensland to the world.


Cabinet has decided that TIQ will have the lead role in the promotion and attraction of foreign direct investment—while working closely with the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning—to facilitate investment in Queensland. Growing our exports and attracting foreign investment will ultimately drive productivity to deliver long-term economic growth for the state and help grow our highly skilled workforce.

Trade and Investment Queensland will also be the state's lead agency for the promotion of Queensland's international education and training sector. Recognising its value to the state, Trade and Investment Queensland will have an expert based board and will support the government's vision to boost trade and investment.

The government will open a new office in Jakarta, recognising Indonesia's growing importance as an economic powerhouse. The office will be led by a Trade and Investment Commissioner, who will also be responsible for the greater ASEAN countries. The opening of an office in Jakarta will build on the invaluable work being done by my colleague the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Dr John McVeigh, to rebuild trade relations that were damaged by the Gillard government's ban on live cattle exports. Establishing an in-country, on-the-ground presence is a further sign of Queensland's goodwill towards Indonesia.

Other recommendations contained in the review relate to resourcing issues, which will be considered by the new Trade and Investment Queensland board. I would again like to take the opportunity to thank Geoff Thomas and John Mickel for the exemplary work they have done carrying out this review at no cost to Queensland taxpayers. The recommendations they have made will not only encourage investment but also foster an export culture in Queensland that will make the state more resilient to external pressures and competition—a great state with great opportunity.

Local Government, Constitutional Recognition

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (9.51 am): On 14 September this year Australians have a very important decision to make—and I am not talking about the federal election. I think most people have made their minds up about that one. What I am referring to is the proposed amendment to section 96 of the Commonwealth Constitution, which we know to be the question mark raised over constitutional recognition of local government.

The Newman government took a very clear position on constitutional recognition to the election that we would support any change that only allows direct funding to our councils. Indeed, this side of the House understands local government, with more than a dozen former mayors and councillors, including six in cabinet, having served their community at the grassroots level. We want our councils to be recognised in this nation's Constitution, to secure direct funding from the federal government and to get the legal protection that such a simple change could effect.

When the Gillard government rushed this decision, our immediate concern was that the question could put local governments under the thumb. Sadly, the state's legal advice has proven this to be correct. As it is currently proposed, if the Commonwealth government decides to fund a local government road, for example, it can tell the council it will do so as long as it installs pink bats in every council building or solar panels on every council roof or even declare a marine park in the local weir. That is the effect of this change. This government recognises the need of local governments to be funded directly by the federal government but not to be controlled by it. Currently the proposed amendment reads—


During a period of ten years after the establishment of the Commonwealth and thereafter until the Parliament otherwise provides, the Parliament may grant financial assistance to any State, or local government body formed by a law of a State, on such terms and conditions as the Parliament thinks fit.

We respectfully request that the federal government includes the following wording—

The terms and conditions of a grant of financial assistance to a State or to a local government body formed by a law of a State are subject to the laws of the State. An entity formed by a law of a State is a local government body for the purposes of subsection (1) if, and only if, the State's law so provides.

Yesterday the Premier wrote to the federal minister to convey this message. Today I have outlined this government's earnest wish to help local governments, the problem with the proposed wording and the solution that will protect local governments. It is now up to the Prime Minister. After failed votes in 1974 and 1988, this may be the last chance to get it right.

Education Reform

 **Hon. JH LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (9.54 am): Last week the Prime Minister wrote a letter to school principals saying that her Gonski reforms were for all students and all schools. The reality is that 300 Queensland schools will be worse off under Gonski. Yesterday, the Labor mates of those opposite voted in favour of the Australian Education Bill in the House of Representatives. They voted in favour of stripping money from 300 schools.

Labor backbenchers around the state trotted blindly into the vote and in doing so condemned schools in their electorates to less funding—Labor backbenchers like Graham Perrett. I want him to go to Acacia Ridge State School and explain to the principal, teachers and the 276 students why he wants them to be 2.1 per cent worse off; or maybe he should go to Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School and explain why he thinks they should be 6.5 per cent worse off; or maybe he should go to the Southside Education Centre and explain why they should be 5.1 per cent worse off.


What about members like Yvette D'Ath? Why doesn't she trot down to Southern Cross Catholic College and explain why they will be 6.5 per cent worse off; or maybe she should go to St John Fisher College and explain why they will be 6.3 per cent worse off; or maybe, just maybe, she should go to the Autism Queensland Education and Therapy Centre and explain why she thinks they deserve to be 1.1 per cent worse off.

Then there are the candidates such as Fiona McNamara, the Australian Education Union stooge, hoping it will be third time lucky as she runs again—this time in the seat of Brisbane. Perhaps she should explain to the parents at Windsor State School why she thinks they should be 2.4 per cent worse off or go to Petrie Terrace State School and explain why they should be 2.2 per cent worse off or go to the Queensland Academy for Creative Industries and explain why they should be two per cent worse off.

Contrast this with what the Newman government is doing. Not only will all of these schools be eligible for greater autonomy through independent public schools, not only will teachers at these schools be eligible for bonus pay, masters scholarships and leadership qualifications under Great Teachers = Great Results; all of these schools have already benefited from the Fixing our Schools Fund. Acacia Ridge State School received \$160,000, with more to come; Petrie Terrace State School received \$54,400; the Queensland Academy for Creative Industries received \$12,500; and Windsor State School received \$160,000, with more to come.

We are getting on with the job of delivering for education. Once again we can see that the Newman government is a government that knows education, plans for education and delivers for education.

DisabilityCare Australia

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (9.56 am): \$1.43 billion—that is what the Newman government is spending on disability services across Queensland in 2013-14. This investment once again demonstrates the Newman government's ongoing commitment to strengthening disability services in Queensland. Our government made history on 8 May this year when the Premier and Prime Minister signed the agreement for the state-wide implementation of DisabilityCare Australia, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, in Queensland—something that was made possible thanks to our \$868 million additional investment in disability services over five years.

Within the disability sector, the Newman government is acutely aware that there are particular areas that experience increased pressures to meet critical needs.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, I am sorry to have to ask you to pause. There are interjections across this chamber that are unacceptable. They are not part of the ministerial statement and they are not being taken. I call the minister.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. For example, we appreciate the pressures that those who have newly acquired spinal cord injuries face when they are well enough to leave hospital and return to life in the community. For this reason we are investing \$26.4 million over four years to provide support for people with spinal cord injuries to leave the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital. This will help by providing funding for home modifications required to accommodate the new needs of people with spinal cord injuries, allowing them to return safely to their home. Some of this funding will also be used to provide individuals with the daily support they require to live in the community. It will also be used to enable individuals to access a range of aids, equipment and assistive technologies that they will need to assist them with day-to-day life.

The chief executive officer of Queensland's leading spinal cord injuries organisation, the Spinal Injuries Association, welcomed this funding allocation when it was announced on Tuesday. In fact, he said that they welcomed the continued investment in Queenslanders who sustain quadriplegia or paraplegia from injury or illness.

Madam SPEAKER: Minister, I have to ask you to wrap up.

Ms DAVIS: This is a great state with great opportunity, and the Newman government is committed to enabling Queenslanders with a disability to be well supported.

MOTION

Suspension of Sessional Orders

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (10.00 am): I move—

That, notwithstanding anything contained in the sessional orders, private members' bills may be introduced after question time at 10.30 am on Friday.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

AGRICULTURE, RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Report

Mr RICKUSS (Lockyer—LNP) (10.01 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 23 of the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

Tabled paper: Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee: Report No. 23—Subordinate legislation tabled between 20 March 2013 and 30 April 2013 [2855].

This report covers the subordinate legislation tabled between 20 March and 30 April 2013 considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has disallowance dates of 7 August and 21 August 2013. The committee did not identify any significant issues regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles or the lawfulness of the subordinate legislation. I commend the report and the committee's recommendations to the House.

TRANSPORT, HOUSING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE


Report

Mr HOBBS (Warrego—LNP) (10.01 am): I table report No. 25 of the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee, *Subordinate legislation tabled on 19 March 2013 and forms*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee: Report No. 25—Subordinate legislation tabled on 19 March 2013 and forms [2856].

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Electricity Prices

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.01 am): My question is to the Premier. After breaking his election promise to lower electricity bills, the Premier is again promising to come up with a plan to tackle the record electricity price increases that have occurred under his watch, and I ask—

Mr Seeney: That is a statement. That is a clear assertion, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I ask the Leader of the Opposition to take her seat. Deputy Premier, if you want to take a point of order, I would ask you to do that in the appropriate way rather than as an interjection, because I have warned about interjections in questions.

Mr SEENEY: Madam Speaker, I will take a point of order. The opposition leader's question is a clear assertion. It is not a question. The opposition leader cannot lead the question with an assertion that is clearly not right. The assertion is not even accurate, Madam Speaker. It is question time. The Leader of the Opposition must ask questions, not make accusations.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Under the standing orders, specifically standing order 115, questions shall not contain arguments, inferences, imputations and a number of other issues. I would ask the Leader of the Opposition to rephrase her question.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier guarantee to the people of Queensland that his new plan will deliver lower electricity prices?

Mr NEWMAN: I am delighted to answer a question about electricity prices, because in answering such a question we need to talk about why electricity prices have gone through the roof in this state and nationally. This is not just a Queensland problem; it is a national problem. Let me explain. There is a thing called the Australian Energy Regulator, which came into force in 2007, as I recall. We also have a Queensland Competition Authority that plays a role in making determinations about electricity tariffs. There are national rules that have been agreed to and the former Beattie-Bligh governments were part of signing up to those national laws. The Bligh government was the government that wrote to the Australian Energy Regulator, as did Martin Ferguson, when the last determination by the AER was made of the permissible profits or the weighted average cost of capital. I have already put on the record, as I recall, in this place that Treasurer Andrew Fraser argued for a higher weighted average cost of capital. In other words, I think in 2009 he argued for higher profits for electricity companies. The AER then made a determination of a weighted average cost of capital which, on my recollection, is around 2.6 per cent higher than it ought to be today. One of the big reasons is that the then Treasurer Andrew Fraser in the Bligh government along with cabinet members, including some of those who currently sit opposite, made a strenuous argument for higher electricity prices.

To get to the nub of what is driving things now, there are three particular elements which I have been talking about which are clearly the fault of the Australian Labor Party both nationally and in this place: one, the carbon tax; two, the renewable energy targets, the green schemes; and, three, the misguided, misplaced, poorly thought out solar feed-in tariff. Those things together are in two years time adding at least \$560 to \$580 to the average household bill.

I can tell Queenslanders how to get the price of electricity down and the plan I am advocating: get rid of the carbon tax and end the renewable energy target program and you will straightaway see relief of over \$250 per average household. There is a lot more we can do. We are going to be arguing on the side of consumers, unlike the Labor Party, which never cares about the little people really. I note for the record the significant support we are giving to disadvantaged Queenslanders in this budget on power bills.

(Time expired)

Cost of Living

Ms PALASZCZUK: Madam Speaker, my—

Mrs Ostapovitch interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I heard an interjection during the question. I did not specifically see who it was. I see that the member is acknowledging. Member for Sunnybank, I warn you under standing order 253A. I thank you for your honesty.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the newsletter—

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Opposition, I apologise; I have warned the wrong member. I warn the member for Stretton under standing order 253A. I apologise; the Leader of the Opposition can start again.

Ms PALASZCZUK: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the newsletter being circulated by the Premier in his electorate in which he states—

- Almost 100% of people are concerned about the increased cost of living

I table the brochure.

Tabled paper: Newsletter of the member for Ashgrove titled 'Community News—Autumn Edition 2013' [2857].

Will the Premier confirm that his government's budget has actually increased the cost of living for Queensland households?

Mr NEWMAN: Madam Speaker, perhaps you are a little weary after the last night, too, and I am most concerned about you. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for her question on the cost of living. I am happy to answer their questions on the cost of living until the cows come home. I do not know if it has escaped those opposite that we have been asked questions by our own side in the last couple of days about the cost of living. I can assure Queenslanders that the cost of living would go through the roof if that mob opposite was re-elected. It would be going through the roof.

I want to go back to one issue, and that is electricity prices. They had the opportunity in 2011, as I recall, to vote very clearly and unequivocally against a carbon tax. We moved a motion in this chamber. What did the cheerleaders opposite do? They voted for a carbon tax. Those opposite support Julia Gillard's carbon tax. They support the renewable energy targets. We know that because we have the comrade from South Brisbane in her little flyer criticising the cancellation of renewable energy projects—

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I would ask the Premier to refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr NEWMAN: The honourable comrade from South Brisbane.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Premier, I would ask you to refer to members by their correct titles.

Mr NEWMAN: The honourable member for South Brisbane who will always be my comrade.

Ms TRAD: I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker.

Madam SPEAKER: What is your point of order?

Ms TRAD: My point of order is that I find the remark offensive. I am no comrade of his.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Premier, the member has found the comment offensive. I ask that you withdraw it under the standing orders.

Mr NEWMAN: I am delighted to withdraw. I know those opposite must look at the member for South Brisbane and think, 'It is time to gear up, be a bit more robust in this place and engage in debate without being so precious.'

Those opposite supported a carbon tax. They support the renewable energy targets. I have to explain something to them. The idea behind the carbon tax was to put the price of electricity up. Tony Abbott warned Australians that this would result in higher electricity prices, and guess what? Surprise, surprise, they taxed it and it has resulted in higher electricity prices. It flows through to everything in the economy in terms of increasing the cost of living. Everything is costing more because of the Labor government's carbon tax.

To come back and demonstrate once again how much better off Queenslanders are because of this government being in office, let's do a bit of straightforward, very simple math for the Labor Party. Perhaps even they will be able to understand this. The Treasurer advises that this coming year's fiscal deficit is \$2.4 billion lower than if Labor had been in charge. There are 4.6 million Queenslanders. Let's do the math. In just one year on that measure alone, Queenslanders will be paying \$522 less than they would have under Labor. In other words, if Labor were on the government benches they would have to raise an extra \$522 per man, woman and child in taxes and charges just to keep the level of deficit—

(Time expired)

Natural Disaster Events of 2013, Reconstruction

Mr BENNETT: My question without notice is to the Premier. Will the Premier please confirm the cost of reconstruction following the recent floods and disasters and outline the government's plan to build increased resilience in communities?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank my comrade the honourable member for Burnett for his question. No-one could forget the images of North Bundaberg or Gympie being evacuated, and they have been hit by floods five times in the past two years. The bill for the recent disaster must be paid. The Queensland Reconstruction Authority estimates the cost of recent floods to be \$2.5 billion with a state contribution of \$620 million.

Looking at the bigger picture, as the Treasurer has said, the cost of natural disasters since 2010 is a staggering \$13.8 billion. Those are in personal figures. Funding comes under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements shared with the federal government, but the money belongs to each and every Queenslanders. It is money that, unfortunately, cannot be spent instead on schools, hospitals, police or new highways. Whether people have been impacted directly or not, the way we rebuild will directly affect all Queenslanders' hip pockets. We are repairing the same infrastructure for the second, third and, in some cases, fourth time in just a decade.

The 2013-14 budget provides \$40 million matched by the federal government for a betterment fund to help build stronger, more resilient structures sometimes in different locations. We asked for \$100 million which we were prepared to match, but we got \$40 million from the feds. It is a fact that the greatest beneficiary of our betterment policy is the federal government, which traditionally funds 75 per cent of the recovery. We offered them a really good deal.

I really do think that Queenslanders want their governments to think beyond the here and now. Councils have been saying for years that if they could just move that water treatment plant to higher ground, build culverts instead of replacing the old bridge, build a higher bridge or redirect roads out of low-lying areas then they would be better off the next time it floods. For too long their pleas have fallen on deaf ears, but we are listening. It is unfortunate that the federal Labor government are not listening. It says so much when we see the response that we ultimately had from them about their poor and reckless financial management. There are so many cues and hints at how terribly bad this federal Labor government are and why they need to be thrown out of office, and this is just another example. There is the carbon tax, which is increasing the cost of living for all Australians and all Queenslanders and there is this stupidity—a failure to actually rebuild in a resilient way to ensure that we do not pay more in the future because we have to rebuild infrastructure in the same way. We are starting the job of making Queensland more resilient to disaster. We can be relied upon to continue with that job in the future.

(Time expired)

Cost of Living

Mr MULHERIN: My question is directed to the Premier. I note that per capita taxation in Queensland has risen to \$2,528 a year, \$257 per person higher than Labor's last budget update, and I ask: given this substantial increase in taxation, will the Premier confirm that he has breached his contract with Queensland by failing to lower the cost of living?

Mr NEWMAN: I have our commitment on the cost of living here in front of me. There has been a lot of verballing going on. The Leader of the Opposition, in a very incompetent way, tried to ask a question today, again making false assertions. Let's have a look at what we said we would do in terms of the cost of living. We said that we would abolish Labor's \$7,000 tax on buying the family home. Has that happened? Yes, it has—tick. That is part of the contract. We will freeze family car rego for our first term—tick. By the way, we also froze the traffic improvement component as well. Our four-point plan will reduce household water prices. Have we had a go at that? Yes, there is an \$80 rebate in the current financial year.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: They dare to interject. If they have received an \$80 water rebate and they do not think it is important, they should hand it back. We will take the money and we will give it to someone more deserving. Another one was to cut Labor's public transport fare increases by half in our first term—yes, it has been done. Then there was the commitment to reward regular commuters by reintroducing discounted weekly fares for go card users. After nine journeys the remaining

journeys are totally free. If we start to look at some of the savings—and I think there is a very conservative estimate just coming in from the Leader of the Opposition's electorate—commuters are \$600 a year better off. That is a cost-of-living saving.

Ms Palaszczuk: You cut bus services in Inala.

Mr NEWMAN: They ask the question. They do not want to hear the answer.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections and they are not being taken. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: The next one was that we would reform electricity tariffs to save families money and ensure the cost of the carbon tax and green energy schemes are listed on power bills. Work is well underway to deliver on this commitment including the freeze of tariff 11 next year. That is what we are doing. We know what we can do. We can do a whole lot more in terms of the next determination from the AER. We will not be writing to Canberra asking for higher profits. We will be asking for an approach which makes electricity companies more accountable, but makes them find savings and deliver them to consumers through lower prices. We will continue to relentlessly push for an end to Labor's carbon tax. Those opposite do not understand, because they have always been either on the public payroll or working for the unions. They have never had a job where they have had to cut a payroll cheque for other people or look after employees properly. They do not understand the pervasive cost increases right across the economy. Even the price of water is affected by the carbon tax because electricity is used to treat and pump water.

(Time expired)

Great Barrier Reef

Mr KING: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier further update the House on the government's determination to protect the Great Barrier Reef and ensure that it is properly communicated to all stakeholders?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the honourable member for the question because it gives me an opportunity to provide additional information to the House on this issue that will be critical to the future of every Queenslander but, more particularly, to the Queenslanders who live in North Queensland—the Queenslanders who live closest to the Great Barrier Reef, who know and understand it better than most. The Great Barrier Reef is in the backyard of the constituents of the member for Cairns and they know and understand the situation.

We are determined to ensure that the truth about that situation is communicated to all stakeholders, to the world. I indicated yesterday that we were going to begin an engagement process with UNESCO to ensure that they were provided with a full suite of information about what our government is doing in regard to achieving sustainable development within close proximity to the Great Barrier Reef, to balance some of the nonsense that has been put forward by the federal minister, Minister Tony Burke, and the people who hold his government to ransom. We have sent a submission to UNESCO updating the information referred to in the draft decision of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area to be considered at the 37th session of the World Heritage Committee in Phnom Penh in Cambodia from 16 to 27 June this year, and I table a copy of that submission for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Letter from the Deputy Premier, Hon. Jeff Seeney, to Mr Kishore Rao, Director, World Heritage Centre UNESCO, regarding the draft decision for the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area [\[2858\]](#).

Tabled paper: Letter from the Deputy Premier, Hon. Jeff Seeney, to Mr Kishore Rao, Director, World Heritage Centre UNESCO, regarding the report written by the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area [\[2859\]](#).

We will be sending government observers to that meeting so that they can report back on the outcome and also so that they can provide information to delegates if required. I have also written to the director of the World Heritage Committee asking for a meeting as soon as possible anywhere in the world for myself and Minister Powell, the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. We are seeking a meeting with UNESCO so that we can put forward Queensland's case. I will certainly keep the House updated in relation to that.

I also note today in the *Australian* that Mr Burke responded to my ministerial statement yesterday by saying that he had a legal right to protect the reef and to deal with UNESCO. He absolutely has a legal right; he also has a moral right. He has a moral obligation to ensure that he represents all Queenslanders and all Australians in his engagement with UNESCO. He has a moral obligation to ensure that he acts on behalf of all Queenslanders and all Australians, not just that small group of Australians who hold his government to ransom. His is a government which is held to ransom by a small number of extreme greens. It is their philosophy that is being communicated to the world, not what is actually happening here in Queensland.

Nambour Railway Station

Mr WELLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. I refer the minister to the Nambour Railway Station former goods yard and the former Sunstrip print shop building which is now scheduled for demolition. Both sites are beside the current railway station car park. Will the minister support my request for parts of these two sites to be used for car parking until the railway line duplication occurs?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. I do acknowledge that the Nambour station does have some challenges in terms of general car parking space and also disabled car parking space. I am aware of the two sites that the member mentioned. One of those sites is being purchased as part of a potential future corridor for the duplication of that rail line. I know that many members on the Sunshine Coast will be very keen to see that duplication occur.

It is important to acknowledge that we put that duplication forward to the federal government as part of the Nation Building Program. We were the first state government to put that project to the federal government. Unfortunately, so far we have had no response from the federal government about whether they are willing to support that project. We have put it to the government, to Minister Albanese, and to Wayne Swan—that so-called Queensland— but he has not come forward to support that project, as he has not come forward on so many things.

That area of land is now being purchased by Queensland Rail potentially for that duplication line, and I am quite happy for Queensland Rail to investigate the possibility of using both of those sites as possible temporary car parking spaces to deal with the challenges at that station. There are also other issues raised in relation to disabled parking in terms of that station. Queensland Rail is talking to the local council about possible ways to deal with this. Disability compliance is one of the biggest challenges that we face in stations across the network. Unfortunately, we have a legacy from the previous government which will not surprise colleagues: they failed to deal with the issue of disabled access in a timely manner. We are awaiting the conclusion of a report about how we can move forward in terms of improving disability access to our stations—indeed, universal access to our stations. It is not just about people who are disabled, but also people who have to push prams and other things. We want our public transport to be as accessible as possible. I am sure my colleagues realise that it is not cheap to make stations DDA compliant. It will take time and considerable amounts of money.

But just coming back to the member's question again: yes, I have asked Queensland Rail to look at the possibility of using those sites as a temporary measure to deal with car parking problems at Nambour station.

Debt Reduction

Dr ROBINSON: My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please inform the House how the debt reduction delivered by the LNP government will impact Queenslanders, and are there any alternative views?

Mr Seeney interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: The Deputy Premier has just said, 'I will bet he can', and that is a bet, Deputy Premier, that you collect on, I have to say.

I thank the member for Cleveland for his question. As we all know, debt is the problem in Queensland. Debt, as I said in the budget speech, is the albatross around the neck of the Queensland state government's finances. It is a debt bequeathed to the people of Queensland by the Labor Party which will leave a student leaving school in grade 12 in 2015 carrying over \$16,000 worth of debt. That is up from \$3,900 just six short years ago.

For those opposite who continue to believe that debt is not a problem and that they left the state in a good place, I again reflect on my old friend the Moody's chart which shows the state of Queensland's debt. The green line is Queensland under Labor. For the debt deniers over there, for the member for Mulgrave, who says I do not need to have a plan—

Madam SPEAKER: Is the Treasurer tabling the document to which he is referring?

Mr NICHOLLS: No, I am not. It is available on the website. If I recall correctly, it was part of the pack that I gave out to people last year. I remember bringing in a pack—

Mr Cripps: You tabled seven of them.

Mr NICHOLLS: I tabled seven of them, one for each of the members over there, so they already have one full copy of the document. It just goes to show that unless it is written in crayon and letters six inches high it is not read by those opposite.

The advice to government was that debt was the biggest problem. The independent Commission of Audit estimated that under Labor, with their business-as-usual scenario, debt had hit \$100 billion. Interest costs are the state's fastest growing expense. Neither health, nor education, nor law and order top the amount which we pay in increased interest. So in the absence of the measures that we took in 2012-13 and 2013-14 the deficit would have been, as the Premier said, \$2.4 billion greater.

For the benefit of the members opposite, I refer them to page 4 of budget paper No. 2, where it clearly states that in the absence of these measures the fiscal deficit would have been \$10.1 billion. That amount would have had to have been financed in order to pay the bills here in Queensland.

It is not just this year. It goes on: \$6.2 billion less in 2014-15 and \$8.7 billion less in 2015-16. The savings to every Queensland adult 18 years and over from the government reducing this debt is \$1,783 per person, growing to \$2,500 per person. This is based on principal reductions. This is before we pay the interest on this debt, which, on \$8.7 billion, is \$478 million a year. Debt is just deferred taxation. Sooner or later the taxpayer pays. As the Premier has said, Queenslanders are massively ahead because of this government.

(Time expired)

Payroll Tax

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to comments by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland that the deferral of the payroll tax threshold relief equated to the loss of 4,000 potential jobs and was 'totally at odds with the LNP government's goal to achieve an unemployment rate of four per cent'. Will the Premier explain how he will convince Queenslanders that he will meet his key employment promise, when he cannot even convince the CCIQ?

Mr NEWMAN: I am very happy to answer a question like that. At \$1.1 million, we now have the highest kick-in threshold for payroll tax in the nation and the lowest rate. If that is not an environment that is conducive for small and medium businesses, I do not know what is. We are going to do everything we can to improve the environment for small and medium businesses, and we will particularly focus on red tape and bureaucracy.

On many occasions over the past 15 months we have brought initiatives into this House to reduce red tape on small and medium businesses. We have put those things through, and I want to reflect on how many times they have been supported by the opposition: not many times. We know that there are so many things that they love and want to hang on to. I will go through some of the things that they imposed on small and medium business that we have removed. A waste tax of \$30 or \$35 a tonne, and all of the associated paperwork, is now gone. But the member for South Brisbane likes the waste tax. She wants that back. That is a bonus for business!

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: The shadow Treasurer's party is all over the shop these days. They rail against the removal of a waste tax, but you cannot have it both ways: if you support small business, you cannot put taxes on them. What about the renewable energy target? What about the carbon tax? What about the Solar Bonus Scheme?

Mr PITT: Madam Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The question related to the unemployment target. Yes, the Premier has covered off—

Madam SPEAKER: Take your seat. The Premier has time on the clock. I ask the Premier to address the question.

Mr NEWMAN: They do not like it when I point out all of the things they advocate for which hurt small and medium business—even larger business. High electricity prices are a direct result of their policies. What about the ERAs for smash repairers and motor vehicle garages? That represented an extra impost of \$1,500 under the Labor Party.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! There are interjections on my right and my left. The Premier is not taking those interjections. I would ask for them to cease or I will warn members under the standing orders. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: Just to show the fraudulence of the shadow Treasurer, I will quote from that good old gift that keeps on giving: the Mythbusters. In response to criticisms about asset sales—asking why they were not putting up taxes—he said—

Already we have:

- raised land tax and stamp duty ...
- increased taxes on casinos and introduced new liquor licensing fees ...
- increased coal royalties
- increased motor vehicle stamp duty and we have recently introduced a rise to car registration.

That is what he said they had done—and he was proud to say that they were doing it. So much for helping business!

Budget, Police Service

Mr PUCCI: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Can the minister outline for the House the budget initiatives which support the Queensland Police Service?

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for Logan for the question. I highlight the ongoing commitment of the member for Logan to law and order in his electorate. Many times in this place I go around a corner and find the member for Logan wanting to discuss the policing and community safety issues in his area in Brisbane's south.

Mr Emerson interjected.

Mr DEMPSEY: It is. It is a great thing for the people of his electorate that he has that much passion.

Just last year in the south-east region, which incorporates the Gold Coast and Logan, we saw an additional 96 police officers on the beat as part of our delivery of over 300 additional officers across the state. There are more to come.

The 2013-14 year will be another good year for policing in Queensland. As part of the Newman government's commitment to an additional 1,100 police officers for Queensland, the upcoming financial year will see 267 more police officers, at a cost of \$63 million, take to the streets to ensure we have both a highly visible policing presence and a real deterrent for perpetrators of crime.

Also, as part of the Queensland Police Service's \$2 billion-plus budget we will ensure officers have the best equipment possible, with \$70.6 million for new and upgraded operational equipment including \$8.2 million towards three new marine vessels. These new catamarans will range in length, up to 22 metres, and will soon be giving police officers in Cairns, Townsville and the Whitsundays a tremendous seagoing platform to maximise policing efforts along our vast coast and across numerous islands. Police will be out there anywhere, anytime. Along with these vessels we will see \$38 million worth of new police vehicles on Queensland streets.

I also look forward to seeing approximately \$18 million spent on Queensland Police Service capital works and a further \$14.5 million towards technology upgrades. Technology is the future of policing worldwide. Finally, the Police Service will start to see real inroads being made, with in-car and on-person mobile data trials. In stark contrast to the former Labor government, the LNP has put another \$3 million towards the Gold Coast based police helicopter, which has proved invaluable to the south-east corner.

In the time remaining to me I ask members opposite to think about the effect of the carbon tax on the Police Service and my other portfolio areas. The federal government collects \$3 million each year in carbon tax. That equates to 30 extra police officers, ambulance officers or fire officers who could help and serve the people of Queensland. I ask those opposite to get in contact with their comrades—

(Time expired)

State Schools, Sale of Assets

Ms TRAD: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the government's admission that more than 100 school properties are being considered for sale, and I ask: will the Premier put a halt to the process of selling these valuable school assets until he has gone to an election to get approval for the sale?

Mr NEWMAN: Let us be very clear about what an asset sale is and about our commitment. That is, the sale of government owned corporations will not occur without us going to the electorate for a mandate. We will not do what the Labor Party did or what the member for South Brisbane did when she was there manoeuvring, getting the numbers to make sure the former Premier did not get rolled at the state conference. So that is our position.

Let us look at what might be going on here. As I have said before, governments constantly buy and sell land. There is land administered by the Department of Education, Training and Employment that is surplus to requirements. It constitutes 0.3 per cent of the total property portfolio and has a value of around \$50 million. I am advised that between 2008 and 2012 the Labor Party sold \$56.22 million worth of surplus land. That is what the member for South Brisbane did. They did sell land, but I do not remember them seeking a mandate for that. They cannot have it both ways.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order!

Mr NEWMAN: They are very rude—and there are schoolchildren in the gallery today. What must they think when an opposition member asks a question but does not let the Premier answer the question, which relates to education? For the benefit of the school students in the gallery today I will outline what is happening to the money that will come from those sales. It will contribute to addressing a \$300 million backlog in maintenance issues in state schools. The money is going back into education.

This is the difference between us and the Labor Party. The Labor Party went around this state putting solar panels on roofs on one side of a school while on the other side of the school there was a leaky roof, a broken bubbler, a blocked drain or a toilet that was smashed. That is the difference between them and us.

A state school in my electorate which will visit the parliament today—Enoggera State School—have actually asked to sell surplus land that is near the school. I have a letter from them urging us to sell that land. What do they want the money for? They want it to build a new school hall, because Enoggera State School does not have an assembly hall. I, as the local member, will work very, very hard to get them a school hall. The only way we will be able to achieve that is to sell off an old piece of land.

A government member interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: No, we are going to sell an old piece of land that is not really used—an old tennis court—and we will put that money back into the school. The school has asked me to do that. That is a good use of taxpayer funds and of land.

Agriculture Industry, Assistance

Mr RICKUSS: My question is to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister outline the actions the Newman government has taken to assist drought hit graziers in North and Western Queensland? How does this compare with others who purport to represent the interests of Queensland producers?

Mr McVEIGH: I thank the honourable member for his question and his ongoing interest and support for agriculture in this great state of Queensland. Last week I travelled to Richmond with the Premier and the member for Gregory to announce our government's drought package that offers over \$11 million in support for struggling graziers in 13 drought declared areas that cover more than

one-third of the state of Queensland—and just yesterday, based on local drought committee advice, I proceeded to declare Mount Isa as well. As announced by the Premier, that drought package includes land rent rebates; freight subsidies for fodder and emergency water; short-term agistment of livestock in a selected number of national parks and reserves; and transport concessions to greatly assist road/rail movement of droughted livestock, with additional routes under investigation. The package includes other measures such as mental health support to help individuals and families cope with stress—an issue that the member for Gregory spoke of so passionately in Richmond—and a new measure through our Drought Relief Assistance Scheme that offers graziers assistance with emergency water infrastructure, and we will continue to stand by our graziers should conditions worsen. I note the member for Mount Isa in this House just yesterday said that he initially supported this package. Now he does not think he does, so I leave it for him to explain his position to his own electorate.

These are common-sense measures. They deliver practical support as requested at the drought summit in Richmond where—after a last-minute invitation that I am sure the Katter party did not want to see the organisers issue—I listened to graziers, I took on board their concerns, I consulted the Premier and cabinet and we came back with solutions that have addressed each and every one of their queries. Between those two visits to Richmond I also travelled to Indonesia, and the House now knows what we have been able to achieve slowly but surely to address the sad malaise left in that trade of live cattle by Joe Ludwig and federal Labor. Compare all of this with the self-centred and idiotic antics of the federal member for Kennedy, Bob Katter, who, for his own base political purposes, claims that we have done nothing as a result of the Richmond drought summit. I will allow the commentators, mayors et cetera to say that their support was quite significant for our package and all that Katter and Labor have done has brought the much-maligned Joe Ludwig to town and his drought suggested farm finance package, which means nothing at this stage. We continue to demand information. He is offering money at 4½ per cent; he is getting it at three per cent. He is wanting to profiteer out of those subjected to drought. I table a joint statement from myself and ministers from the other states expressing disgust at that profiteering.

Tabled paper: Joint statement, dated 31 May 2013, by NSW, NT, Vic, WA and Qld agriculture ministers, titled 'Commonwealth should not profit from farm loans' [\[2860\]](#).

(Time expired)

Police Resources

Mr JUDGE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Police and Community Safety. Having terminated the positions of 110 of Queensland's most senior police, amounting to in excess of over 2,000 years combined policing experience, what impact does the police minister expect this to have on the professionalism and effectiveness of policing in Queensland and on officer retention?

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order. Under standing order 115, the member is asking for an opinion rather than asking a question.

Madam SPEAKER: I have heard the point of order and I have also heard the member's question and I am not going to rule it out of order because we have taken other questions asking for what impact an issue will have. To be consistent with other rulings, I call the minister.

Mr DEMPSEY: I thank the member for the question because it gives me an opportunity to highlight the great things that are happening in the Queensland Police Service not just now but in the future with the Keelty report that is due to be released later this year. We have seen magnificent restructures under Commissioner Ian Stewart. Changes such as his, which have obviously been monumental changes, have not happened in the Queensland Police Service for over 20 years. However, the question is actually misleading in some respects because 86 of those 110 officers have taken redundancies so that they can move on to other career paths. We acknowledge that that means the loss of a great deal of knowledge and history, but the people of Queensland and the Police Service itself know that as we go forward we do not want to have a conglomerate of managerial hierarchy within the Queensland Police Service. At the end of the day, we want more police officers on the beat.

With regard to those 110 positions for commissioned officers, they will be replaced with more police officers on Queensland streets protecting and serving the people of Queensland, ensuring that we have a Police Service structure that meets the futuristic needs of the people of Queensland. This is a great state; it has great opportunities. We have a budget based on growth, rebuilding and resilience and the current restructure gives us the opportunity to have task force operations and different commands to address current and modern types of policing operations. That restructure also

allows us to have the most technical and advanced Queensland Police Service going forward. As I mentioned in answer to an earlier question, we have made advancements in relation to technology which will assist police officers when they are mobile—in-car and on-police technology—to respond well.

This restructure has been warmly welcomed by the Queensland Police Service. It certainly knows that Queensland police officers on the street protecting and serving the people of Queensland now have a structure that is more responsive, meets the needs of all Queenslanders and ensures that we have a structure based on the best way to serve the people of Queensland into the future. It also ensures that we address the extra 1,100 police officers who are coming online into the ranks of the Queensland Police Service. I must reiterate that that is 1,100 officers on top of our normal attrition rate. So when we refer to 300 police officers last financial year, that is over and above the 450 police officers on average who are leaving the state, and I must compliment the Queensland Police Service.

Budget, Natural Resources

Mr YOUNG: My question without notice is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Can the minister please explain for the House how this state budget will both protect Queensland's natural resources of land and water and unlock the state's potential mineral and gas reserves, thereby promoting economic growth in regional Queensland?

Mr CRIPPS: I thank the member for Keppel for his question, the member for Keppel being a great advocate for the Keppel electorate and Central Queensland generally. The 2013-14 state budget is all about supporting growth in our economy, rebuilding Queensland after years of neglect from those opposite and making Queensland communities more resilient for the future. Despite our constrained financial circumstances, the Newman government is underwriting future growth in the resources sector by investing \$30 million into mineral and petroleum and gas exploration initiatives that will ensure Queensland remains attractive for resource investment. This significant funding has been made possible due to the success of the Newman government's first round of competitive cash tendering for exploration rights to the state's most highly prospective resource tenure. This \$30 million has been allocated to fund a number of priority initiatives designed to support mineral and energy related exploration to ensure Queensland remains attractive for resource investment. Seven key initiatives will be funded by the package and managed by the Geological Survey of Queensland in consultation with relevant industry groups. The GSQ plays a vital role in attracting exploration and resource investment by providing industry with key geoscientific and resource data, and this funding will ensure this important work will continue.

I am also pleased that natural resource management in Queensland will be supported through an \$80 million injection both to government programs and to support the important work of Queensland's 14 natural resource management groups over the next five years. Natural resource management groups play an important role in supporting the sustainable management and productive use of Queensland's natural resources. They are an important link between the government and local communities. They facilitate local activities that improve and restore and protect waterways, rangelands, wetlands and other landscapes in a cost-effective way. This investment will help natural resource management groups fund practical local on-the-ground projects that aim to eradicate and manage pest weeds and feral animals, improve soil and vegetation management and water-quality outcomes and help to protect the Great Barrier Reef.

I certainly commend the Treasurer on the delivery of his second prudent, responsible and balanced budget, which will help Queensland remain a great state with great opportunity. I look forward to the outcomes from the support that the important work of the Geological Survey of Queensland and our regional NRM groups have received from this budget.

Rail Services

Mr KATTER: My question is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. With 12 derailments on the Mount Isa-Townsville line from 2010 to 2012 emanating from diminished maintenance levels as a result of privatised rolling stock, will the minister rule out any further privatisation of the line that abrogates the Queensland government's social responsibility to remote communities and industry?

Mr EMERSON: Mr Deputy Speaker, can I get the member to repeat the question?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Member for Mount Isa, I am sorry but the minister could not hear the question and I could not hear it clearly. Could you please repeat the question more clearly.

Mr KATTER: Yes. My apologies. With 12 derailments on the Mount Isa-Townsville line from 2010 to 2012 emanating from diminished maintenance levels as a result of privatised rolling stock, will the minister rule out any further privatisation of the line that abrogates the Queensland government's social responsibility to remote communities and industry?

Mr SEENEY: I rise to a point of order. My respect for the practices and tradition of this place no longer allows me to remain silent. That question is clearly out of order. It is not just an assertion; it is a statement. The member is making a statement in the question, he is making an accusation in the question, that offends the standing orders. The member must ask a question. He can refer to a matter, but he cannot make a statement. He cannot make an assertion.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mount Isa, you need to just simply put a short question to the minister, because we are having difficulty understanding what you are saying and there is quite a longwinded statement there. So put your question to the minister.

Mr KATTER: Yes. Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I will rephrase it. Will the minister rule out any further privatisation of the line from Mount Isa to Townsville that abrogates the Queensland government's social responsibility to remote communities?

Mr EMERSON: I thank the honourable member for the question. Of course, can I also thank the honourable Deputy Premier for his guidance of the House once again.

The member has asked a number of questions about this section of line between Mount Isa and Townsville. In case he did not understand what I said the last time, I will reiterate what I said previously. In terms of that line, as we know that line has been put up as part of our Nation Building Program 2 submission to the federal government. We have asked for money for that. Unfortunately, Swannie—that so-called Queensland Treasurer—has not put the money up for it. Of course—and I am sure I will pre-empt the Premier here before he jumps up—who supports Swannie out there? Who is out there making sure he is there? Who is doing it? Who is keeping Swannie in power?

An honourable member interjected.

Mr EMERSON: That is right. The member for Mount Isa may know the main supporter of Labor in the federal parliament. He may be aware of him. He may know him. He may know him quite intimately. The reality is that he is the leader of the member's party, even though this week I noted in the media that one of the member's former supporters—in fact, one of the federal directors of his party—has now abandoned his party. He was once with the council. Can I say that, unfortunately—

A government member: Do you know what his name is?

Mr EMERSON: Yes. He was once a member of the LNP. Can I say that he did see the light briefly. He went from Logan City Councillor to the LNP, then he turned an Independent, then he turned to the Queensland Party and then he turned to the Katter party. Now—

Mr KATTER: I rise to a point of order. Relevance—the minister is making no attempt to answer the question.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The minister has been speaking to the question.

Mr EMERSON: I do not want to go through the long list of parties that he has been a member of. Now, I understand he is with the Family First party. Why did he join the Family First party? Because he missed out on that Senate spot that he was craving. But he is not the only one in this chamber—

Mr KATTER: I rise to a point of order—relevance again.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mount Isa, the minister very directly and immediately began to answer your question and he is continuing to speak to it.

Mr EMERSON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. As I said, we all know he was not the only one who missed out—who wanted that job, who wanted that Senate spot, but missed out. The reality is that, in the end, they wanted someone who was living and working on the land, but they could not find anyone. They could not find anyone here, could they? So they had to go for the pop star. That was the reality. So I say to the member for Mount Isa to get daddy to stop supporting Labor.

(Time expired)

Budget, Tourism

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games. Can the minister please advise the House of any budget measures in her portfolio that will benefit Queensland tourism?

Mrs STUCKEY: I thank the honourable member for the question and I recognise and congratulate her on being such a champion for small business and tourism, particularly up there in that beautiful area of Springbrook. There are many hidden treasures in the hinterland area of the member's electorate that I am sure are ripe for some ecotourism developments.

Honourable members, the Queensland government recognises tourism as one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy. That is why we have taken such an inclusive and collaborative approach with our DestinationQ strategy. This strategy is harnessing the expertise right across the whole of our government so that we are able to work closely in partnership with Queensland's long neglected tourism industry.

I am very pleased to inform the House today that, yes, there is more good news—that my Tourism budget includes \$127.1 million to be able to continue our state—

Mr McArdle: How much?

Mrs STUCKEY: I say to the honourable member for Caloundra that that is \$127.1 million for our pro growth tourism and events industry. This amount includes an additional \$15 million for our recently merged Tourism and Events Queensland to support destination marketing, promote major events and develop world-class tourism products and tourism experiences. This is the very first year that we have combined our budgets for Tourism and Events for Queensland. This additional investment is going to allow those portfolio areas to continue the great successes that we have recorded to date, working directly with Queensland's 13 regional tourism organisations to deliver destination based marketing campaigns and to attract new events as well as supporting some well-known existing events.

Honourable members, this year's budget also continues the government's increased investment into Queensland's regional tourism organisations, with \$7 million again made available this year. Almost \$4 million of that funding is delivered as a contestable funding pool. That is more than double the \$3 million that this network received under the previous government and the latest round of successful applicants will be announced soon. We will continue to focus on attracting investment into Queensland's tourism industry, supporting the second year of our Attracting Aviation Investment Fund and, of course, our very impressive Tourism Investment Attraction Unit.

On 27 and 28 August, the Premier and my Tourism cabinet colleagues and other members will join me and over 300 tourism operators on the Gold Coast for the second annual DestinationQ forum, which allows our tourism industry to review our progress in delivering the agreed actions from last year. We have workshops already occurring across all regions. Our commitment to supporting tourism and events development in the 2013-14 budget demonstrates that our government is continuing to build a stronger, more resilient tourism industry.

(Time expired)

Infrastructure Projects

Mr BYRNE: My question is to the Premier. I refer to the fact that almost three-quarters of the government's capital spend is confined to the south-east corner of the state and ask: will the Premier explain why the government is neglecting regional Queensland and why the government's only capital project remains the new Executive Building in the CBD?

Madam SPEAKER: I call the Premier. One minute.

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for his question. I want to acknowledge students from the Enoggera State School in my electorate who sadly missed my discussion about how we might be able to get them a new school hall. To the question: what nonsense from the member for Rockhampton. I recall very clearly, because I listened to the Treasurer's speech, that 75 per cent of the capital spending was outside Brisbane going to the regions of Queensland—going out there right across this state. There is so much that is going there: Royalties for the Regions—\$495 million over four years; the doubling of the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme; country racing, that the Labor Party

wanted to crush, will receive \$1 million per year over four years to provide 20 extra country race meetings; there is funding for the Bruce Highway; there is \$5 million to fight cattle disease; there is \$11.2 million for a drought relief package; and \$1.7 billion in health infrastructure. I could go on, but they would not even listen.

Madam SPEAKER: Time for questions has expired.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Madam SPEAKER: There are two schools visiting today from the electorate of Ashgrove: the Ashgrove State School and the Enoggera State School.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL


REVENUE AMENDMENT AND TRADE AND INVESTMENT QUEENSLAND BILL

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill resumed from 4 June (see p. 1902), Appropriation Bill resumed from 4 June (see p. 1912) and Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill resumed from 4 June (see p. 1916).

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (11.02 am): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.02 am): I am pleased to rise today—Queensland Day—to respond to the 2013 state budget. Queensland Day is the day we celebrate the birthday of our great state, the day we come together to revel in our good fortune at living in probably the best place in the country. Unfortunately, under this LNP government the best place in Australia has entered a frightful new era and the budget that its Treasurer handed down two days ago gives us nothing to celebrate. That budget is one of blatantly broken promises. It is a budget that betrays Queenslanders. It is a budget that lets Queensland down.

As I look around the House I see a government that is arrogantly pleased with itself. I see a government that has just as arrogantly used its huge majority in this place to abuse the trust placed in it by Queenslanders at the last election. They have presented a budget of broken promises: broken promises on taxes, broken promises on jobs, broken promises on debt, broken promises on deficits, broken promises on privatisation and, above all, broken promises on the cost of living. This is a Treasurer who, when he was in opposition just a year before the election and in June 2011 delivered the same response I am delivering today, promised definitively that he would lower the cost of living. He has failed and he has betrayed the people of Queensland. This is a Treasurer who, during that same speech, told Queenslanders that their electricity bills would be less under the LNP. He has failed and he has betrayed the people of Queensland. This is a Treasurer who also, at the same time, which was immediately after our worst summer of natural disasters, said an LNP government would not be caught short if they were in the same situation of having to carry out a mass repair and rebuild of our great state. This week he changed his tune and blamed the dismal state of his budget on floods and storms.

The LNP budget is a direct indictment on the character and the honesty of the Premier and his government. This is not the government Queenslanders thought they were voting for in 2012. It is a serial offender when it comes to breaking promises and it is Queensland families who are now paying the price. I ask each member of this place, including the Premier and the Treasurer, to actually get out amongst Queenslanders and hear what they are saying. More to the point, I challenge them to actually spend some time in their electorate offices and come face-to-face with those families who are hurting. I do and I can tell members that what is happening to the average householder in my electorate is simply horrifying. It is horrifying because people are struggling to pay the very basic bills. Such is the fear associated with an impending bill, they are literally living in the dark. Every time one of them opens one of those bills they will think of Campbell Newman's broken promises.

That is why today I am calling on Queenslanders to fight back against the Premier's assault on their cost of living. I am rallying Queenslanders to use their household accounts to hold the Premier to account for his string of broken promises. I am asking Queenslanders to ensure that they keep hold of their power bills, their water bills and their insurance renewals between now and the next election and then make a judgement as to whether the Newman government has truly kept its promise to cut the cost of living. Prior to the last election the Premier published a contract with Queensland which he urged voters to keep so that they could hold his government to account for its promise on the cost of living. Let us see if at the end of this term of government he can really claim that that contract should remain valid.

The 2012 budget was dominated by the callous sacking of 14,000 Queenslanders and the cruel cuts to front-line services across our state, both of which were of themselves broken LNP promises. These cuts included front-line positions, such as the axing of around 800 nurses, despite the LNP's commitment to revitalise front-line health services. At the same time, the LNP was forking out money it said it did not have getting Liberal Party life member Peter Costello to produce a so-called independent Commission of Audit. Mr Costello is as independent from this government as Mal Meninga is from Queensland's State of Origin team. Of course, that is where the comparisons would end, largely because not even Mal would be raking in Mr Costello's \$3,300 a day to draft foregone conclusions. As the shadow Treasurer has already explained to the House, Mr Costello's \$2 million audit was simply a tool to create a make-believe crisis, a Trojan horse for the Premier's programs of cuts, sackings and sell-offs. Much of that carnage was already inflicted in the budget last year.

In my budget reply speech last year I said that the LNP's austerity drive would lead to slower economic growth and higher unemployment. The evidence is now clear. The Treasurer's own budget papers reveal an economy that is slowing and an unemployment rate that is higher. Today's unemployment rate of 5.6 per cent is higher than when the LNP was elected. In fact, unemployment under the LNP has already peaked above six per cent—higher than during the darkest hours of the global financial crisis. Around 24,700 full-time jobs have been lost under the LNP. If Queensland's participation rate was the same today as it was in March 2012 the unemployment rate would now be over seven per cent. Sadly, many Queenslanders who have been looking for work have been forced to give up. As it is, over the next year, Treasury expects the unemployment rate to average six per cent. That is a full half a per cent higher than when the LNP was elected. It makes the Premier's promise to track towards a four per cent unemployment rate by 2017-18 heroic at best. The budget shows unemployment in 2016-17 is forecast to be 5.25 per cent, meaning unemployment would have to drop by 1.25 per cent in just one year for him to reach his target.

By stark contrast, the Labor Party will continue to give jobs a top priority. That includes jobs for people who currently do not have one, job security and fair wages and conditions for those who do and the necessary and vital planning for the jobs of future generations of Queenslanders. There is nothing more important to Queenslanders than work. There is nothing more critical to holding families together than holding down a job. Queenslanders are hurting. They are disappointed and they are scared of becoming desperate. They are scared of not being able to pay the rent. They are scared of not being able to pay the mortgage. They are afraid that if they have not already lost their job they are in danger of doing so. This government talks about fighting the cost of living, but it sacks thousands of people and smothers growth, causing higher jobless rates. The fact remains that you have no hope of battling the rising cost of living if you do not have a job. Labor has a proud record of creating jobs, protecting jobs and preparing Queenslanders to enter the workforce. We have already committed to restoring the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. Last year that program was savagely cut by the LNP, which cast aside the disadvantaged and long-term unemployed the program supported.

We are committed to retaining our best and brightest. Under the Newman government and its program of slashing jobs, we are in danger of losing a generation of our smartest minds. Under Labor's Advance Queensland policy, to be released later this year, we will bring together the best minds in the state in science, engineering, medicine and other highly skilled fields to stimulate and foster our reputation as Australia's most comprehensively knowledge based state. We will act to keep a new generation of Queenslanders right here in Queensland. We are committed to helping those who have been left behind by this government.

The reckless austerity drive imposed by the LNP has driven many Queenslanders to despair. Many people are out of work, many people are struggling to pay their bills and many people are struggling with the rising cost of living. However, there is almost nothing for them in this budget. The government has shown little in the way of compassion to those whose lives have been torn apart by its cruel cuts.

At the same time as unemployment is up and things such as the electricity rebate have been cut, the LNP has cut much needed funds for emergency financial counselling to our most vulnerable Queenslanders. Free financial counselling can help save those on the brink of financial collapse. A relative outlay by the government can make a huge difference to those reeling from the LNP's policy decisions. The opposition urges the government to immediately look into ways it could reinstate and also increase funding to those services. We also call on the government to pick up the phone and accept the federal government's offer to fund the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service. The cutting of TAAS funds is more politics from a government that is more interested in pushing Tony Abbott's barrow than securing real outcomes for Queenslanders.

What we have seen globally is that austerity generally leads to an economic slump. Here in Queensland, independent commentators and analysts, including Deloitte Access Economics, CommSec and the Commonwealth Bank, have already observed that the LNP's cuts are choking the economy. The LNP's economic slump, aggravated by the sacking of workers and cuts to front-line services and community groups, has led directly to a revenue slump. Falls in revenue include \$800 million in transfer duty and \$2.62 billion in royalties over four years compared to the 2012 budget. The Treasurer has complained about the lack of money flowing into Treasury coffers. Well Treasurer, if growth is strong, revenues are strong. If people are in jobs, revenues are strong. If companies have the confidence to invest, revenues are strong. If the Premier and the Treasurer do not spend a year denigrating the state's performance, talking about us being on a high dive into the abyss and comparing Queensland's economy to that of Spain, revenues are strong. This government has abandoned pro-growth policies and embraced pro-tax policies, placing Queensland in a difficult position. Even with the Treasurer's massive tax increases of nearly \$1.2 billion, this budget outlines increased fiscal deficits of \$1.38 billion in 2014-15 compared to the previous government, with a return to a fiscal surplus now not slated until 2015-16. Yet again, it is another broken promise. This surplus rides on the back of the LNG industry, an industry ushered into Queensland by the former Labor government. Labor initiated that industry from day 1. It has transformed areas such as Gladstone into the state's powerhouse. It is that industry that the government admits will now chart Queensland's economic future.

For all the Treasurer's attempts to spin the financial management of the former government, the indisputable fact is that that government delivered seven surpluses in 11 years. That includes surpluses in 2008-09 and 2009-10 during the depths of the global financial crisis. That was a time when global growth contracted for the first time since World War II. At the same time, Labor undertook a massive building program that not only delivered new infrastructure but also created and protected jobs. In stark contrast, the Treasurer is now presiding over the two largest fiscal deficits in Queensland's history. The Treasurer's increased deficits lead directly to the Treasurer's increased debt. Yet again, it is another broken promise. At the election the LNP's economic blueprint committed to reducing debt and every LNP frontbencher talked about reducing debt, yet today they are increasing debt as they increase taxes and send more Queenslanders to the jobless queue.

The LNP government inherited a net debt of \$24.92 billion, which was lower than in Victoria and New South Wales. Today net debt is \$32.5 billion and is set to increase to \$41.9 billion in 2015-16. When you compare net debt without the self-supporting debt of government owned corporations, the picture is even worse. General government net debt for 2014-15 will be \$634 million higher than that projected under the former Labor government. The Treasurer's claims that gross debt forecasts have been reduced since their election simply uncovered the uncomfortable truth, which is that the Premier has already broken his promise not to privatise assets.

Regional Queensland is feeling the pain from this budget. Almost 75 per cent of the government's capital spending is confined to the south-east corner. Their new Executive building in the Brisbane CBD remains the only big signature project that they have initiated for themselves. Queenslanders voted for the LNP because it said it would get Queensland back on track. In reality, this Premier has derailed economic growth and delivered fewer jobs, lower growth, higher debt, increased taxes and a higher cost of living.

If last year's budget took the axe to jobs and front-line services, this year's budget takes the sledgehammer to household budgets across Queensland. Before the election the LNP told Queenslanders that it would deliver savings to household bills of up to \$330 per year. That was yet another promise that was not worth the paper it was written on. This budget delivers an increase to household bills of around \$600. Families in rural Queensland are set to pay even more with the new emergency services tax of at least \$90 and the costs for people living in cyclone or flood impacted areas will be even greater as the insurance tax slug for home and contents potentially will be in

excess of \$285 per year. It was this Treasurer, when in opposition, who said insurance taxes were a 'windfall on misery'. Now he is responsible for massively hiking insurance taxes, when some Queenslanders are struggling to rebuild their lives and their businesses after the recent disasters.

In 2011-12 taxes per person in Queensland were \$2,271. In 2013-14 taxes per person will be \$2,528. For an average family of four that is a \$1,000 increase in taxes since the LNP was elected. Whether it is car insurance taxes, home and contents insurance taxes, fire taxes or even payroll taxes, this government is sticking its hands in Queenslanders' pockets like never before. These tax increases come after the Treasurer promised in December last year that there would be no new taxes in this budget and just weeks after he said Queenslanders would not be 'taxed into their graves'.

Even traditional LNP supporters in the business community are feeling betrayed. The ongoing lack of confidence in business circles will not improve by the Premier and the Treasurer going back on their word when it comes to payroll tax deferrals. A hike in payroll tax, as well as the royalty increases announced last year, sends the wrong message to the business community. It will not help boost investment and it will not boost employment. What is worse, this government proudly boasts about its lack of action to support business and generate jobs. The Premier and the Treasurer repeat their mantra that their government is 'an enabler' not 'a doer'. In other words, instead of a can-do government we are saddled with a do-nothing government—one that will not take the lead.

The LNP's unprecedented attack on household budgets is most obvious in its broken promise on electricity prices. As confirmed by the QCA last week, the LNP is delivering the biggest increase in the regulated electricity price in Queensland's history. When electricity prices went up by 6.6 per cent during the last year of the former government, the LNP said Queenslanders were being belted. The increase that the Premier has presided over is almost four times as big.

At the last election, the Premier told families and pensioners and people on low incomes that he would find a way to reduce the burden—to 'lower your bills', in his words. He broke that promise last year when prices went up by \$140 on average. Next financial year power bills will increase by 22.6 per cent or \$268 on average. It is even worse for elderly people living alone, with bills to rise by a whopping 27.9 per cent.

The Premier can spin it how he likes, but the massive increase in bills between this year and next year is solid proof of his broken promise. It was telling that the Premier and senior ministers did not have the courage to front the media last Friday to explain themselves. By arrogantly saying nothing they told Queenslanders everything about what kind of government they really are.

But let me remind the House and Queenslanders of the words of the Treasurer in his speech in the budget debate back in 2011. This is what he said—

Under our plan the LNP would be able to offer Queensland households lower power bills than Labor.

Let me repeat those words—

Under our plan the LNP would be able to offer Queensland households lower power bills than Labor.

Well, Treasurer, Queensland households are waiting for your offer. It is not just electricity prices that are rising, despite the Premier's promise to lower the cost of living. Bulk water costs will go up by \$49 for the average household next year, with additional increases in retail prices still to be announced. Registration bills are going up too, thanks to the CTP increases which the LNP included in its pre-election promise to cut the cost of living.

The Premier tries to deflect criticism about his list of broken promises by pointing to the reintroduction of the principal place of residence concession. What he does not say is that he paid for it by abolishing the first home owner grant on existing homes, making it harder for young people to enter the housing market, and by hiking transfer duty by \$361 million.

It is time to put some facts on the table when it comes to health funding in Queensland. Labor undertook the largest ever hospital building program in Australia. We fixed the decades of neglect that allowed the system to deteriorate under previous Liberal and National Party regimes. Labor built new hospitals in Brisbane and invested in new facilities and major redevelopments across our regional centres. The people of Rockhampton, Cairns, Mackay, Townsville and Mount Isa know that their major hospital upgrades happened under a Labor government. The people of the Gold Coast understand that their brand-new hospital was built by Labor.

By contrast, the LNP government now want to privatise essential services which will mean job cuts, higher costs and poorer quality services for patients. In the first year of the LNP well over 4,000 health jobs were earmarked to go, and we lost a generation of dedicated health workers. This budget has continued the LNP's assault on our free public hospital system. This budget shows that there are

4,640 fewer health staff in 2012-13 than in 2011-12. It cuts outpatient services by 70,000 appointments. The LNP has cut state funds for elective surgery and specialist outpatient clinics so fast that it is failing to meet basic targets to improve these services. The rapid decline in these core hospital services is causing real pain in the community as people are forced to wait longer for operations and longer to see a specialist in our public hospitals.

The health minister refuses to acknowledge that fundamental health services are a fundamental right. That was evident in his response to the opposition's proposal to give child-care centres the right to refuse entry to children who have not been vaccinated. Vaccination should be a bipartisan issue because scientific research has put the issue beyond politics. Our legislation is before the House, and I urge everyone to support it.

The approach to education in Queensland provides one of the clearest delineations between the government and the opposition. Quite simply, Labor believes in investing in schools not selling them off. For the education minister to release a list of lot numbers instead of addresses and school names in response to a legitimate question on his asset sales was yet another display of LNP arrogance. This government does not understand the very real sense of fear and anxiety parents are feeling out there in their local communities. That is only being exacerbated by the lack of compassion displayed by the Premier and the minister.

Labor believes in innovation in education. That is why I recently released a discussion paper on single-sex public schools in Queensland, seeking the views of parents, teachers and other stakeholders. We are consulting with local communities and schools about this proposal and will talk more about this in the future. That is just one of the discussion papers we will be releasing to hear the views of Queenslanders as we develop the policies we will take to the next state election.

Education and training will be a major focus of our policy initiatives. Education should boost the state's bottom line by creating a skilled, more productive workforce, not by having its assets flogged off to the highest bidder. Labor stands with the parents, students and teachers of Queensland and strongly opposes the LNP's sell-off of our schools.

Labor also joins the overwhelming number of teachers and parents supporting recommendations of the Gonski review. The Gonski review is all about establishing a fairer school funding system and recognising the needs of individual students in Queensland. It is about improving school performance so we give our kids the world-class education they deserve. Sadly, it has become a political plaything for Tony Abbott and this Premier who put their political interests ahead of what is best for our students.

Madam Speaker, Labor would work with the federal government to implement the Gonski reforms, and we urge this government to do the same. The fact is that funding for the Premier's own plan has been scuttled by the legislation passed in the federal parliament. I understand that he is now \$535 million short for his education commitments which rely on federal funding contributions. So where will he find the money? Instead of playing politics, the Premier should allocate the funding for his own education plan to support Gonski.

Labor believes in supporting growth in the Queensland economy. Labor's tough decisions during the global financial crisis—to invest in infrastructure and protect jobs—saved our state from recession and kept thousands of people in work. Because we maintained infrastructure spending, Queensland is positioned to grow strongly into the future—something both Treasury and Deloitte Access Economics have publicly acknowledged. This will be a return to growth—despite this LNP government and not because of it.

When the LNP was elected, the budget was on a path back to surplus in 2014-15 without any mass sackings or slashing of front-line services. This was reaffirmed in an assessment by the Queensland Treasury Corporation after the election. We remain committed to a return to a AAA credit rating but not at any cost. It is important to map out a sensible medium-term strategy, one that does not undermine service delivery or jobs.

Unemployment under the LNP has already peaked well above levels recorded during the worst conditions of the global financial crisis. During the GFC, the previous government acted to support the economy with \$60 billion of generational infrastructure investment over four years. That investment included a major hospital building program that will benefit future generations. If debt had not been utilised to build infrastructure during the GFC period, we would likely be facing a scenario of a smaller economy with lower or forgone government revenues.


I make these points because it is important to remember that returning to surplus is not simply a matter of slashing, cutting and selling. It is not about shifting numbers on a balance sheet. It requires sound policy development and recognition of the need to invest in our most important asset in Queensland—our people—to invest to support jobs, to support our communities and our way of life, to develop the industries of the future and to maximise the productive potential of the industries we already have.

The people of Queensland put their confidence in the LNP. They put their faith in the LNP. Above all, they put their trust in the LNP. They put their trust in this Premier not to pull any rabbits out of a hat but simply to deliver on what he promised. Under any objective assessment, the Premier has abused the trust put in him by Queenslanders. He has broken promise after promise after promise after promise. He has implemented his own political agenda after promising to govern for all Queenslanders. He has lifted the tax burden on business at a time of great challenge, and he has dramatically increased the cost of living for Queensland families.

Queenslanders put their trust in this Premier, and he has repaid them by cutting too hard and too fast, while increasing debt and increasing taxes. He is not the Premier and this is not the government people voted for just more than a year ago. Queenslanders have every right to feel betrayed and disappointed. Yesterday the Premier made the wild claim that his broken promises put Queensland householders massively out in front. That just shows how out of touch this government is. Far from being in front, the Newman government is taking Queensland backwards with lower growth, higher taxes, higher unemployment and higher deficits. The only bright spot on the horizon is the potential revenue flowing from the major resources projects Labor initiated. Their strategy for surplus is built entirely on the back of the LNG industry that Labor kick-started.

The strength of Labor's vision for Queensland is that it is based not only on pragmatic policy and sound financial management but also on values—things like a decent education for Queensland students, no matter their background; decent health care for Queenslanders, no matter the size of their pay packet; giving young Queenslanders the tools to forge their own destinies; protecting the dignity of work, supporting families and strengthening their communities; and recognising that people can fall on hard times through no fault of their own and may need some support.

Labor fundamentally believes in equality, opportunity and fairness—in simple terms, a fair go. Labor believes in every person having an equal opportunity to achieve their goals and maximise their potential and that everyone is entitled to common decency, irrespective of who they are. And decency, Madam Speaker, starts with trust.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (11.34 am): It is with great pleasure that I rise to address the Treasurer's presentation of the 2013-14 budget, a budget for growth, rebuilding and resilience. I wish I had the time to address some of the inaccuracies and some of the untruths that have been put to us today by the Leader of the Opposition. Unfortunately I do not have the time, as I really need to talk about the benefits to my community that this budget has delivered.

Mr Johnson: And to Queenslanders.

Mr CRANDON: And for Queensland. I take that interjection. Firstly, I want to congratulate the Treasurer for staying the course in difficult circumstances on some very, very difficult matters. This is the Newman government's second budget in the aftermath of major floods, cyclones and droughts affecting all Queenslanders—and these events have cost the people of Queensland dearly, either directly or indirectly. One focus of the first budget for the Treasurer was to bring down the cost of living—such mechanisms as the freezing of registration on the family car for three years and reinstating the stamp duty rebate for the family home, just to name two. These actions helped all Queenslanders but particularly those most in need.

So what does this budget hold for the people of the Coomera electorate? My focus today will be on three important areas—policing, education funding and support for those with the greatest need. First of all, I will talk about policing. One of the major issues for my electorate leading up to the 2009 election and certainly continuing on through the 2012 election and right up until today is the issue of policing—and, of course, we are talking about break and enters; we are talking about physical injury to persons; we are talking about hoodlums, hoons and so forth.

In the lead-up to the 2012 election, there was a promise that we would have something in the order of an additional 100 police for the Gold Coast and Logan City areas. To date across Queensland we already have 300 additional police, and there are 267 more police slated. This is on the way to achieving a total number of additional front-line police of 1,300—1,100 new officers and 200 coming from the back office to the front, to be at the coalface, if you like.

In terms of education, in my electorate one of only two new high schools to be built was opened this year and there is more funding to go towards enhancing that high school as well as other high schools in preparation for the 2015 influx of year 7 students and of course the growth which is very, very apparent in the Coomera electorate. I point out as a matter of interest to all members in the House that the \$100 million maintenance budget for this year follows on from the \$200 million top-up maintenance budget from last year, and virtually all of the schools in my electorate received the full amount—the \$160,000—to assist them in catching up with the maintenance that is so desperately needed.

I also point out that the Gonski proposal by the federal government would in fact disadvantage the most disadvantaged community in my electorate. One of the schools in the most disadvantaged community in my electorate would be 2.8 per cent worse off under Gonski. Why? What do they have against the children in those areas that are doing it so tough? We have a different plan, a better plan, to deliver a better education for our children, and that is our Great Teachers = Great Results plan.

Support network funding—and this includes child safety, disability services and social inclusion funding—totals over \$6 million throughout the Coomera electorate. About \$2 million is in the Logan part of my electorate and about \$4 million is in the Gold Coast part of my electorate. This will support those in greatest need, and there are many people in Coomera, as I have just alluded to, in disadvantaged situations. There is a total of \$780 million in rebates alone for people in those circumstances to assist with their electricity and gas bills. There is a total of \$5.2 billion of concessions across the state. Many of those dollars are going into the areas in my electorate that need help.

In a nutshell, it is economics 101. Scarce and finite resources versus so many needs. Those opposite focus on negatives. I alluded to that a short while ago, and I hope my colleagues on this side of the House will take the opportunity to point out some of the errors in the Leader of the Opposition's speech today. We on this side of the House try to do more with less and deliver for the people in a sustainable way. That is the difference. We try to deliver in a sustainable way: doing more with less. Let me explain it to those opposite in simple terms as it may be easier for them to understand. Let's use the family budget. How long would you last? Let me set the scene. As a financial planner I was able to help people work through their issues. First of all, as I said, I will set the scene.

Dr Flegg: Paint a word picture.

Mr CRANDON: I will paint a word picture. I take that interjection. The scene is set like this: the client has no savings and they have come to their financial planner for some advice and some help.

Dr Flegg: They've got a good financial planner.

Mr CRANDON: Of course they have. I take that interjection. Currently their expenditure is 10 per cent more than their income. Therefore, every year there is more debt being added to their existing debt.

Mr Boothman: You've lost them.

Mr CRANDON: I have lost them already? Keep thinking. Beaker, listen up. They have a big mortgage with an interest bill that is making a big difference to how their family enjoys—or does not enjoy—the hard work they have been putting in over the years. The interest bill on that debt is their fastest growing expense. Some things are costing more than they should. They are paying for things in the marketplace for which they could have got a better result or the same result for less expenditure if they had had a look around and spent some time seeing whether or not they could get a better deal. It is that contestability thing.

Mr Hart: Did they buy a desal plant?


Mr CRANDON: No, they did not buy a desal plant. We will not go into that at this time. I have not got the time. I am on a fairly tight schedule.

Income is not a certain figure for these people. It depends on how busy things are out there in the marketplace. On average, it could be that they would be receiving something like \$48,000 to try to make ends meet on a take-home basis. If things are good in the marketplace, if things move forward in the marketplace, they could end up with a little overtime and a bit of extra money. Let's say that takes them to about \$53,000. On the other side of the coin, if it is quiet they could be pushed back to a nine-day fortnight and therefore lose around 10 per cent of their income to take them back to \$43,000. They come to me and ask what I recommend they do.

The first thing I would do is refer to the fact that they have no savings and we have to try to turn that around. They have massive debt that is growing and we have to try to turn that around. So we have a look at their assets situation. We look at how they are spending their dollars to find out whether or not we can save some money. That is the first thing.

The second thing is we look at what assets they have and we see whether there are any assets they no longer need. We consider the possibility of selling those assets. I suppose you could liken that to selling the land that we no longer need in our education system because we are always buying and selling land as a government. We are going to sell land over here in order to buy land over there to put it in the right place. I can refer to the Coomera electorate, where we are buying additional land for additional schools. In fact, I have a new school which has been announced—one of the 10 PPP schools—and which is due to be in place by the 2016 school year. Where do you get the money from to buy that land? This land over here that you do not need any more you sell and bring it across. It is a matter of tidying up your affairs, trimming the fat, making sure that the things you are doing are smart, cost effective and, most importantly, you are not living beyond your means.

I want to make one final point. It was an irony we heard from the Leader of the Opposition when she talked about 1 William Street. She is taking a swipe at this government for putting forward a proposal to save \$70 million a year in rent by building one building to bring all of our departments into one place. But she loses this point: Cbus, which is a union superannuation fund, owns that building. Cbus has something like seven or eight buildings around the country which it is doing exactly that sort of thing with. It owns the building. Union labour is being used to build the building, adding to their assets. Finally, the returns on that building are going into the Cbus super fund for the benefit of those people in their retirement. Once again, I congratulate the Treasurer for his outstanding efforts in these tough circumstances. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr GIBSON** (Gympie—LNP) (11.47 am): It is an honour to rise in this House on Queensland Day to deliver the budget in reply speech on behalf of my community. My community has a strong connection to the Queensland budget as it was the discovery of gold in 1867 that saved our fledgling new colony from bankruptcy. Fast forward 146 years from that gold rush, and whilst Queensland was not facing bankruptcy under Labor its mismanagement had resulted in us losing our AAA credit rating. Under Labor expenses had blown out and interest had become the fastest growing budget line item.

It is an LNP government that today is rebuilding our state's finances with this no-nonsense budget, delivering the front-line services that Queensland expects whilst also fostering economic growth. Notwithstanding the difficult financial constraints faced, this budget is a gold rush for my community with over \$100 million in funding for works and projects in the Gympie region. Why is this the case?

Government members interjected.

Mr GIBSON: Because they have a good local member to start with but, more importantly, we have a great government—an LNP government.

The LNP is the party that understands the importance of our regional roads by delivering a record \$690 million in funding for the Bruce Highway as part of the ongoing effort to improve that 1,700 kilometre lifeline. In the Gympie area that means \$16.8 million for the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Curra around Traveston and Keefton roads; \$5.5 million for the Bruce Highway Keefton to Curra roads to construct a new four-lane sealed standard; \$3 million to construct an interchange on the Bruce Highway at Pomona; and, importantly, \$65 million to build section A of the Bruce Highway Cooroy to Curra upgrade. Section A! One would think that they would put A before B, but not a Labor government. Our children in prep understand that A comes before B, but not a Labor government. They were so caught up on that Traveston Dam debacle that they put section B ahead of section A. It is this government that is fixing the problems of Labor.

The LNP is the party that cares for Queensland's students and Queensland's teachers. I note that in this budget it is providing \$11.4 billion. That includes \$537 million over five years for Great Teachers = Great Results; 724 more teachers and teacher aides; and \$110 million to clear the maintenance backlogs in schools. Locally, this means a school like Gympie high, which under Labor had a maintenance backlog of \$1.3 million, has now got hope. Finally it is seeing its maintenance backlog being addressed. Under Labor, Gympie schools had raw sewage in their yards because Labor refused to provide proper maintenance. The LNP is addressing Labor's backlog. But there is more. We are seeing James Nash and Gympie high receive \$5.2 million for new classrooms as part of the move of year 7 into high school. I note—and I want to thank the minister and the departmental staff because as a result of the funds—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! There are too many interjections. The member for Gympie has not been taking interjections. He has the call.

Mr GIBSON: I thank you for your protection, Mr Deputy Speaker. I thank the minister and his staff because when we had discussions after the recent floods we asked if they could bring forward whatever major works they had to bring economic activity into the region. This \$5.2 million being spent in Gympie will go a long way in assisting the flood recovery. James Nash has also received \$5 million for the trade training centre, which will be built at the Gympie TAFE site. I note that James Nash has the lead, but it is a consortium of all the high schools in the area working together on this trade training centre. It will be a welcome asset to the educational facilities, developing an educational precinct with the Sunshine Coast University and our Gympie TAFE in the same facilities.

The LNP is a party that cares for our aged and disabled Queenslanders. We see this in increased funding in the disabilities budget of \$2.86 billion, including \$868 million for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and major investments for young people with a disability, foster and kinship carers and, of course, the people affected by the recent natural disasters such as the people of Gympie. Locally, we see the securing of \$700,000 in funding for the Maryborough, Burnett and Cooloola districts' Home Assist Secure Home Maintenance and Security Service Association. This will be welcomed by the many who use this service.


Many in this House know of my commitment to the deaf community. I am extremely proud that the minister for emergency services has been able to secure \$250,000 which has been allocated in this budget to fund an independently managed hearing impaired smoke alarm subsidy scheme on behalf of the QFRS. It is important to note that, under Labor, this scheme was blowing out and was unmanageable. The fact that it will now be independently managed will ensure that it delivers for those in our community who need the financial assistance to be able to purchase a smoke alarm that provides not only audio but also visual and vibration effects to provide safety and security in their lives.

The LNP is the only party that understands the importance of regional communities. My community will see the benefit of funding of \$2 million for track upgrades for the Mary Valley Heritage Railway. This will enable this heritage railway to return to operations in 2014 and restore it as an iconic tourism experience not just for my community but for all Queenslanders, for all Australians and for international tourists who come to the area. I also note the amount of \$1.5 million for the Mary Valley economic strategy. Finally, we see a strategy that is focused on rebuilding the Mary Valley after Labor's failed Traveston Dam debacle. There is 75,000 to start work on a new fire station in Pomona which will be due for completion in 2014-15.

They say the sweetest fruit is often the smallest. We see \$50,000 for a men's shed in Gympie that will be well received; \$45,000 for working with the council on a Gympie and district flood management option study; \$25,000 for the world renowned Heart of Gold film festival under the Events Queensland Flood Assistance Program, and I thank the Minister for Tourism for her support of my community. There is also \$14,000 for improvements to Lake Alford recreational reserve to improve the recreational value of the park to the travelling public. I note that when she visited recently the member for Pumicestone sent me a text saying that she was in Gympie and was experiencing that great park with her young family. It is a facility that is used by many who drive through my fair city, and that money will be well used by all.

There is also \$5,000 for a shade sail installation at the Gympie saleyards—something that will be well supported—and \$3,000 for an upgrade of the Gympie Lighthouse Oval. I look forward to hearing from the Minister for Tourism about the financial support from Tourism and Events Queensland for the Gympie muster that has been allocated in this budget. The Gympie muster is another iconic Queensland experience and one that has been hit hard by recent floods.

This chamber opened in 1886, the year after the discovery of gold in Gympie. I cannot help but think that the Treasurer of the day delivering his first budget in this House was grateful for the revenue that that gold provided for our young colony. Today I stand in this same chamber and thank the Treasurer of today for a responsible budget that not only delivers for my electorate but, more importantly, delivers a foundation for my children that begins the recovery from years of Labor waste.

 **Dr FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (11.56 am): There is some great news for Moggill in this budget despite it being framed in the shadow of Labor's massive debt and deficit. Kenmore State High School, one of our finest state high schools in Queensland but which is busting at the seams, received \$3 million to build a new classroom block and facilities to help it cope with its burgeoning size. Schools have received up to \$160,000 for maintenance backlogs. This meant that a number of schools including Kenmore State School, Moggill State School, Mount Crosby State School, the Pullenvale Environmental Education Centre and the Upper Brookfield State School have completely cleared their backlogs. Another five schools have received \$160,000: Brookfield State School, Chapel Hill State School, Kenmore South State School, Kenmore State High School and Pullenvale State School. This has been a wonderful initiative. I well remember walking around Chapel Hill State School and hearing about the trip hazards, the dangers and the unfenced waterway. I am glad to see these maintenance issues addressed.

People in Moggill depend heavily on bus transport. The halving of Labor's fare increases means a saving of some \$300 per year for every one of those commuters, and 6,000 people a day use the 444 bus service alone. There has also been a tripling of funding for the Get in the Game support for local sports clubs. We have a number of terrific local sports clubs such as the Kenmore Bears that do a great job for the young people of our area. This will help families afford for their children to participate.

There is also \$26.5 million for koala protection. We have some wonderful environmental groups within the Moggill electorate with intelligent, well-informed and sensible people in organisations like REPA and THECA, and we also have the Moggill Koala Hospital. Koala protection and the environment are things that people in my community hold very high, and I am very pleased to see the government investing this much money in difficult financial times. For the people of Queensland there has been the largest injection of funds for disability care that this state has ever seen as we sign up to the disability care system formerly known as NDIS.

I would remind people about the reintroduction of the stamp duty concession when you buy your own home. Under the previous Labor government, this state could not even afford to allow people a stamp duty concession when they bought their principal place of residence. That was a shameful decision which we have reversed. The Newman government has abolished the waste tax which was hitting small business and removed the ridiculous sustainability declaration that wasted everybody's time whenever they did a real estate transaction.

Kenmore State High School has benefited significantly by its acceptance into the independent public school scheme, a policy which I am very proud to have had a part in preparing prior to last year's election.

In Australia and overseas there are macro picture matters with which I am concerned and I know the Treasurer is as well. One of the domestic issues is electricity prices. This is a very serious issue. As so many people have said, it impacts dramatically on the cost of living. It also does something else that is very important to this state: it damages our competitiveness with the rest of the world. The Queensland company Incitec Pivot have just put aside \$850 million to build a fertiliser plant which converts natural gas into fertiliser. Are they building the fertiliser plant in Queensland? No. They are building it in the United States for the express public reason that gas is so much cheaper in the United States. Who would ever think we would see energy-intensive industries relocating out of Queensland because we cannot compete with the US?

The comparison between electricity and toll roads is striking. The costs in both are largely in the fixed overheads to provide the network. It is not the electrons or each car that goes through; it is the fixed overheads which are there regardless of how much traffic or how much electricity is used. As more and more people cut their use of electricity—and this has perhaps been the overlooked factor in this discussion—it will still cost as much to provide the remaining electricity. As people substitute with solar power, as storage technologies improve for solar devices, and as the cost of power drives a change in people's behaviour away from grid electricity, the volume of electricity sales will be put under pressure. When you add to this the hundreds of dollars a year it will cost for each consumer to pay for the carbon tax and for green schemes, we have a disaster in the making for a state built on plentiful, cheap power. However, when a government makes a commitment to its people such as the 44 cent feed-in tariff—ill-thought out as that proposal was—people have a right to expect the government will keep its word. It is a contract between them.

Moggill residents strongly welcome the iron-clad guarantee from Minister McArdle that the feed-in tariff will stay, and it is important that the government honours that commitment. In the long term, the cost will diminish as properties with solar energy change hands. In this day and age, with cheaper solar panels and the much higher cost of electricity, solar energy will pay for itself without the need for some customers to subsidise other customers or for the government to subsidise everybody. Solar power is here to stay and it will grow in use, particularly as power prices escalate. The Treasurer is well aware that he is facing this challenge, and he is working very hard with the minister and cabinet to address this very serious threat to the competitiveness of our state.

I wish to say a bit more about the macro picture. We are facing a massive debt hangover in this state. Our budget numbers are predicted on reasonable global growth with our trading partners. These are matters which are not directly under our control, but there are threats on the macro scene around the world. We have a massive global printing of money. Japan is doubling the amount of money in circulation over a 24-month period. That is a mind-blowing amount of money. The US is printing \$85 billion worth of new money a month. As we have struggled with other issues globally we have not yet paid the piper for this massive printing of money around the world, but we will one day pay the piper for this printing of money.

The second global issue is the massive sovereign debt which has, as the Treasurer explained this morning, brought forward demand and growth, but it must be paid for later. When you pay back that debt or when your income is sapped—as it has been for the Queensland government—by billions of dollars in interest being paid out, and in many cases paid even out of our country, then you contract. There is no other way around it. You have less income to spend when you are paying down debt or paying an ever-growing interest bill, as is happening in the state of Queensland.

The other unknown is whether China may have overbuilt its infrastructure and dwellings, and that is something that only time will tell. The other global threat is the tight credit environment. It is the tightest that I personally have ever seen, and it is probably the tightest credit environment in the post-war world. That is why in Queensland we have to be smart, and we have to make a deliberate decision to foster competitiveness in this state. Look at the growth figures in the budget: six per cent growth for Queensland next year in 2013-14 as a result of the commencement of LNG exports. But there are some threats to that industry. There is certainly a chill wind blowing through the resources sector. Fortunately, energy resources are faring better, but the Americans have approved the export of liquefied gas. They are building a terminal in Texas and offering gas contracts worldwide at a cheaper price than will come out of Curtis Island.

We need to be vigilant about our competitiveness. Previous downturns in the resource sector have hurt this country, but an impending downturn in resources will do so much more. Why? For 22 consecutive months manufacturing has declined in this country. In 2006, over 50 per cent of our exports were manufactured; in 2011, that was down to 34.4. In the same period mining had risen from 36.85 to a whopping 55.4 per cent. We are much more vulnerable to a downturn. Much of this is beyond our control, but what is not beyond our control is to foster competitiveness. We must do better in that area, or we will risk losing hundreds of millions of dollars more on another ratings downgrade.


If you think these macro issues do not affect you, you should think again. It is only by getting these things right that we can afford things like the NDIS, education or health. Luckily, Queenslanders elected a government that actually gets this and has taken some tough decisions as a result. No doubt it will have to take some more. So often a Liberal or a Liberal National Party government is left to do this. Federally the Gillard government has squandered the good years and wasted, and wasted and wasted more. Most disturbingly, it has abandoned efforts to make this country competitive.

Finally, there are a number of things Moggill desperately needs. We understand that because of the financial position some things will have to wait, but these will be my priorities: first and foremost, a Kenmore bypass, which is the only way we will deal with traffic congestion, get dedicated public transport and a desperately needed safe cycle link to Brisbane.

Under Labor, the development of the Health payroll system wasted the equivalent of 2½ Kenmore bypasses, a shared services initiative wasted the equivalent of one Kenmore bypass, a Traveston Dam proposal wasted the equivalent of one Kenmore bypass, a recycled water scheme wasted the equivalent of three Kenmore bypasses, a desalination scheme wasted the equivalent of more than two Kenmore bypasses, and the loss of the AAA credit rating cost us the equivalent of one Kenmore bypass. This is waste on a grand scale that we cannot afford.

I am greatly appreciative of a major road safety upgrade to Kangaroo Gully Road. That has been wonderful. I thank the Minister for Main Roads for that. We will continue to push for some lights at the Grandview Road-Moggill Road intersection and a park-and-ride at that intersection. That is a high priority in my electorate to improve both safety and transport.

Finally, I congratulate the Treasurer, Mr Nicholls, for making the very best of the mess left behind by Labor and, importantly, not playing political spin games with something that is so vital to our constituents and our citizens.

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (12.10 pm): I start by continuing with the theme the honourable member for Moggill finished with. That is, I acknowledge the extraordinarily hard work, diligence and application of Treasurer Nicholls in framing this budget and arresting the decline of Queensland's financial position in the budgetary context. Indeed, the Treasurer has shown the aptitude and capability to apply himself to addressing significant issues for the Queensland budget which have carried on as a consequence of years of lack of financial due diligence from the Labor Party in government in Queensland. The commentators themselves admit that fact. They admit that our Treasurer has been able to achieve what other governments and other Treasurers have only dreamt of being able to achieve.

It is quite extraordinary in the context of the modern world that a Treasurer has been able to put such downward pressure on recurrent expenditure that Queensland's recurrent expenditure this financial year has increased by less than one per cent. That is absolutely amazing. Through the guidance, application and very clear direction set by the Treasurer we have been able to achieve an enhancement of service delivery in Queensland.

Under the stewardship of this Treasurer we have completely recalibrated the way government does its finances in Queensland. We have moved away from an inputs basis to an outcomes basis—to the government being an enabler rather than a provider. That is fundamentally important. If a government simply measures its contribution and achievements by how much money it spends and how many people it employs, it will never achieve the outcomes the people of Queensland want in terms of service delivery, the efficiency of government or even the ability of government to grow the economy.

Why is it that some people on the other side of the House have a belief that the public sector lives in some sort of parallel universe, so far removed from reality that it does not have to exercise fiscal restraint, that it does not have to respond to a tightening of government revenues, that it does not have to respond to the pressures that the private sector and households have to deal with every day of the week? Businesses and households in Queensland routinely tighten their belts in order to ensure they can deliver better outcomes for the resources they have available to them. But in Labor's parallel universe they do not do that. They borrow more, they tax more or they sell more.

I think it is quite remarkable that our Treasurer is now able to project a debt in Queensland \$5 billion less than the projection of the previous government and, significantly, up to \$20 billion less than the projected potential debt level contained in the Commission of Audit. No-one should undersell that in any way whatsoever.

Health is a classic example of how, when you move from an inputs basis to an outcomes basis, you can get more results and better outcomes with the resources available. I will give a couple of examples. In terms of emergency department performance, towards the end of last year, before we put our reforms in place, an average of only 64 per cent of patients were seen within four hours. Six months later, 75 per cent of patients presenting to emergency departments in Queensland are being seen within four hours—and that number is increasing. That has nothing to do with additional resources; this is all about smart thinking. It is about clinical engagement, innovation and productivity. Indeed, over that time we have been able to free up the equivalent of 86 emergency bays in our hospitals around Queensland. That puts off the capital expenditure obligation. That ensures we have more and better utilisation of our resources. Not only have we banned bypass; we have less ambulance ramping and more efficient utilisation of our hospital and health services in Queensland.

In the face of the most desperate, extraordinary and vicious privations from the Commonwealth government in November of last year, when they ruthlessly clawed back \$103 million midyear, our hospital and health services had to make some very tough decisions. Not only did they make those decisions; at the end of this financial year they will have delivered more activity in the area of surgery and services than they were contracted to deliver in their service level agreements. That is by acting smarter and doing things differently. That is a consequence of clinical engagement and a

consequence of political redesign. It is also a consequence of local area management and good budgetary processes with regard to delivering the extraordinary amount of funds which the government in Queensland, courtesy of the Treasurer, allocates to the health department.

Last year we had to flatten the growth in expenditure in Health in Queensland. It was completely and absolutely unsustainable. The Commission of Audit pointed it out so well when it indicated that over the last five or six years of the outgoing Labor government expenditure in health care in Queensland increased by almost 50 per cent while activity—that is, the benefit to the patients in additional services—went up by 17 per cent. So we had a complete disconnect and a growing rift between the amount of money spent and the provision of additional services. The providers of the services were getting the money; the potential recipients of the services did not benefit from additional activity or outcomes. We have to ensure that our expenditure, now and in the future, delivers an increase in activity.

Now we have a more sustainable level of health funding in Queensland which is more in line with our growth in gross state product and our projected future economic growth. That is the only way we will be able to deliver the health care people want in the future. I can assure the House that I, my assistant minister and our department and HHSs will work even harder to get better value for the health dollar in Queensland. It is a shifting and a completely changed paradigm. It is now about contestability, with the option of outsourcing. It is about engagement with the private, not-for-profit and community sector in delivering new services in the future.

Additional public health services that will be invested in by the Newman government in Queensland will be delivered in a different way. No-one should be surprised about that, because the average patient in the community does not really care as long as the waiting list is reasonable and they get their service on time. That is the most important consideration for them.

There were a number of serious considerations for us in the crafting of this year's budget. We still have to deal with the monstrosity of the Health payroll, which was left to us like a stinking legacy by the previous Labor government. Over the next four years, it will munch \$384 million out of money which could have otherwise been spent on front-line services. Again, I pay tribute to the Treasurer, who has indicated that that should not come out of the Health budget but that they will contribute that. Mind you, it would have been great to have the money in order to provide new services so that we do not have to find that within. This year, the unfunded component which is now being funded by the Treasurer is \$124 million. Just imagine how many nurses, doctors and operations that could buy.

We have also had to deal with the ongoing issues of the fake Tahitian prince. That money will be allocated back to the department in Queensland—that is, the \$12 million that has been raised as a consequence of the sale of those assets will be made available as additional services in Queensland Health. That money will come back to fund services in the area of additional breast screening, Quitline, additional research and good public health campaigns. I again thank the Treasurer for agreeing that that money can go directly back into the Health budget in Queensland.

There are a number of remarkable improvements in this year's budget. A real and serious commitment of this government has been to address what is a growing and significant problem with outstanding cochlear implants in Queensland. Indeed, 120 patients are on the waiting list—adults or adolescents—for cochlear implants. This year's budget allocation of \$5.8 million will completely clear the waiting list for adult and adolescents in Queensland. On top of that, through corporate office savings of \$2 million, there will be 22 operations given to children on public waiting lists to actually completely clear the public waiting list for children awaiting surgery in this state. This will allow us to address the outstanding waiting list for cochlear implants and get it to a more manageable basis for the future. Again, as honourable members can see, this is another dividend which is being paid by savings in corporate office overheads. I make no apologies for the fact that in the last 12 months we have reduced the size of the corporate office of Queensland Health by almost 50 per cent. We should not be employing people for the sake of employing people in bureaucratic positions. And guess what? The department works better than it ever, ever worked before. Anyone who believes that just employing people means better outcomes needs to look no further than Health and the reforms of this government.

I also want to mention some of the other highlights. Before I do that, I want to commend our hospital and health services because, through their hard work and diligence, they have been able to identify \$80 million worth of community dividends that they are going to repay to their communities in the area of cutting the waiting list to get on the waiting list, in the area of additional surgery and in the area of investment in outstanding capital works in their areas that were never addressed under the

previous government, including the \$1.1 million in Stanthorpe in my electorate for an upgraded maternity unit. That has come about as a consequence of the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service not only meeting all of its targets set for it this year but through its own frugal savings which has identified \$6 million. Some of that went to the maternity unit upgrade in my electorate. Other funds went to assisting with upgrades in Kingaroy and \$3 million in elective surgery waiting list reductions. This is what we are seeing, because the Treasurer has agreed, as has the Premier, that if our hospital and health services in Queensland meet their key performance indicators and meet their contracted activities they can keep any savings and reinvest them in their communities. This is a far cry from Labor, which never had savings. Indeed, in the previous year of the last Labor government, it had \$300 million of deficit which Treasury threw more money at. When I took over as minister, there was another projected \$140 million deficit with four months to go which we were able to address.


Turning now to particular things of interest in Health, there is \$28.3 million over four years for additional Hospital in the Home services. We know Hospital in the Home can importantly reduce the impact on our hospital budget in this state because we can see people in their own homes. They are in a more comfortable environment and in many ways they get far better outcomes because it reduces the rate of a hospital based infection and keeps them in their own environment. Importantly, this additional funding will be delivered by the community, not-for-profit and private sector, so we are creating jobs in the public health area in the community as well.

There is \$30.9 million over four years to establish a rural telehealth service, which is vitally important. There is an extraordinary network of telehealth backbone which has been laid down in Queensland, and I give some degree of credit to the previous government for that. However, we have never seen an appropriate uptake of that. There has never been a culture of utilisation of telehealth in Queensland beyond superspecialisation or major incidents. It needs to become an embedded part of the culture of running health care in Queensland because it is an important initiative. There is also \$51.9 million over four years to revitalise regional, rural and remote services. This is very important to assist with the new ways of delivering health care in this state in rural areas with regard to ambulatory services and the running of new hospitals. As an example, let us look at the amazing achievement between the hospital and health board in Central Queensland and the Moura community. They came up with an outstanding solution which provides a more sustainable way of being able to deliver a community hospital and a new facility which will be built there attached to the primary care clinic and will deliver health care in rural areas of Queensland in a different way. I pay tribute to that community for the way that it has been productive and proactive in those discussions. That will become an exemplar and a template for what we need to do around the rest of Queensland.

There is also funding for rural mental health workshops in drought declared areas and, as I mentioned a moment ago, there is the issue of unfortunately having to allocate more money that could have gone into health care to just keep the payroll system going. There is an additional \$147 million over four years to address the backlog of maintenance in Queensland Health facilities which was not dealt with by the previous Labor government but identified again in the Commission of Audit report. That will also be supplemented by another \$180 million from within Queensland Health to ensure that we deal with that backlog of almost \$330 million over four years to address maintenance. Again, there has been hard work of Queensland Health employees, central office and also our hospital and health services to liberate available funding to complement the new funding from the Treasurer in order to address outstanding issues in those hospitals so they are safe and appropriate. We will then need to look at how we rebuild some of those facilities in the future, and more and different ways need to be embarked upon to do that such as engaging with the private and not-for-profit sector to deliver them and possibly even bundling them to allow the market to construct them and for us to put the doctors and nurses in to run them. There are also funds for the replacement of the elevator systems at the Toowoomba and Cairns base hospitals, upgrades to air conditioning at the Kirwan mental health unit and it goes on and on and on and on.

Again, this is a government that is serious about getting the basics right. This is a government that is serious about ensuring that taxpayers are respected, that every single bit of taxpayers' money, which is a privilege for the government to be given and accrued on the community's behalf, is consciously spent in a frugal way which ensures it gets the results that make a difference for the people of Queensland. That is something that we do and that is something which is a polar difference between us and the Labor Party, which has a profligate view that the taxpayer can be milked dry, that everything can be sold, that everything can be borrowed and it will be all better because you spend more money. We will have a sustainable health system that delivers for the people of Queensland.

I am also very encouraged by what we are seeing coming through the budget, particularly in relation to my electorate and other rural areas around Queensland—that is, the hard work that this government is doing to repay the support of people in those areas and ensuring that services that need to be invested in—whether it be primary industries, roads and a whole range of other essential areas—are properly catered for in this budget. This is a government that is serious. It is about the basics. It is about respecting taxpayers and getting the services right, and it has done that. I commend the Treasurer for what has been an extraordinary document which he has put forward which frames the future of Queensland well in a financial context.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (12.28 pm): It is my absolute privilege to rise today to speak on the Appropriation Bill introduced by the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls. Politics is all about getting the mix right between a reformist program and not trying to do too much overnight, as you need to take the people with you. This second Newman government budget does just that and consolidates the fiscal repair task undertaken last year. As the member for Chatsworth and the Assistant Minister for Public Transport, I am deeply honoured to be a part of the reformist Newman government—a government that is still cleaning up the mess after 20 years of financial mismanagement under the helms of captains Beattie, Bligh and their fellow comrade Andrew Fraser.

Rome was not built in a day. Hence, after years of fiscal neglect and financial irresponsibility under the Labor Party, it was always going to be a long, hard road to get our state's finances back on track. Along with most fair-minded people, I truly believe that some short-term pain is indeed worth it for the long-term gain. The measures that we undertake in this budget will deliver for not only us but also our future generations. As I have mentioned previously in this House, I am the proud father of two boys who should not shoulder the burden of irresponsible current debt for future generations. It is manifestly unfair that the economic incompetence of the past state Labor government should be paid for by our most precious asset, our children.

However, not only do we need to get the budget back in the black, there is a burning need to make our great state resilient. As we are all too aware, Mother Nature has hit this great state extremely hard, with the financial cost of the natural disasters in January 2013 expected to reach \$2.5 billion, not to mention the emotional cost that those natural disasters have had on many fine Queenslanders. Although the Chatsworth electorate suffered minor damage from the natural disasters in comparison to other affected parts of the state, the financial burden is truly felt by all, as we work together rebuilding essential infrastructure and communities.

As I mentioned earlier, I am honoured to be part of a reformist government that is committed to growing our economy, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient in the future. As a former businessman, I agree wholeheartedly that the Queensland government should be pro growth. In fact, I am glad that the Treasurer has mentioned that we are unashamedly pro growth. Small business is the undeniable engine room of our economy in concert with our large companies in the mining, agricultural, tourism and construction industries. Business and economic growth are the vital strands of the LNP's DNA. Unlike those Fabian socialists opposite, we get it. Without sensible economic growth and management, pragmatic service delivery, which is the cornerstone function of state governments, cannot be fulfilled. I can only imagine that the term 'pro growth' is making the members of the ALP opposite shudder—or maybe I should explain the term, because it is evident from their term in office that they did not quite get the concept.

Rather than pointing out the failings of the previous failed Labor government, now reduced to a paltry seven members, let us get down to business and see how the residents of my Chatsworth electorate will benefit from the LNP's second budget. In the state budget of 2013-14, we have seen a 4.5 per cent increase in the Health budget to \$12.3 billion. This is an extra \$532.7 million to ensure that we are delivering the best possible front-line services as part of our healthcare system. As part of our commitment to improving health services, this budget includes a \$1.7 billion investment in health infrastructure. The Newman government has also allocated \$327 million to the health maintenance backlog program. I am pleased to say that the Hospital in the Home program will receive \$28.3 million, making it possible for residents of the Chatsworth electorate to access this important service if required. This budget will also deliver an expansion of the fantastic Mums and Bubs initiative, which was an LNP election commitment.

Having a functional health system, along with a world-class education system, is essential to my electorate. The Newman government understands the importance of a good education for our children; therefore, we have increased the education budget by 6.6 per cent to \$11.4 billion. This \$707.4 increase will have real benefits for school students throughout the Chatsworth electorate. As part of the education budget, \$537 million has been allocated to the Great Teachers = Great Results

program, which will see 724 new teachers and support staff. This government has also put aside \$100 million for the Fixing Our Schools Fund, because we know that an investment in education is indeed an investment in all of our collective futures. Over the past year, schools in the Chatsworth electorate benefited from up to \$160,000 to ensure that essential maintenance was attended to. As I mentioned in my previous budget reply speech, this government has allowed schools to become empowered to look after their own needs and wants. It is all about choice and freedom—great liberal values that I hold dear. The Chatsworth electorate is a growth area; therefore, I am pleased to announce that this budget has delivered \$910,000 for stage 1 of the master plan for Gumdale State School. This master plan will be an important milestone for this expanding school, ensuring that extra classrooms are built for the school's growing student population.

The LNP takes law and order seriously. That is why it has increased law and order funding by a further \$129.6 million to \$4.1 billion. This increase in funding will ensure that 267 additional police are on the beat. Also, \$1 million will be committed to ensure that front-line community crime prevention services, such as Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, continue their revitalisation and great work for all of our communities.

It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of the LNP's second budget since being elected on 24 March last year. I have seen firsthand the incredible changes that the Newman government has been able to achieve. Community groups in my Chatsworth electorate have received significant funds from the Caring for our Community grants to continue their important work in their local areas. For example, the Men's Shed at Carina received a grant that will go towards an extension of their shed. The Camp Hill Carina Welfare Association also received a grant towards its worthwhile activities. As Assistant Minister for Public Transport, it is particularly gratifying that we will again honour our election commitment to halve Labor's proposed 15 per cent annual increase in public transport fares and will allocate money for Carindale bus interchange improvements.


The Newman government has truly lived up to its promise that it will work for all Queenslanders. This second Newman government budget sets a strong foundation for Queensland to become more resilient and to grow and prosper in the future. We are continuing to build a strong economy based on our four pillars of tourism, resources, construction and agriculture. Despite the protestations of those neophytes opposite, we are easing the cost of living and, most importantly, delivering better and resilient infrastructure that will stand the test of time.

What did those economic tyros opposite do to relieve the cost-of-living pressures in the last couple of years of their failed time in office? They abolished the fuel subsidy, breaking an election commitment; introduced a waste tax; increased motor vehicle stamp duty; increased car registration; created a \$3 billion tax for the majority of households through the Solar Bonus Scheme, expected to cost a typical household \$276 in the 2015-16 year; and who could forget they supported a carbon tax, which contributes about \$109 to the typical residential customer's electricity bill for this year? When it comes to hypocrisy, the state Labor Party knows no bounds.

This week, the Treasurer has presented another responsible budget that will ensure that front-line services are efficient and effective. We will continue to be accountable and upfront with the people of Queensland. This budget proves again that we are committed to Queenslanders' best interests, not only in the electorate of Chatsworth that I am privileged to serve but also throughout this magnificent state.

Last September when outlining our first budget the Treasurer said that it was the most important budget in a generation. This year's budget builds on the strong foundation of the previous budget. I commend the Treasurer and his office and Treasury officials for their efforts in preparing a responsible budget. Refreshingly, spin and smoke and mirrors is replaced with a no-frills continuation of the great gains that were made last year in an effort to provide an ongoing platform of recovery for our balance sheet. Our future generations deserve no less.

Queensland is a great state to live and work. This budget ensures that Queensland will remain a great state with great opportunity. I again take this opportunity to congratulate the Treasurer, his staff, and everyone involved in putting together this essential follow-up budget to last year's most important budget for a generation. Of all the people who are present in this House today, I am delighted that the Treasurer is here to hear this small contribution from the people of the Chatsworth electorate, who I know from visiting many of them subsequently to last year's budget being introduced know all too well that this follow-up second budget is the one that will lay the foundation and provide the platform for the economic prosperity that will surely come our way. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (12.38 pm): The Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing supports the government's fiscal policy objectives, through managing protected areas to enable sustainable use now and into the future, encouraging active participation in sport and recreation and ensuring the integrity of the racing industry right across this great state of Queensland. My department manages 12.5 million hectares of protected area estate in Queensland and offers a wide range of visitor experiences. We manage more than 30,000 kilometres of roads and fire-control lines, 2,000 kilometres of walking tracks, 470 camping areas, 330 administrative buildings, 200 day-use facilities and 150 work bases.

I am very pleased to announce that this year we will invest \$25.8 million in our national parks capital works program as the Newman government continues to provide greater ecotourism opportunities for all Queensland residents and visitors to enjoy. This will include \$6.3 million towards improving visitor access and \$2.2 million for upgrades to some of our most popular visitor centres at Carnarvon National Park, Mon Repos in Bundaberg, the David Fleay Wildlife Park on the Gold Coast and Walkabout Creek in Brisbane. The Newman government is clearly focused on providing greater ecotourism opportunities for all Queensland residents and visitors to enjoy.

I remind the House that the former Labor government locked up huge parcels of land in a bid to reach a percentage target, which had nothing to do with land quality, in a desperate attempt to lock in Greens preferences. Thanks to Labor, our national park estates now include land which houses dairies, wineries, as well as sporting fields where children need to get an activity permit to go and play a game of cricket. This locked-up land has been allowed to become overrun with weeds and pest animals which have reached plague proportions in some areas. This is why we have undertaken a scientific review of all 12.5 million hectares of land within national park estates which will result in higher protection and proper management of our pristine natural areas. This year my department will facilitate ecotourism opportunities in national parks and deliver key actions in the Queensland government's ecotourism plan to contribute to the government's key focus on tourism and the 2012 Destination Q outcomes. Our vision is to make Queensland a world leader in ecotourism by the year 2020 as the Newman government continues to grow our four-pillar economy and get Queensland back on track. The future of ecotourism in Queensland will be guided by ecological, responsible and sustainable practices. National parks and protected areas have a big role to play in ecotourism, and this government is committed to improving the environmental integrity of these unique areas while enriching the visitor experience.

Ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald tracked inland down much of Queensland's east coast between 24 and 28 January 2013, impacting on 266 national parks and other protected areas with gale force winds, intense rainfall and flooding that coincided with very high tides causing significant erosion. Queensland's protected area estate sustained large scale damage to both natural and cultural heritage, built assets including roads, trails, walking tracks and recreational facilities. Our hardworking QPWS staff focused initial recovery efforts on reopening popular high-visitation parks, roads, camping and visitor facilities, and clearing and repairing roads and walking tracks and networks from fallen trees and extensive landslips. Priority was given to iconic, high-profile protected areas, in particular areas with high visitation and significant commercial tour operator value in our efforts to support local business, community and the tourism industry on the road to recovery. By 31 May 2013, all but two of the 266 protected areas affected were reopened. These efforts assisted in economic recovery and community redevelopment, vital to the recovery of regional and rural communities.

Whilst numerous QPWS staff were involved in recovery operations across the state, some QPWS teams exceeded all expectations and deserve a special mention, including the Bundaberg, Mon Repos and Lamington management units. These management units demonstrated outstanding performance in difficult conditions, providing support, services and assistance to some of the hardest hit regional businesses and communities before turning their attention to reopening the protected area estate. The combined efforts of these management units has resulted in enhanced communication and stronger community relationships with regional Queenslanders by achieving positive outcomes for QPWS, our neighbours, stakeholders and regional communities. I thank all those involved for their outstanding efforts. On behalf of the Queensland government I say to each and every one of them that we greatly appreciate them.

The Queensland government's \$110 million Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme provides infrastructure investment across the state's racing industry. This investment in racing infrastructure will provide the industry with quality facilities to deliver a first-class product, which is


vitaly important for the future growth of the industry in Queensland. In 2013-14, the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme funding has been budgeted at \$35.1 million. This funding includes \$4.6 million towards finalising phase 1 of the Gold Coast Turf Club's \$35.4 million redevelopment, which includes the upgrade of members' facilities and the construction of a new equine swimming pool, and \$2.7 million towards the Toowoomba Turf Club's \$6.9 million new racing surface. This program is funded by redirecting 50 per cent of wagering tax and is just part of a range of sweeping reforms to put the industry on a stronger footing for the future. The previous Racing Industry Infrastructure Plan saw commitments made to a large number of developments across Queensland; however, this government was not convinced the money was being spent in a way which would deliver the greatest benefits for the industry. Racing Queensland was asked to review the plan and prioritise those projects to ensure the best value for government funding from the Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme.

Last month I announced that the Newman government would triple its funding for its flagship Get in the Game programs over three years from \$16 million to \$47.8 million to support grassroots sport and recreation across Queensland. Get in the Game has been a resounding success. The first round of the Get Started program was fully subscribed, with 12,000 vouchers of up to \$150 issued to help young people who can least afford it with the costs of membership and participation fees at a registered club. Through the Get Going initiative, 475 sporting and recreation organisations, ranging from cricket and AFL through to tennis and dirt bike clubs, received grants of up to \$10,000 for equipment and activities to increase and sustain memberships. Through the Get Playing initiative, 83 sporting and recreation organisations, ranging from rugby league and hockey through to BMX and pony clubs, received grants of up to \$100,000 to improve their infrastructure and facilities.

When this program was first announced, it was estimated over the life of the scheme it would provide around 40,000 grants of up to \$150 for kids to join clubs, 200 grants of \$10,000 for clubs to purchase equipment and 80 grants of \$100,000 for clubs to renew facilities. Through this budget initiative, the original number of grants for the three-year period will now be available each and every year, meaning that there will be 40,000 grants of \$150, 200 grants of \$10,000 and 100 grants of \$100,000 each and every year. This initiative is all about getting kids from Cooktown to Coolangatta out on the paddock. This why we have allocated \$23.1 million this year towards Get in the Game to support sport and recreation at the grassroots level.

The budget that the Treasurer delivered on Tuesday balances cost savings with responsible investment in national parks infrastructure, grassroots sport and recreation participation opportunities and a commitment to revitalise Queensland's racing industry. This will ensure that my department's ongoing objective to improve access to national parks and forests, generate greater participation in sport and recreation and rejuvenate the state's racing industry remains front and centre of our efforts. This budget is a demonstration of our commitment to fix the state's finances and grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we remain a great state with great opportunities.

I need to thank a great Treasurer—probably the best this state will see in a long time—and to mention the cabinet and every single LNP member of this parliament. We could not have got to the position we are in today without each and every single one of them doing the hard yards and communicating the message to their constituents. We are a united party that will deliver on behalf of all Queenslanders. Treasurer, you did a great job!

 **Mr KEMPTON** (Cook—LNP) (12.48 pm): There is a fundamental trap for new players in any business. It is the Friday night syndrome. How many times do we hear of business owners who see a till full of cash at closing time on Friday and, thinking they are doing well, grab a handful to spend up over the weekend. Why not? They have worked hard for it and it is their money. However, come Monday the bills arrive and the business owner pays them from the overdraft. Come Thursday the wages are due and again the business owner pays them from the overdraft. Come Friday the cycle starts all over again. It does not take a genius to work out where this business is headed. Andrew Fraser must have been a genius because that is exactly what he did to Queensland.

Another fundamental of any economy is as old as the abacus, that is, the triple bottom line. Responsible fiscal management means expenditure must be balanced between the economy, the environment and society. That is another fundamental that was lost on Andrew Fraser. He spent and spent on ill-conceived environmental initiatives to keep his green mates happy. He spent and spent on unfunded social and employment programs to keep his union mates happy. Andrew Fraser and Labor left the economy to chance. It is a testimony to the resilience of our great state that we survived for as long as we did.

By stark contrast—in fact, there is no comparison—our Treasurer has set about repaying the huge debt left by Labor, rebuilding our economy and restoring the faith of Queenslanders and those who do business with us. That task was made infinitely more difficult as our government grappled with a health system in tatters, the loss of our AAA credit rating, the erosion of infrastructure, the neglect of our hospitals, schools and roads, soaring power prices and the list goes on. The Treasurer is steering a responsible course to recovery and has tied our future to growth, rebuilding and resilience. This budget was delivered by the Treasurer in the shadow of escalating debt, which is a legacy of the previous government, declining revenue from mining royalties and a lower than expected return on GST. The government has also had to factor in \$15.8 billion, which is the estimated cost of natural disasters in recent years.


Many Queenslanders have no experience of a government that puts the people first, makes the tough decisions and stands up and tells people if the forecasts and estimates cannot be met. The people of Queensland deserve that respect. The 2013 budget contains no surprises, and nor should it. In fact, the more predictable the budget the more comfortable Queenslanders will be with their government, as they know we are doing what we promised and are getting on with the job. Queenslanders had the living daylighters scared out of them by the fiscal mess left by Labor. The election result of 2012 could not be more evident of this fact.

Our government has not put all its eggs in the resources basket, but rather has identified four strong and reliable pillars upon which to build our future. One of those pillars is agriculture, which is a topic dear to my heart. For 20 years I fought against the green Labor attack on the pastoral industry in Queensland, the erosion of the rights of our farmers, the handing over of land management to the EPA, the Vegetation Management Act, the regional forest agreement, the east coast wilderness zone, national park expansion programs, the Water Act, the Wild Rivers Act, the Delbessie Agreement and many other debacles. The fundamental of any successful primary industry is security of tenure and access to resources and markets. In just 12 months our government has brought about huge reforms in tenure, vegetation management, water management and the removal of red tape. Support for our pastoral industry is music to my ears, and that that support has been reflected in this budget makes the tune sound even sweeter. More and more I hear of hope in the bush where there was only despair under Labor. Mine may be the most distant electorate in Queensland and the most remote, but I am confident that my electorate has not been forgotten. My constituents appreciate that many of the services they receive are in fact subsidised by the south-east. However, they are also proud of the contribution that they make to the state's economy.

At a glance, the budget predicts that by 2016 the government will maintain and improve on the growth rate of 2.75 per cent, will increase employment by 2.5 per cent, will increase exports by 20 per cent, will improve trading partner growth and achieve a budget surplus. The Newman government will deliver better services to Queensland in health, education, housing services, disability services and law and order. We will improve front-line services to all Queenslanders with 155 ambulances, 724 new teachers, 267 new police officers, \$537 million spent on our Great Teachers = Great Results program, \$868 million for disability care, \$1.7 billion for health infrastructure and \$28.3 million for hospitals in the home. Regionally, our government will allocate \$30 million to mining exploration, \$5 million to fight cattle disease, \$11.2 million to drought relief, \$790 million to the Bruce Highway upgrade, \$15 million to tourism marketing, \$2 million to aviation new business, \$327 million to the health maintenance backlog, \$82.8 million to regional and remote health care and \$80 million to reef protection.

Within my electorate of Cook there has been significant spending, for example, on the Lotus Glen refurbishment, the Mareeba Fire Station, the Mareeba State High School, the Hope Vale multipurpose centre, the Napranum Civic Centre, the Wujal Wujal sports oval, the Thursday Island Police Station, and improvements to the Mulligan Highway, the Peninsula Development Road and the Bloomfield Crossing. There is also money for work on the Captain Cook Highway from Cairns to Mossman and a share of the crocodile management funds. My electorate will also share in the state-wide Indigenous housing fund of \$238 million, which is partly funded by the federal government. While there is a long way to go, I am seeing a lot more hope and confidence in the Cook electorate now than there was 18 months ago.

There will be no grabbing the cash on Friday by our government and no deals with the Greens or the unions. Queensland is in safe hands.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—UAP) (12.56 pm): This is the budget that the government convinces itself will address the circumstances that it believes will resolve the problems it faces. That said, last year the Campbell Newman government made a fatal decision to sack 14,000 public servants and

plunge the state into recession. That recession occurred at a time when the rest of the nation was still enjoying at least 0.5 per cent growth in the worst of the states. The recession was due to the collapse of public confidence and commercial confidence. In no small part, the commercial confidence was echoing the public sentiment, but was bolstered by raising royalty fees to miners at the end of a cycle-led commodity boom. That followed years of flawed Labor grand plans and borrowed capital balance sheets, which led to the change of government.


Even after that situation, we saw some amazing things happen. The miners just shut the mines, delayed expenditure, sacked staff, diverted supply to other states and focused on using contracts. If it were not for the expenditure at Gladstone on the two-train LNG plant, state growth might have totally collapsed. To hold all one's hopes on one such project is to enjoy wishful thinking, and that is what is continuing. Statistics for housing starts show they were at 10 per cent of three years previously and new capital for homes hit an historical low as a percentage of population. Suncorp, our state owned bank, told the market that it is not lending for development and it is not happy with the outcome of the flood inquiry in terms of who is to blame. Money stopped circulating.

An \$8.7 billion deficit when the projection was \$3.3 billion is the end result of hubris, blind ideological actions, impatience, inexperience and incompetence. It will forever mark what should have been the greatest opportunity for a new government to demonstrate its bona fides and capacity. Next year the deficit is predicted to be \$7.7 billion. In contrast to what was stated, that looks like a dreadful stain on ourselves as a government in the federation of Australia and we look laggard in our economic management ability. Truly, heads must roll. Irrespective of the claims of the Treasurer about it being hard to get projections right, an unexpected decline in GST, land tax and stamp duty revenues and an inability to sell the assets that the Costello report recommended, the result is an indictment on his stewardship of the economy and, by default, that of the Premier as well.

Clearly, the LNP Campbell Newman government overpromised and underdelivered. It said it would cut the cost of living and it has not done so. Sure, the future is ahead of us, but if the past year is any guide we should be very frightened—very frightened—about what this lot have planned. By consistently blaming the worsening economic conditions, the failure of public confidence to return or even the insouciant behaviour with regard to solar panel roof owners as if they are causing the problems, in Queensland we have demonstrated what we should not do when trying to mend the broken budget position that Labor created.

It must be acknowledged that sacking the public servants was wrong, selling 18 per cent of QR at \$3.30 when the market is now at \$4.20 was wrong and selling schools to land bankers is wrong, particularly when they are complaining about the impact of land tax, because reducing land tax is designed to increase property speculation. It is a natural closer on top of that. Also, if you increase land tax it will stop land banking. We do not need to do this. Why? Because we have a very low net debt position at \$37 billion and we have a second balance sheet in assets and cash, and we own it all. The super liability of that component is, at worse, \$17 billion and it has available cash of over \$20 billion. Best of all, we own 100 per cent of it. It is a sovereign wealth fund and it is called the \$78 billion QIC. Our second-tier assets, the GOCs, are carrying somewhere between \$41 billion and \$45 billion in debt and are returning between seven per cent and nine per cent. That is not bad when the official cash rate of the Commonwealth is one-third of that. Our revenues are in decline because for years we have falsely assumed that our negative state taxes—even though the Treasurer always seems to suggest that we need to increase them—are driving away businesses or, at least, driving them down. The payroll tax threshold was meant to have been raised, but unfortunately that has been delayed for another two years. Those are negative taxes and they reduce commercial activity.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

 **Dr DOUGLAS:** Those negative taxes are reducing commercial activity thereby reducing revenue to the state. Critically, the state has forgotten that its staff is its backbone. Namely medical and education staff is where our biggest part of our budget spend is. The Campbell Newman government has fought a class war of sorts with them since it came into government. Whether it is Gonski or not accepting casualisation of the nursing staff and their permanency, the Campbell Newman government uses a kind of executive contract model of service delivery.

What it fails to understand is that people—whether they are patients or students or the staff looking after those—are not widgets. Outcomes will only be achieved by pragmatic negotiation, not executive action. It is a very hard learning curve, especially for a government. It is worse when one is reliant on using outcomes to drive economic returns for one's budget. This is where the budget goes wrong in the medium term.

I heard the health minister detail his understanding of this. He completely fails to understand that making a patient demographic conform to an executive contract is an oxymoron and by inference those who ascribe to this philosophy are similarly affected. The increase in funding to Health, for example, comes off a base that was previously cut.

Honourable members, the problem we all need to confront is that the cost of living is the problem. It is a problem that needs prompt resolution. To propose solutions that only increase that, irrespective of the reasons governments of whatever persuasion confront, will mean that those governments will be rejected and by default removed. There is a clear belief in this budget therefore that the Campbell Newman government can squeeze the public even harder for money. I presume that that is due in part to many factors—desperation, higher levels of debt repayment by individuals, declining credit card debt and a refusal of people to borrow. I put it to members that they are wrong. There is no more money for failed plans of ideologically driven Premiers, Treasurers, governments or whatever. The public is furious about what happened last year in an unnecessary recession, and they are going to punish you all very severely for it.

Therefore this budget is then predicated on asset sales to redress its inherent weaknesses as the debt rises by a further 25 per cent over the next two year. It has a strong whiff of wishing and hoping with regard to the growth and controlled growth of unemployment. If growth above three per cent is not sustained and we have further floods or disasters—and these are the norms in Queensland—this is all for nought. Underemployment becomes the real problem we then face.

Sensibly this budget does confront the issue of growth of expenditure and restricts it to 0.9 per cent from those heady years of six per cent under Labor, which was the genesis of the budget problems. What is missing is the lack of a real capital spend, other than on the Sunshine Coast Hospital, that will drive commercial activity in our current circumstances, particularly when we combine both state public and private debt. That is the mismatch that is currently not being considered.

The Treasurer is trying the austerity approach and squeezing average Queenslanders for the essential utilities that they need for normal living. That austerity approach in Europe has led to massive social unrest, a massive sudden rise in unemployment—and also underemployment that preceded it—and a flight of capital or real capital loss with some sovereign failures in the case of Cyprus.

People think this cannot occur, but in fact it will happen. The error of the ideological liberal class warrior stuff against the public servant has cost us the equivalent of one full year's effective Public Service allocation for no net gain because we lost many people we needed and too few whose time had come. This is both a failure of management and a failure to pragmatically plan.

Ted Theodore, as the federal Treasurer, faced exactly this problem in his federal budget in 1929. At the time the states raised the taxes and not the Commonwealth. Members must remember that we raised the taxes and gave them to the Commonwealth. Labor would not support him and eventually the government fell. The incoming conservative government chose the Campbell Newman government approach. Unemployment rapidly rose and people actually starved. Their egos consigned the nation to much greater misery than it otherwise would have endured. Theodore subsequently formed the UAP with Joe Lyons and it subsequently went on to form government with Menzies.

The decline in revenue should be a bellwether to those in control. The public mood is currently one of repaying debt and refusing to build and continuing poor confidence in the future. They have a deep mistrust of our politicians. Critically, the decision of the Premier to wimp out on what people considered were the tough decisions in this budget so as to ensure his own re-election at an election in the next few years essentially means that next year's budget will be a kind of groundhog day and will be the end of the seeds of what led to the problems they faced at the time. The victims are all unchanged and there will be a historical record of this failure occurring at the time.


The legacy of this government and its midterm 2012-13 budget will be one of missed opportunity, interestingly enough, and a failure to confront the failures of the 2011-12 budget. That implies that the 2013-14 budget will probably bring yet more misery upon those who have a declining capacity to pay.

It was only a few years ago that we were seeking to remove stamp duty altogether. Those members who were here previously would know that that was what we were running on. We were aiming to halve it and then get rid of it totally. People really switched onto this because stamp duty is

a negative tax for those who do not realise what it is about. There is a difficulty in paying that tax. We ran that as a campaign strategy and we knew that it resonated with the community. Yet here we are with this budget and it laments the fact that the public are not paying enough. This budget even delays the lifting of the payroll tax threshold for a further two years.

In my electorate of Gaven—consistent with what occurred under Labor and now the Campbell Newman government—we have received essentially nothing. Gaven residents are taxed as heavily as everyone else. We are desperate for a new high school on the outskirts of Gaven, which would be shared by students in the Coomera and Albert electorates. But there is certainly nothing for my electorate in this budget. They really needed it. They did not need any more stadiums or things that were not going to be used for their purpose and basically solved the government's dilemma.

The reality is that these people are voters. At the next state election there will be a real awakening for members. People's patience does have a time limit. The UAP will run candidates in all 89 seats at the next election. We intend to resolve this public agony. I am stating here today that there are going to be major changes. This budget will not deliver what the government states it will do and next year they will be back doing the same thing.

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (2.38 pm): The Newman government is rebuilding Queensland. I am not just referring to the roads, water treatment plants and bridges that were wiped out earlier this year—in many cases for the second or third time in a couple of years—I am also talking about the urgent need for us to keep turning the state's ship from the rocks of debt, deficit and deceit. The budget handed down on Tuesday is a responsible and calculated one—the result of honest analysis about the economic realities we face today. Those realities have been shaped by the legacy of Labor debt, but that is not the only driver of this budget. It also addresses many of the urgent needs of regional Queensland, focusing on areas like health, education, law and order, and roads—issues that are very important to my electorate of Mundingburra.

More than two-thirds of the money set aside in the 2013-14 Queensland budget for capital expenditure will be spent outside of Brisbane. That includes the \$24 million for flood mitigation works that will fully fund the raising of Blakey's Crossing, a major traffic black hole in my city that floods after every heavy downfall and throws the surrounding network into chaos. It is delightful to have the Minister for Transport and Main Roads here today because he knows how important that road is as a major connector for my city. Whilst it is a council road, fully funded by the council, it would have been hypocritical of me to change my tune when I came into this place after campaigning for nearly a decade to have that road funded by the state. Why? Because when that road is cut it puts huge pressure on our state controlled roads, and what that means is that our network simply cannot handle it with that capacity gone. Nearly \$38 million has been flagged this year to realign the Bruce Highway between Ayr and Townsville, jointly funded with the federal government. Overall, over \$150 million has been allocated for the Bruce Highway, which meets the LNP election commitment.

I also want to talk about some of the local intersections that will be upgraded this calendar year, and they are very important intersections. I mentioned Blakey's Crossing. These are the roads that feel the pressure when Blakey's is out. I always say that when Blakey's Crossing is closed it gives us a snapshot of where we were headed under the previous government when you do not build infrastructure ahead of the game in regional Queensland. You must build infrastructure ahead of the game otherwise you are constantly chasing your tail and, quite frankly, you will never catch up. The Dalrymple Road and Banfield Drive intersection and the Woolcock Street and Mather Street intersection are key intersections, and the fact that that work will be conducted in the next 12 months makes me very, very pleased. There is some unfinished business in my electorate, and I intend to push very hard. Again, it is great to have the minister here. There is unfinished business and I intend to make sure that that gets done in the years ahead.

In the area of health, the Townsville Hospital will get nearly \$90 million to continue redevelopment work. The hard work of the local board—and I pay tribute to all on that board including its chairman, John Bearne—is starting to pay dividends, with money to be spent on front-line services rather than back-of-house administration. As Townsville's population marches towards 200,000, it is essential that we have a hospital that is both physically capable and properly staffed to meet those challenges. I pay tribute to every employee and every volunteer at the hospital who helped transform a monolithic, centralised bureaucracy into a local, service focused organisation.

Law and order is a major concern for the people of Townsville—a major concern—and time and time again I hear that message loud and clear in my electorate. The \$2 billion allocated to the Queensland Police Service this financial year is another step in the right direction. There has already been about a 15 per cent increase in police numbers over the past 12 months in Townsville, and that is a great start. The budget provides for more record numbers to come out of the local academy, which we are very, very proud to have in our city. That is only one of the ways we are putting the public's money to work to make them and their families safer.

The amount of \$2.4 million has been provided for the Townsville boot camp for repeat juvenile offenders. I look forward to seeing the selection panel make a recommendation to the Attorney about where that boot camp should be held. Indeed, I have to pay tribute to the attentive members for Townsville and Thuringowa, currently hanging on every word I say about our local area because it means so much to them. They know that we have to get this right. They know that we have to get a boot camp site that enables good training to be conducted to turn people's lives around. We are not after hugs and kisses. We are not after a place where they can go out the back on to an 800-square metre lawn and hang out some washing. We want somewhere where they can get their fingers dirty, where they can actually hook in and do some good and turn their lives around.

We are also helping the kids who are doing the right thing to ensure that they can lead a fulfilling life and reach their full potential. This year the Newman government will spend \$100 million as part of our Fixing Our Schools Fund. As a preview of what is to come for Mundingburra students, in the past financial year schools in my electorate were allocated \$1.43 million to fix the maintenance backlog—yet another legacy we have inherited. It is not sexy to go and repair things. It is not sexy to go and do the hard yards and do the maintenance. It is always easier to take the approach of doing things that you can cut ribbons for. But if you are not doing the nuts and bolts, ultimately your assets run down and the quality of education you give kids suffers as a result.

I want to pay tribute to four principals in my city, and they are the principals of Currajong, Bluewater, Hermit Park and Rasmussen state schools. Those four principals got together and said, 'Not only will we take the opportunity to engage directly with the private sector'—that contestability word that sends shivers up the spine of some and gives opportunity to others—'but we are going to grasp this opportunity to see if we can deliver more value for money if we pool our resources.' The result has been fantastic. They engaged a local contractor, a local architect, and they have delivered value for money in a more timely fashion than they have ever been able to do before. I pay tribute to each and every one of them for the vision they have shown.

Mr Hathaway: A 20 per cent saving.

Mr CRISAFULLI: A 20 per cent saving, as the member for Townsville informs me and I know that he is a man who gets his facts and figures right.

These are just a few examples of this government looking after those issues that really matter to people in my part of the world and making sure that we get maximum value from each dollar spent. That is part of our covenant with the people of Queensland who were let down in the past. We are determined to make sure that our spending reflects the view that it is their money—the money belongs to the hardworking men and women of this state—and we must spend it wisely.

We have been entrusted to steer this state to a better future, maintain essential services and drive the best deals we can. And that is at the heart of how we are going about rebuilding the state after the devastating floods earlier this year. Fifty-seven of the state's 73 local government areas were impacted by flooding, and I saw more destruction and heartbreak than I ever want to see again.

The cost and task of rebuilding is enormous. The state is not rolling in cash. But we had to ask the question: do we spend your money rebuilding in the same way only for it to be knocked over again when it floods the next time or is this the time to try to find a way to build stronger, more resilient communities? Of course we would dearly love to choose the latter.

When some who knew about the complex conditions that applied to flood recovery funding by the federal government said that we were dreaming and that the way the state had rebuilt in the past was the only way to do it, the Newman government pushed even harder to find a new route. We asked for \$100 million from the federal government; we were given \$40 million. We have agreed to match that \$40 million. Undeterred we are now in the process of putting that money to work so that, if a water treatment plant needs to be relocated or a road needs to be built to different specifications or a road needs to be moved or a culvert needs to be improved, we can help councils deliver what their communities deserve—smarter, long-term use of their money.

I acknowledge that \$80 million will not change the world. It will not change the way that we rebuild these communities and make them bulletproof for the future. But it is my intention to show such value for money with that \$80 million that the next time a flood or a cyclone or other act of Mother Nature occurs it will be the federal government coming to us demanding that this becomes business as usual in the way we recover, because it makes sense. The federal government funds predominantly 75 per cent of the recovery from disaster events. It is the one who benefits most from this. We are offering fifty-fifty to upgrade that infrastructure to the next level.

Overall, we have allocated \$4.2 billion in this year's budget to rebuild Queensland, and obviously over half of that is going to road reconstruction. We must work hard to deliver that money this financial year. It will be made available from the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements, funded jointly with the federal government. We will be making every cent count, but particularly that \$80 million in betterment funding.

In this financial year we have allocated around \$150 million in grants and subsidies to enable councils to carry out new projects as well as major upgrades to water and sewerage infrastructure. This includes \$14.6 million for local government infrastructure grants and \$12.3 million for floods response to fulfil the recommendations of the Floods Commission of Inquiry. We will go out with other funding for floods through both the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Community Safety to make sure that councils get great value for their money.

For the first time this year I have tightened the time frames for councils to deliver these projects. Councils must now spend the money applied for in a 12-month period. The message is clear: we will do whatever it takes to help Queensland councils deliver the projects they have applied for. The flow-on effects of this quicker delivery will be enjoyed by every Queenslanders as they get the infrastructure they want and the prosperity that will evolve from that delivery.

Today I announce that applications for the local government grants and subsidies infrastructure component are now open and they will close on 28 June. The assessment period for infrastructure grants will be about two weeks. I contrast that with times gone by when local councils have waited months for the state government to make an assessment and often these announcements coincided with a state election. Then we wondered why local councils were not capable of spending that money in that financial year. There will be no excuses this year. We will turn those approvals around quickly, and in return we ask the councils to deliver for their communities in this financial year.


If a council is having trouble with their schedule because of unforeseen circumstances or it is a large project for which they want to put in a different bid, they can come and we will work out a solution. But this is an initiative to drive cultural change and we want that to be the exception rather than the norm. We want to help the most effective layer of government—the one closest to the people—be as efficient as possible and as productive as the state needs it to be.

This year we are also changing the way we fund Indigenous councils. This is something I am very passionate about. At the moment, and for more years than most of us can remember, governments have rewarded Indigenous councils with the weakest financial performance. The ones that were not prepared to do the hard yards have been rewarded. As someone who has visited each of Queensland's Indigenous communities, I want to put on record a truism that everyone who has spent some time in Indigenous townships knows. The problem is not the amount of government spending. The problem is not the number of public servants who fly in and out of these communities every day of every week. It is how we are spending the money. It is a culture of a generation of paternalism, lack of control and lack of self-empowerment. That is the problem with Indigenous councils that has been left to fester and fester.

In this year's Local Government budget I have changed the way the state government financial aid will work. The base grant of \$32 million will move from a quarterly payment with all the bureaucratic reporting guidelines that go with it to two 50 per cent incentive payments to the 12 councils that have achieved unqualified financial audit results in the year 2011-12—trust. In the year ahead the SGFA base grant will be 10 per cent lower, or \$29 million, spread between all of Queensland's Indigenous communities on traditional funding guidelines. But for the first time there will be \$3 million up for grabs for those who perform at a higher level. These incentive payments will be paid to councils that show improved generation of own-source revenue—for example, through appropriate fees and charges for municipal services or as support payments to councils that are pursuing business and economic development opportunities. We will be rewarding those who are prepared to do the hard yards and look after their community. Gone are the days of punishing

councils. We will reward councils and we will encourage other councils to step up to that level. We cannot continue to look after those who are not prepared to do the hard yards, because that comes at the expense of the ones who are.

In the future I hope to expand the incentive component of these payments as communities respond to the challenges in front of them. The change may only be small in amount, but I know that if we keep doing the same things we will keep getting the same results. If we start changing things now, we have an opportunity to change the results and improve life for everyone who lives in Indigenous communities. It is one of the few ambitions that I believe would be held unanimously by every member in this House today—that and seeing Queensland return to prosperity and opportunity, which is what this budget will achieve.

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (2.54 pm): The Newman government is focused on economic growth, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. The budget's investment in the Department of Transport and Main Roads will ensure Queensland remains a great state with great opportunity. There is much to talk about in this budget with regard to my portfolio, but I will focus on three areas, the first being the Bruce Highway and QTRIP.

This year \$690 million will be spent on the Bruce Highway, a vital national road for this state. Of that \$690 million, \$153 million will come from the state government. Twenty-two per cent of what is being built on the Bruce Highway this year will come from the state. The obvious part of that is that there is an underspend by the federal government on this federal road. It is their responsibility but they are short-changing Queensland on this vital road for this state.

There is also \$340 million in the budget over the next four years as part of our \$1 billion pledge of additional money for the Bruce Highway as long as the federal government also commits to additional money. As I have said before, this is a federal road. Traditionally federal roads are paid for 80 per cent by the federal government and 20 per cent by the state government. There is \$345 million in our budget as part of our \$1 billion pledge. So far no money has come from the federal government in terms of additional money. In fact, of its promise of \$4.1 million, \$1.7 million is old announcements. Again, it is still funding this year less than its traditional 80 per cent for Queensland's major highway across the state.

In terms of QTRIP, which is a sizeable program, there is \$10.3 billion in the budget over the next two financial years. It is important to contrast that with what our political opponents were planning to do in these two years. Under its plan for QTRIP, there would have been less than \$2 billion of that \$10.3 billion. In the next two financial years we are spending \$2 billion more on QTRIP than what the previous government was planning to spend. It is a significant difference.

I note that the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience, who was the previous speaker in the House, talked about some of the projects in his area that are coming from our Roads to Resources program. The Deputy Premier is in the House today. I think we should thank him for that program. There is \$72 million allocated for our Roads to Resources program on things such as Townsville's Blakey's Crossing and Toowoomba's ring road. I see the member for Toowoomba North in the chamber today. I know that he remains a strong advocate, as we all are, for the Toowoomba second range crossing.

Large amounts of money are allocated across-the-board for our road systems: Capricorn Highway, \$28.4 million; Warrego Highway, \$315 million; Cunningham Highway, \$125 million; Dawson Highway \$62 million; Flinders Highway, \$66 million; Peaks Down Highway, \$17 million; Kennedy Highway, \$38 million; Landsborough Highway, \$138 million; New England Highway, \$19 million; and the Pacific Motorway, \$123 million. It is a sizeable program. I must emphasise again that we will be spending \$2 billion more on QTRIP than what Labor planned to in the next two years.

An important program in this budget that we have just released is our historic Road Safety Action Plan. Sadly, our road toll is 19 more than it was this time last year. It is time for action. This budget outlines a \$350 million Road Safety Action Plan. It is a 60-point, two-year action plan. Incentives include community road safety funding, an alcohol and risk related trauma injury awareness program, student programs and a record \$82 million infrastructure spend on road safety treatments including wide centre lines and audio tactile markings. There will be an ongoing rollout of flashing lights at over 300 schools—something the previous government promised to do but never delivered. They promised year after year to roll out a flashing school light program but failed to do it. We have already put 60 in. We are on track to meet our schedule of 300 schools over four years. This is a great program, and I know many communities have already benefited from it.

I turn now to our licensing reforms. We have already announced significant licensing reforms for younger drivers, for older drivers and for motorcyclists. Of course, we are reviewing speed limits on 100 roads across Queensland—something that has not happened for almost two decades. I welcome the comments made by the RACQ on our Road Safety Action Plan that bolstering a number of existing safety initiatives across a broad range of topics also demonstrates a collaborative approach to addressing the state's road toll. I will talk also about the public transport initiatives we have achieved in this budget. An amount of \$2.1 billion has been allocated for public transport across Queensland; \$645 million for bus, ferry, coach and air services across Queensland, an increase of \$30 million; and \$1.1 billion for train services.

We are also keeping to our election promises—and they are significant election promises—such as halving Labor's planned fare increases. As we know, Labor's only public transport policy was to increase fares every year by 15 per cent—year after year after year and for years ahead. They had planned to do more if they won the previous election. Fortunately, they did not win. We will be able to keep to our election promise of halving their 15 per cent increases. Also we have put in place our free trips after nine journeys—a runaway success of a program. The combination of halving Labor's planned fare increases and that significant policy of free trips after nine journeys is seeing savings across-the-board compared with what public transport commuters would have had to pay under Labor. For instance, if Labor policies in terms of their fare increase had been in place, people travelling from my electorate would have paid \$375 more over two years. People travelling from the Sunshine Coast or the Gold Coast would have paid \$1,200 more if Labor had still been in power. Even constituents of the member for South Brisbane would have paid \$320 more over those two years.

The budget also delivers on the integration of ferry services to the southern Moreton Bay islands from 1 July, something for which the member for Redlands has strongly advocated, and it has been great to work with him. I do acknowledge also, because I see him in the House, the hard work of my assistant minister, the member for Chatsworth, Steve Minnikin, in working on that policy. He did a great job.

Government members: Hear, hear! A genius!

Mr EMERSON: 'A genius,' I hear them say. I take those interjections from so many members of the House. He is a hardworking assistant minister who has done a great job on that policy.

We are also doubling the number of senior officers on the network by July next year, up from 28 when we came to office. A further \$51 million has been allocated for infrastructure to improve interchanges and access to public transport, \$2 million for disability access across the network and \$19 million for new bus stations at Browns Pains, Redland Bay Marina and Deception Bay.

Finally, let me turn to my own electorate of Indooroopilly. I am pleased to see that education and disability services are the big winners in this budget for my electorate. A number of schools will receive vital grants from the budget that will assist in upgrading their facilities, including the construction of additional classrooms. In 2013-14 these will include Graceville State School, with \$2.43 million; Indooroopilly State High School will receive \$1.969 million; Ironside State School will receive \$910,000; and the University of Queensland, which is also in my electorate, will benefit from funding grants in excess of \$10 million to support the Institute for Molecular Bioscience, Geothermal Centre of Excellence and the Centre for Clinical Research.

In terms of disability services, there will be an additional \$282,000 grant for Indooroopilly to assist in funding social inclusion services including domestic and family violence prevention, homelessness, seniors participation and youth support. Community clubs will also get a leg up from the budget with Get Playing grants as part of the Get in the Game initiative. I do acknowledge also my colleague and good friend the minister Steve Dickson behind me who is driving that program—


Mr Dickson interjected.

Mr EMERSON:—and watching my back, as he says. He is also watching out for the good constituents of Indooroopilly, and I do appreciate that. As the minister well and truly knows, our sporting clubs will be well supported with nearly \$20,000 to be spent on upgrades to facilities at Bert St Clair Oval and Faulkner Park in Graceville.

Crossing over into my own portfolio of Transport and Main Roads, we will continue to ease the cost-of-living pressures through the continuation, as I have mentioned, of our free travel after nine journeys on public transport and halving Labor's planned fare increases for 2013-14. A regular

weekday passenger travelling two zones from Indooroopilly would save \$375 million over two years compared to what they would have been paying if the previous government was still in power. Those travelling from Sherwood or zone 3 will save \$445 by the end of 2014. I am also pleased to see that flashing school lights are due to be installed at Ironside State School and Sherwood State School as part of our commitment to deliver those important safety measures at 300 schools across Queensland. As I said, the flashing lights in school zones program is part of our Road Safety Action Plan.

This has been a great budget for Transport and Main Roads. It has been a great budget for Indooroopilly as well. I thank the Treasurer for his hard efforts in terms of this budget. On behalf of Transport and also the constituents of Indooroopilly, I thank my colleagues in the ministry for their hard efforts in putting this budget together.

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (3.06 pm): I rise to speak in this cognate debate on the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013, the Appropriation Bill 2013 and the Revenue Amendment and Trade and Investment Queensland Bill 2013, all introduced into this House by our Treasurer and Minister for Trade, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, MP. It is fitting that I should be addressing this year's state budget, a budget for Queensland's future, on Queensland Day. As the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and the proud member for Currumbin, I am delighted to speak to this, the 2013-14 budget—a budget that again demonstrates the faith this government places in tourism and small business to help lead the way in growing our economy, creating jobs and rebuilding a more resilient Queensland.

It is common knowledge that when we formed government in March last year we inherited an economy in a dire financial state, an economy that had suffered for over a decade under the incompetent management of the ALP. Queenslanders deserve better, and the LNP government has worked around the clock over the last 12 months to fix the mess that was left to us by those opposite to get Queensland back on track. In handing down this, his second budget, may I commend the Treasurer for continuing the hard work begun last year to set Queensland's finances on the road to recovery, a road that has been made more difficult by the effects of natural disasters earlier this year.

When speaking to last year's budget, I informed the House that tourism was one area of our economy that deserved recognition for being a key job and wealth creator. It is no surprise then that the LNP took tourism to the 2012 state election as one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy together with construction, agriculture and resources. We in the LNP recognise the value that the tourism industry plays in the Queensland economy, supporting 220,000 direct and indirect jobs and investing \$18 billion in revenue. Our goal is to return Queensland to its rightful position as No. 1 preferred destination in Australia and to double overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by 2020.

Collaboratively, we have achieved a lot over the last 12 months by implementing a range of proactive strategies achieved through forging strong industry relationships compared to 12 months ago. I have to say that the mood then across the state amongst the industry was far less optimistic than it is today. In June last year the Premier and I hosted the inaugural DestinationQ forum in Cairns where we signed a landmark partnership with industry leader QTIC. The 2013 forum is to be held on the Gold Coast in August where we will discuss a 20-year plan for tourism. In 2012 Queensland welcomed more than 20 million international and domestic overnight visitors to the state, a six per cent increase compared to the number in 2011.

We have increased aviation route access into Queensland, welcoming China Eastern, China Southern, Hawaiian Airlines—and I have to say 'aloha'—and the return of Qantas to the Gold Coast. With assistance from my colleague, the Hon. Steve Dickson, the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, we have cut green tape and developed an ecotourism plan. With Minister Emerson we released our Drive Tourism Strategy with an aim to grow the Queensland drive visitor market.

This budget commits more than \$127.1 million to continue to support the state's pro-growth tourism industry. Our Tourism Investment Attraction Unit has a growing list of Queensland investment opportunities, including 56 projects on the tourism investment opportunity register. In December last year we created Tourism and Events Queensland, combining the expertise of the former Tourism Queensland and Events Queensland into one superentity. This entity has already proven instrumental in allowing Queensland to attract new events and produce engaging marketing activity to promote

Queensland's regions, both domestically and internationally. \$111.6 million of the budget funds are for this new entity to continue to drive visitation across Queensland's regions through its integrated tourism and events approach, and \$15 million is allocated to build upon the impressive results delivered through the tourism investment strategy from last September's budget.

Regional tourism organisations have not missed out in this budget, with \$7 million provided to the network. \$3.89 million of this is in contestable funding, which is more than double the amount Labor contributed. Queensland boasts a rich and diverse calendar of events that boosts drive visitation into Queensland's regions in our typically quieter periods.

Last week I had the pleasure of welcoming the Bolshoi Ballet premiere *Le Corsaire* here in Brisbane. This is the first time the Bolshoi Ballet has performed in Queensland since 1985, and this is a real coup for our first-world capital city. Later this month Queensland will welcome the British and Irish Lions on their Australian tour, and I understand that many members will be there to cheer them on. In July, 13,445 competitors who have already registered will be visiting the Gold Coast to compete in the Gold Coast Airport Marathon.

Over the next 12 months we will continue to develop Queensland's event calendar with an exciting mix of sporting, cultural and participatory events right across Queensland. These events bring huge economic and social benefits to all of our regions. With nine out of 10 tourism operators also being small businesses, we understand that tourism and small business are intrinsically linked.

The Queensland government is unashamedly pro-small business and is committed to getting Queensland's 412,000 small businesses back on track. After all, small businesses are the backbone of the Queensland economy, representing over 96 per cent of Queensland businesses and employing approximately 50 per cent of all private sector workers. This year's budget allocates \$7 million to continue support for small businesses and deliver business to government services.

This funding will be used to continue the successful whole-of-government business and industry portal, our one-stop shop for business access to government services. Since taking office, we have grown the number of guides on the business and industry portal from 150 to over 600. Over the last 12 months we have seen an increase of over 300 per cent in unique visitor numbers to the business and industry portal, and I am thrilled to report that on 4 June the portal recorded over one million unique visitors—a sure sign it is delivering what small business wants.

In May this year I launched the Queensland small business strategy and action plan 2013-2015, a plan that builds on the government's efforts to date and articulates the policy directions and actions to be delivered over the next two years. Until now there has been no specific, clear plan for supporting small businesses, which drive growth across all industries in Queensland. Under Labor there was not even a department. Labor did not like small business and suffocated them under 92,000 pages of red tape and regulations.

Outlining 32 actions to be delivered across 10 government agencies, the Newman government has committed more than \$1 million in funding for initiatives that will directly assist small micro and non-employing businesses. The inaugural Queensland Small Business Week is just one of the 32 actions in this plan. To be held from Wednesday, 24 July to Wednesday, 31 July, this week will include Buy Locally Saturday on 27 July, which will be the culmination of the Think Queensland, Buy Locally campaign. During this week, events, workshops and seminars will be held across the state in cooperation with industry partners such as CCIQ. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the staff in my department who deal with small business and members of my Queensland Small Business Advisory Council for their enthusiasm and professional expertise, which has seen us achieve such stunning results.

The biggest sporting event Australia has seen in a decade is coming our way in 2018: the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. With less than five years to go, it is important that the planning and development of the games progress steadily. The colourful and creative emblem has been launched and brand protection legislation enacted. We are where we should be in the preparation stage of the games. This budget allocates \$100 million to continue these preparations. This funding includes \$59 million for my department and the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation to continue their planning work and progress with the redevelopment of what will be a state-of-the-art Gold Coast aquatic centre, to be completed by June 2014 in time for the Gold Coast to host the 2014 Pan Pacific Games.

It is anticipated that approximately 350 jobs will be created from this development, and an additional \$41 million has been allocated to the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning to develop the Commonwealth Games Village at Parklands. Site works for this village, which is the single-most significant urban renewal project ever undertaken on the Gold Coast, are scheduled to commence from 1 October this year. We are committed to ensuring that preparations progress in a timely manner so that we can deliver the best Commonwealth Games yet and leave behind a lasting legacy for all of Queensland. I am sure that under the experienced guidance of Nigel Chamier and his board, the team at GOLDOC and my hardworking departmental staff, these goals will be achieved.

I now turn to my beloved electorate, Currumbin, where residents are set to benefit now and into the future from a number of ongoing and newly introduced measures. On behalf of local residents, may I thank the relevant ministers for their foresight.

Our two high schools have been big winners, with Palm Beach Currumbin High receiving \$4.3 million to go towards building additional classrooms, and Elanora High School receiving close to \$300,000 to conduct refurbishment works. This is a part of the LNP government's commitment to education, which has seen schools in Currumbin receive well in excess of \$1 million to clear the maintenance backlogs which were left behind by Labor.

Following on from last year's budget, Gold Coast South Home Assist Secure Service has received another \$523,000 to allow them to continue to deliver support for those aged 60 and over. Grants for disability services in Currumbin will total \$4.166 million and are a most welcome assistance for Queenslanders with disabilities, their families and their carers. Social inclusion services in Currumbin will receive a \$2 million boost for a number of worthwhile causes, including youth support and domestic and family violence prevention. A further \$68,000 has been allocated for child safety services in Currumbin, and I commend the government for recognising those in our community who most need the services of the state government.

Over the last 15 months, this government has been unwavering in its resolve to clean up the streets and make our neighbourhoods safer. This budget has allowed \$3 million to continue funding of the Gold Coast police helicopter service, which is an invaluable asset to our area. There has also been \$63 million set aside for the funding of an additional 267 police officers this coming year, as well as the 300 recruited last financial year—part of a recruitment drive which will see 1,100 new police officers over the next four years.

One million dollars has also been set aside to assist Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers in Queensland. The seven Neighbour Watch groups in Currumbin are very active. We have an eighth group currently in its formation stage. I applaud the government's ongoing commitment to supporting community policing initiatives.


The budget allocates \$260,000 for Energex to upgrade the existing Palm Beach substation located in my electorate as part of a larger project, with a total cost of \$13.8 million to increase network capacity and improve reliability.

Community groups and organisations in the electorate have, through a variety of grants since the 2012 September budget, courtesy of our Treasurer, received funding of over \$500,000, with some big-ticket items including \$93,000 for Tugun Bowls Club to upgrade their ditches and support lawn bowls on the Gold Coast.

The Currumbin electorate has a number of events that are supported by the Newman government and TEQ. Right now Cooly Rocks On is rocking along in Coolangatta, attracting tens of thousands of visitors. Upcoming events in the electorate include Australian Stand Up and Paddleboard Festival, Bleach Festival, Kirra Kite Festival, the AHM Wave Warriors Junior Challenge and the Queensland Ocean Swim Series. It does appear that you need to get wet if you want to attend some of these events in Currumbin but, then again, we do have the cleanest beach in Queensland. Events like these are always well received on the southern Gold Coast as they attract visitors from near and far to celebrate the lifestyle and culture on show on the southern Gold Coast, which we call the gateway to Queensland.

In closing, this is a tough but fair budget. The natural disasters of January and the economic disasters of the ALP left Queensland finances with a gaping hole and with the need for a budget that promotes growth and rebuilding. This budget is more than a plan for the next 12 months; it is our plan to build upon the solid foundation established in last year's budget to fix Queensland finances, grow the economy and rebuild a more resilient Queensland.

I sincerely thank the staff in my ministerial office; my assistant minister, the honourable member for Cairns; my department; Tourism and Events Queensland; and the TEQ board members. Without them we would not have been able to achieve what we have these past 12 months.

 **Hon. GW ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier) (3.21 pm): Government budgets must reflect the times they are formulated in. There is not a government or a Treasurer who would not prefer to bring down a budget which hands out increasing amounts of money to community groups and for government services. That would be very popular, but this year it would also be very irresponsible. It is not unreasonable for governments wanting to be popular, but the greater driving force for any government must be as a responsible steward of the state's finances.

A competent budget finds the balance in providing the services people need at a price they can afford to pay. A competent budget recognises that the limits of revenue must be reflected in the range and extent of services that can be provided. A competent budget makes the most of limited funds through more efficient and appropriate service delivery. This is a competent budget. It is a budget for the times, making the most of diminished revenues and accommodating service delivery demands. Slow economic conditions around the country and around the world mean that the predicted state government revenue has not been realised.

Putting together a state budget is no different from formulating a household budget: you have to balance what you spend with what you earn. If you need to go into debt for significant purchases, you need to do so thoughtfully and only as far as you can afford the interest payments. Under Labor, interest payments on state debt were out of control, getting closer every week to about \$100 million per week. An essential part of the early days of the Newman government has been to get the runaway financial situation under control—to bring debt back to a reasonable level so that we can spend money on services and not interest payments. That is what our first budget started and that is what this budget continues. Unfortunately, there will be a very small deficit for this budget, largely due to spending already locked in under the previous Labor government and revenue shortfalls. In this budget we have had to make some tough decisions but will continue to deliver the services Queenslanders need.

Every line of this budget has been compiled with the best interests of Queensland and Queenslanders in mind. In my own portfolio, the budget has maintained a focus on better coordinated services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders and on the development of programs that cater for emerging multicultural groups. The budget includes additional funding so that Queenslanders will be able to take part in and celebrate our cultural diversity through a new funding program for multicultural events across the state. At this point I pay my respects and thank to my two assistant ministers: the honourable member for Brisbane Central, who is in the House at the moment; and the honourable member for Cook, who is the Assistant Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs. I thank them for the work they have done over the past 12 months in their respective portfolio areas.

Grants of up to \$20,000 are available under the Valuing Diversity program for multicultural community events to be held in 2014. The 2013-14 budget also includes \$4.14 million to continue the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program, which transfers state land to Aboriginal ownership and/or management; \$5.7 million to extend the Cape York welfare reform trial to the end of 2014; and a further \$815,000 to improve retailing facilities in six Indigenous communities.

The Newman government's Indigenous agenda is focused on overcoming disadvantage by providing support and structures which promote better social and economic outcomes in health, housing, education, employment and other areas. An innovative Indigenous community welfare program, which is operated as a trial on Cape York, is being extended for a further 12 months.

The Cape York welfare reform trial, for which the budget includes \$5.7 million, has at its centre the Family Responsibilities Commission. The FRC continues to be a crucial component of the Queensland government's involvement in the trial, which operates in the communities of Hope Vale, Aurukun, Coen and Mossman Gorge. The Cape York welfare reform trial is an example of the significant government funding which has gone into Indigenous communities in the past. Since 2008 more than \$100 million in combined state and federal funding has been injected into the four trial communities. This government wants to see successful components of the trial extended, where possible, across all Indigenous communities in the state. We want to see Indigenous funding and services directed towards building more resilient communities. Consultation has commenced this

week with the four communities on how the trial might be continued. As part of the 12-month extension we will be looking at further development of successful components, introducing new initiatives and reducing those which have not shown positive results.

The Newman government is committed to alleviating the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders across so many aspects of life. We are committed to doing that in conjunction with Indigenous people and their elected representatives through responsible programs, services and actions. It has always been the intention that lessons from the trial should be applied to the benefit of other Indigenous communities. That remains the intention of this government. We will take the time during the next 12 months to properly assess it and to plan how results from it can benefit more Indigenous communities from 2015 onwards.

Queensland is proudly a very diverse state. A significant part of Queensland culture derives from our very long history of migration. Our culture and lifestyle are made all the richer by the contribution of migrants who have chosen to call Queensland home. The budget includes additional funding for a Valuing Diversity grants program for multicultural community events to be held in 2014. Nominations for those grants opened this week. Funding will be available in two categories—significant events and culturally diverse events—providing grants up to \$20,000 and \$10,000. Signature events are typically the major events with proven track records, such as Paniyiri and Italian Week and other multicultural festivals around the state. Culturally diverse events will be focused on events which promote broader acceptance and understanding of the culture and heritage of small and emerging cultural communities.


Queensland has a richly diverse ethnic composition, and this government wants to be sure that diversity is recognised and celebrated in appropriate ways across the state. These community based events give Queenslanders the chance to share, acknowledge and respect our differences. Queensland is a multicultural state and home to people from around the globe. In the 2011 census some 20.5 per cent of Queenslanders identified as being born overseas, compared to just 17.9 per cent in the 2006 census.

The Newman government is committed to supporting the development of strong, multicultural communities in all areas of Queensland. While we are operating in a tight fiscal environment, we are determined to support events promoting positive community relations that help Queenslanders realise the long-term social and economic benefits of cultural diversity. The multicultural grants program ensures Queenslanders have the opportunity to celebrate the wealth of cultural diversity through a variety of great events. My portfolio also includes funding for managing the environment of Cape York in partnership with traditional owners. The budget includes \$4.14 million to include the important work of the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program, which assists the transfer of state lands to Aboriginal ownership and/or management. The program also works with traditional owners in the designation of new national parks over areas of high-conservation significance under joint management arrangements with Aboriginal people.

My electorate of Noosa has also benefited from this budget, which is focused on growing our economy, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient for the future. The Coolum State High School will receive \$1.9 million for new classrooms and associated facilities to help with the transition of year 7 to high school by 2015. Construction and planning for the project is expected to commence this year and will ensure that Coolum State High School students have access to top-class facilities. There is also \$352,000 for the refurbishment at Sunshine Beach State High School. This is part of the Newman government's commitment to delivering a quality education system for all students—a commitment reflected in a significantly increased overall Education budget.

In other funding for the Noosa electorate, \$1.26 million has been allocated to Energex to improve electricity supply and reliability by upgrading high-voltage powerlines. There is also—as I refer to it—\$7.7 million for social infrastructure throughout the electorate, including \$268,000 for the Noosa Home Assist Secure program, \$2.3 million for child safety services, \$4.5 million for disability services and \$621,000 for social inclusion projects. Additionally, people within the electorate of Noosa will benefit from other budget initiatives within the region-wide application, and they include \$640 million for the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service, \$7.9 million for upgrades to public and community housing properties, \$4.7 million for disaster recovery initiatives and \$1.4 million to ensure adequate supply of resources to public libraries, which will really be a boost.

This is a budget with a focus on the present but an eye to the future prosperity and amenity of the state. It is a budget which respects the needs of people from all over the state but does not shirk its responsibility to act for the collective good. This budget is a demonstration of our commitment to fix the state's finances and grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we remain a great state with great opportunities for all. Rebuilding the state's finances is vital if we are to deliver better services the people of Queensland expect and deserve. I congratulate the Treasurer on bringing down a budget which is appropriate for the times and gives taxpayers the greatest value for money. I am proud to be a member of this first Newman government which takes seriously its responsibility to manage the state's finances in a way which makes the best of the current difficult times. This budget is grounded in the present but sets a course to take the state positively into the future. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (3.33 pm): I rise to speak on the government's budget handed down by the Treasurer on Tuesday, 4 June. First, let me congratulate my colleagues the Premier, Campbell Newman, and Treasurer, Tim Nicholls, on delivering a fiscally responsible and measured budget in the face of the difficult economic circumstances we as a government have inherited from the Bligh government as a legacy to all Queenslanders. I wish to commend the government on the proactive steps it is taking to reduce government expenditure in overall terms and to get the state's finances back on track. The fact is that, even with stringent economic measures as in the 2012-13 budget, there remains a \$7 billion deficit due to the already pre-obligated spending commitments of the previous government. The budget that was handed down by the Treasurer is a fine example of balancing the responsibilities of improving services and managing the inherent Labor government debt.

This LNP government has invested in the core front-line services of health, education, housing services, disability services, law and order, among other important areas. This government has not only maintained existing funding levels in these core areas; it has increased the funding. I congratulate the government for this and am thankful that the residents of Cleveland will share in these increases in funding: \$12.3 billion in health funding, a \$532.7 million or 4½ per cent increase from the last budget; \$11.4 billion in education funding, representing a \$707.4 million or 6.6 per cent increase in funding; \$932 million in housing services, a \$24 million increase; \$1.4 billion in disability services, a \$64.8 million increase; and \$4.1 billion for law and order, a \$129.6 million increase. I am proud to be a member of a government that understands the importance of investing in these essential government services while at the same time beginning to tackle the debt crisis that the former government left behind.

There was a lot of scaremongering from those opposite and the unions who were engaged in scare campaigns and prophesied that the government would cut to the bone and slash all services. It appears that, for all the talk of service cuts, they could not be further from the truth. The LNP has cut the waste and invested in front-line services for all its citizens—all this while still making the tough decisions in cutting government expenditure to pay off the debt that the previous government left behind. The people of Cleveland voted last election for change and for a government that would repay the debt while maintaining services, and we have done that in this budget despite suffering a \$4.5 billion drop in revenue. Land tax revenue is down 6.4 per cent for the first time in a long time and gaming revenue will be down 2.8 per cent. GST revenue has also slumped. These revenue losses make the challenge of getting the budget back on track sooner rather than later that little bit harder. The fact that the Queensland budget is projected to return to fiscal surplus in 2015-16 is indeed welcome news. Most Queenslanders will be aware of the wide-ranging reforms this government has embarked upon to reduce the debt and deficit, including the restructuring of the public sector. Although not always the easiest political decisions, they have been necessary in getting Queensland back in the right direction. The Newman government is being proactive in addressing the inherent cultural and structural problems created by the previous administration. However, unlike it, the Newman government is determined to make the hard decisions to bring about a return to surplus and better times ahead.

In the 2012-13 budget, Cleveland received a considerable commitment from the LNP government to provide investments of \$7 million in capital works for local schools, including a new year 7 building at Cleveland State High School, \$6 million for disability services, \$6½ million for capital works and operational funding for the future of North Stradbroke Island, \$2 million for sports coordination and incentive programs throughout the electorate, and \$500,000 in home assistance for seniors. The 2012-13 budget proved that this government can invest in community programs,

essential educational infrastructure and the future of North Stradbroke Island while reducing government expenditure. In this budget there have been some great announcements for the people of Cleveland. However, probably the greatest commitment by the government to Cleveland is the upgrade of Toondah Harbour. Last month the Deputy Premier, Jeff Seeney, visited Cleveland where he declared Toondah Harbour as a priority development area. The announcement of a major upgrade of the Toondah Harbour site has far-reaching implications to Cleveland residents and for those who live on North Stradbroke Island, and in fact all those who access the island for tourism and business. Redland City as a whole will benefit from the investment into developing Toondah Harbour. The harbour upgrade will create many jobs in construction, tourism and hospitality and retail; will improve transport facilities and services; will be a boost to the Cleveland CBD and local economy; and will support a more gentle transition to a non-sandmining economy.

The job opportunities created is good news for local residents, young and senior alike. A significant potential exists for future growth in the tourism and business industries that service North Stradbroke Island. For 30 years in the Redlands this key piece of infrastructure had merely been a pipedream. Members of parliament and councillors had dreamed of this development taking place. So I am proud to be part of a visionary government that is encouraging investments such as this in the infrastructure in Cleveland at Toondah Harbour.

The government is also committed to the future and preservation of North Stradbroke Island, with additional funding to maintain facilities and to manage the national park areas and to go towards the implementation of the Quandamooka Indigenous Land Use Agreement. These investments show that the government is dedicated to the future of the residents and businesses of North Stradbroke Island, both in preserving the island's parks and infrastructure and working to strike the right balance in recognising and supporting the island's local Indigenous population.

Disability services in the Cleveland electorate will receive \$6.5 million in direct funding towards a combination of respite care, individual assistance and community disability care. This funding is a boost for Queensland and confirms the Liberal-National Party's pledge in regard to the NDIS to those with disabilities. The boost for disabilities helps those who are most vulnerable in our community. The government has continued the funding of \$5.9 million for the palliative care services that are based at Redland Hospital. The continued palliative care funding will service the needs of people in the Cleveland and greater Redlands area. I was proud to join with the local community to advocate for this much needed service in the Redlands. I thank the government for its continued support of palliative care in my electorate.


In regard to education infrastructure, the Bay View State School multipurpose hall will be completed this financial year. This \$2.8 million project will service the school and the local community. It is a fantastic investment, as it provides a first-class facility to conduct first-class education and activities for the students of Bay View State School in Thornlands.

Law and order in the Cleveland electorate has not been overlooked in this budget. I again thank the government for responding to the demands that have presented themselves within my electorate. I am grateful for the new patrols of police, extended along the Cleveland rail line to Raby Bay to the Cleveland Railway Station. Within the electorate of Cleveland there are four railway stations—Birkdale, Wellington Point, Ormiston and Cleveland. An increase in security for commuters on the line is welcome as it is for those residents who live near the stations. The train line is a major means of transportation for not only those in Cleveland but also all who live in Redlands city. So an investment in the security on this rail line is another great win for the community.

In the last budget the Cleveland Railway Station received \$1.2 million for refurbishment and upgrade. I thank the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for that allocation. Unfortunately, owing to an accident at the Cleveland Railway Station, being a train running through the station, much of that good work was undone only months after it was completed. The reconstruction and repair of the station has taken some time owing to the thorough investigations that were needed into the accident. But it is great news that the money has now been committed for the reconstruction of the railway station and that it can now get underway as soon as the tender process has been completed. I look forward to having a fully reconstructed and operational Cleveland Railway Station in the coming months. I know that the thousands of residents who use the station every day are also grateful to the minister for that.

The Newman government has not forgotten the need for investing in emergency services within the Cleveland electorate. The funding for the additional ambulance officers will bolster the emergency medical services that our ambulance crews already offer in the Cleveland electorate. The multimillion dollar reconstruction of the Cleveland ambulance station, which was destroyed in an arson attack, will soon take place. The temporary station has been acceptable to date. However, it is now timely that the Cleveland ambulance crews find their home in new premises. I know that the Cleveland ambulance crew and the local community are definitely looking forward to the increased and improved capabilities that the new station will bring in providing emergency services. The bigger and better station will be welcomed by the community.

Overall, this budget is good for the people of the Cleveland electorate. They have received substantial commitments in education, health, infrastructure, disability services and law and order. The budget delivers on key cost-of-living commitments and improved services. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (3.44 pm): Today, it is a real pleasure to rise to make some comments about the appropriation bills that are before the House. Obviously, over a number of years I have seen many budgets go through this place, but I would have to say that this budget that has been presented by the Treasurer has met all of the guidelines to meet the difficulties that we find ourselves in in the environment in which we are now placed. I regard it as a good, responsible budget. It meets the needs of the state moving forward and it also covers the bases in terms of continuing the development of the state. It is interesting to note the conditions in which the budget was drafted. It is almost a perfect firestorm. Over \$5 billion was taken off the income for the state and there was also an extra \$2.1 billion in expenses for rebuilding the state after Cyclone Oswald and other storms around the state. That makes for a difficult scenario in which to draft a budget.

I had some discussions with Kim Kleidon, who is an ABC Radio presenter in Mackay, in respect to the government having to run the budget basically like a business—or indeed, in her case, like a single mum—whereby the income should almost automatically equal the outgoings in the hope that, at the end of the year, there is some money left in the bank to buy some toys for the kids. She was adamant that the government's budget was quite different from that and that it should not operate within those guidelines. When discussing that matter on air, it was pretty obvious that there are some people even in the ABC who believe that you can continue to borrow money without any consequences to the state over a long period. I think we are certainly seeing that scenario today. As the Treasurer has indicated, there is only one way to look at the situation that we have currently. Either we have fewer services or we have more tax, or we put the extra money on the Chinese bankcard and hopefully one day the fairy godmother will come along and pay off our debt. Unfortunately, that will never happen. So we have to move forward and do the best we can over a period of time to get to a budget surplus so that we might be able to, over time, pay off the \$80 billion-odd that the previous Labor government put on the Chinese credit card.

I would have to say that I am very pleased with the support that the Treasurer has given to my electorate, which goes from Glenden in the north to almost Curtis Island in the south, covering the regions of Rockhampton and Mackay. I want to talk briefly about some of the highlights in the budget that relate to my electorate. A real highlight is the development of Mackay Base Hospital. There is an allocation of \$1.5 million for an MRI facility at the hospital, which has been long overdue. That allocation has been able to be brought forward by at least a year, possibly two years, through the very good management of Col Meng and his team at the Mackay Hospital and Health Service. There was also an allocation of \$5.5 million for a far more important issue, a cardiac catheter laboratory at Mackay Base Hospital. I will explain why that is. Currently in Mackay, anybody who has a heart attack and who survives has to fly to Townsville or Brisbane to go through the process of getting stents or undergoing open-heart surgery. With this cardiac catheter laboratory facility at Mackay Base Hospital, the expectation is that more than 70 per cent of those people who present at the hospital under those circumstances can be treated at the Mackay Base Hospital. That is a marvellous outcome for all of those people who are put in that very difficult position at that stage in their lives.

Another important budget announcement was funding of \$3.6 million allocated to Mirani State High School for a multifunction hall. Over many years Mirani State High School has been in a situation where it has had very limited access to such a functional area. The P&C have been saving over many years to bring that to fruition. One of the problems with the allocation is that it is not enough for the school community or the number of residents in the community over a period of time. It is basically the size of a basketball court. In reality it needs to be the size of two basketball courts with

a stage that will be able to slide in and out, some seating and the sorts of things that you would hope to see in a community hall. I am keen to explore the possibility of contestability with this building and in conjunction with the P&C hopefully we can deliver to that community a building that suits their needs. I will be in discussions with the minister to try to turn that \$3.6 billion into a facility that the community will be very proud of.


The backlog of maintenance in schools is an important issue. My grandchild is the fifth generation of our family who has gone through the small Koumala State School. The BER program delivered quite a substantial building that had toilet and shower facilities for special needs children. Unfortunately the money did not go as far as connecting the grey and black water to that septic system. Currently we have a beautiful building that cannot be utilised properly because of the lack of funding to enable that to be connected so that the wet kitchen, the toilets and the showers could be used. Hopefully some of this money will go towards that. I look forward to those sorts of programs right throughout the community.

I am very pleased with the amount of money that has been set aside for boot camps throughout Queensland. I am a very keen supporter of boot camps and am very much behind the development of those facilities. I am very keen to work with the Attorney-General to bring those to fruition. I agree with the member for Gregory that they do not need to be 800-square-metre houses and they need to be a fair distance out in the bush so that those kids, if they do get out of the facility, are not going to walk into town; they are going to have to basically stay there for the duration. I am very keen to make sure that that happens.

In my role as the Assistant Minister for Volunteers, I am very much looking forward to the funding that will see recommendations in the Malone report implemented for rural firefighters. I was very pleased to see extra expenditure in terms of 40 new yellow trucks and extra equipment for the Rural Fire Service. That is heading in the right direction.

Other capital works to be undertaken in my electorate apart from the building at Mirani State High School include kindergartens at both Glenden and Marian state schools at a cost of \$1.4 million each and new accommodation at Mount Morgan State High School at a cost of \$460,000. That is money going to worthwhile projects in Mount Morgan.

It is a pleasure to speak in the House in relation to the appropriation bills. I believe the Treasurer has done a great job in meeting the requirements to take Queensland forward. Hopefully 12 months down the track the forward forecasts will come true and we will only have a very small deficit next year and the following year there will be a surplus. I thank the Treasurer for his support for my electorate and wish him well in the next 12 months.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (3.53 pm): In speaking to the Appropriation Bill I acknowledge the increase in funding to disability services. Since 2004 there has been an increase year in, year out to support disability services. I believe we are going forward in this important area, especially with the signing of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the continued funding. It is good that we can all work together to ensure the best outcomes for adults and children across Queensland with disabilities. I feel that this is a step in the right direction.

It is also good to see that there is an increase in funding for health. Hopefully that funding benefits the right people. There is around \$6 billion in growth revenue produced in the region around Moranbah, yet Moranbah does not have a maternity service. Last year in the budget \$9 million was announced to fix the roof of the Atherton Hospital. It was announced again this year. I applaud the minister for announcing it twice. Yesterday I questioned the minister about the Atherton Hospital. It is important to ensure that funds go to the right place. We do need the roof fixed. But if wardsmen hours are cut it means that the nursing staff have to pick up the patients. That puts pressure on the nursing staff.

The Atherton Hospital is a 56-bed operation. It has been twisted in such a way that there are now flexibeds. Now the hospital receives funding for 42 beds. When those extra beds are needed they bring in staff from outside. They think that those staff are waiting there to be called out. These experienced staff will move elsewhere. This is a problem that we see in places like the Atherton Hospital where funding has been reduced. Cutbacks have taken place. There is a dialysis machine at Atherton but there is not enough staff to operate it so patients have to travel to Cairns four days a week. Patients' families are coming into the hospital and having to assist in showering patients because there is an overload of work. When there are cutbacks in administration staff, nursing staff have to take phone calls. Sometimes staff have to deal with the patient's travel subsidy. There is a domino effect. It puts great stress on the hospital.

We secured funding for the roof, but we want to ensure that we provide the appropriate care to patients in those regions. We need to investigate this very strongly, very powerfully. Money is being allocated, but we want to ensure that it is going into the right area. It is important to fix the roof. We support that. But we want the nurses to be functioning at their full capacity. We do not want them to be stressed out and constantly recalled to duty. We do not want to see good nursing staff leave because they cannot cope. We want to see patients get dialysis at the local hospital rather than travel to Cairns four days a week. We want to see nurses with support from wardsmen who are able to pick up those patients.

This is about putting money where it is needed and focusing on where the money should go. We need to address this. We need maternity services in Moranbah. That region produces \$6 billion worth of gross revenue. There are mums, who are about to give birth to a child that will be so important in their life, staying in motels for three weeks in Mackay. This is the year 2013. We had better services 30 years ago. We support the Queensland Plan and looking 30 years ahead at what we can achieve. If we look at what we were doing 30 years ago, rural and regional Queensland will prosper. We had the medical services, appropriate police services, railway stations and thriving communities. We had medical surgery performed in local hospitals in rural and regional Queensland. It is simple to speak about a 30-year plan; the government needs to look at what we did 30 years ago and invest money into it.

If money and services are removed from regional hospitals, people are driven away from the regional and rural areas and into the cities. Rural people who need medical assessments, surgeries and other requirements will have to travel to Cairns, Townsville, Mackay and Rockhampton, putting greater stress and pressure on those regional hospitals. You resolve that by investing in the regional hospitals to ensure that they can offer medical services and that they are staffed by quality nursing staff and wards people who are not stressed and overworked. You ensure that people can access the patient travel subsidy. We have to offer those services all day, rather than have people waiting for hours and hours. We need the money to put a focus on getting the priorities right.

The increase in the cost of electricity by 22 per cent is a big kick in the guts for pensioners, householders and small businesses.

Mr Cox: They get a discount, mate.

Mr KNUTH: That is lovely and I am sure that once we had a discount for everyone, but that has now gone. The problem is the flow-on effect: businesses, that are already suffering, will have to put up their prices and people, who are already suffering, will have to pay more for food and clothing. Pensioners will suffer more. Things started to fall down when the Liberal Party and the Labor Party both agreed to privatise the retail arm of our energy sector. The Liberals said passionately, 'We must back this by whatever means are necessary, because it is about privatisation, it is about supporting big companies and big business and it is about competition to get the best outcome.' However, that competition has resulted in massive increases in the price of electricity, I think by about 400 per cent over the past four or five years. I see people nodding their heads, but these are the facts. That is why it is important that we do not sell our energy assets.

The Treasurer said that the figures are down for property tax and other taxes, but there has also been a loss of revenue. He did not mention the loss of revenue from the privatisation of our assets. He did not mention it because we are not receiving income, as we did years ago, from the \$1.2 billion coal haulage industry. We are not receiving income from the Gateway Bridge, the forests and the ports that were sold. That income is no longer coming in. I can see that, but the Treasurer does not want to mention it because he wants to sell more. He is selling government buildings that could generate income for future budgets. He is selling the remaining share of Queensland Rail, which could generate money for Queenslanders that instead will end up going to—

A government member: Debt, Shane, debt.

Mr KNUTH: It goes to pay off debt, but once that is done the money is gone. The asset is no longer generating money for us to pay off debt. In the past, governments invested. They built power stations and dams. They put infrastructure in place. They did get into debt and it was bigger debt than we are in today. However, I am concerned that this government is all about trying to make the books look good for the next election. This process should take over five, six or 10 years, but somehow they are hell-bent on making things look good before the election. They say, 'We will put our hands on our hearts and show what a wonderful thing we have done. We have reduced the debt. We have sacked 14,000 workers'—

Mr Johnson interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Gregory, I am struggling to hear the member for Dalrymple.

A government member: So are we.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Members, the member for Dalrymple has the call.

Mr KNUTH: It is very important that this budget is not just about getting rid of debt, because then everyone will suffer so that the government looks good at the next election. This was very badly thought out, because 14,000 workers are no longer spending in motels and other local businesses. They are not supporting their communities because they do not have jobs. Small businesses are going broke and people are going broke. Then the government says, 'We are losing revenue! We don't have revenue!' We are still following that example; nothing has changed. The government is looking at the problem of debt, for which it keeps blaming one particular party. We should look at addressing the debt over an eight-year period rather than trying to look good before the election. However, this government is determined to make the books look good before the next election.

I welcome the recurrent funding of \$150 million over five years for the Gregory Development Road. I thank the government for continuing that project and not taking funds from it. That is a great thing. It is important to have inland highways to relieve the traffic congestion on the coast. During Cyclone Yasi, the coast road was cut, on and off, for a two-week period and the inland highway was used. Both state and federal government money is going into that road, which is a good thing. However, we need to upgrade the crossings at creeks such as Snake Creek, Fletcher Creek, Basalt River, Clarke River and Hann Creek. If we focus on upgrading those bridges and crossings, the inland highway will be used by more trucks and vehicles. That will relieve pressure on the Bruce Highway and perhaps we will not need to spend so much money on it, although I think it is important that we do spend money on that highway. However, there would be less pressure on it. Therefore, while it is good that money is being spent on the regional highway, the bridges need to be upgraded to improve the inland highway and create an alternative transport route.

Each year the Tablelands produces \$500 million in gross revenue. In that area, the roads are improving. About five years ago you could say that they were probably the worst roads in Queensland, but they are slowly improving. The previous state government allocated money to upgrade the Kennedy Highway between Tolga and Mareeba and disaster relief funding has also been allocated to that road. However, the intersection of Grove Street and Tolga Road is near where all the mums pick up their children from the Atherton primary school. It is a very dangerous intersection. Cars have to travel uphill to meet a main highway. While money from disaster relief has been invested in that road—and I know that a criteria has to be met—I was disappointed that that intersection was not allocated funding for an upgrade. Previously I have brought up this matter. We need to upgrade that intersection, because this is about saving lives through whatever means are necessary.

We have not seen any investment in infrastructure to resolve the problems associated with power generation costs. That is a big kick in the guts to people. I am sad that people have to pay such a massive increase, which they do not need to be paying. In this parliament, we moved to introduce, slowly and gradually, a 10 per cent ethanol blend and allow for another avenue of cogeneration so that by investing in sugarcane, grain and power generation we can deliver clean energy and create jobs and wealth. Government should not say, 'We are going to cut.' We are going into a recession and what are they doing? They are cutting. This is a time when they need to invest, to put money back into the community. A Labor government cut funding before the Depression and then we were faced with the Depression. Now we are experiencing a downturn and what does the government do—cut, cut, cut and sack, sack, sack.

One service that is important to my electorate is the Tenant Advice and Advocacy Service. I know that the federal government has allocated \$2.5 million to help that service. It is a good service in my area. It provides jobs for local people. It provides a service to my community. The state government needs to work with the federal government on this because the service is beneficial to my area. It is beneficial to the people who rent and to the owners. They all work together.

Mr Cox: The tenants.

Mr KNUTH: That is right. Thank you, member for Thuringowa.

Another issue I wish to address is the emergency fire levy. I take my hat off to all of our firefighters who play a role in our communities. They raise funds for their brigades by selling raffle tickets. I purchase a few tickets myself. It is a kick in the guts for those people to be hit with a \$183 fire levy when they put the fires out themselves and raise funds themselves. They are out there selling raffle tickets. They are out there fighting fires. All of a sudden they will be belted with a fire levy.

Obviously the government feels that it is acceptable to cripple and kick in the guts all those rural residents who do a wonderful job fighting fires by hitting them with a 22 per cent increase in electricity prices. The LNP campaigned strongly at the last election that it would cut electricity prices. This is not a cut. I think inflation has been at around three per cent or four per cent, so this increase is five or six times the inflation rate. The government could cut it a little for one year. This increase is five times the rate of inflation. This is a big kick in the guts.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr KNUTH: It is up to you whether you want to support a 22 per cent increase. We were elected to parliament to take a stand and state that we do not want a 22 per cent increase in electricity prices. Our energy assets are making a return, but this is about them making more.


It was this government that supported and voted to back the Gillard government's proposal to pass the energy price increases due to the federal tax onto consumers. It was these government members who voted to back the Gillard government's passing of the carbon tax onto consumers.

Government members interjected.

Mr KNUTH: You can look that up in *Hansard*. It is very simple. It was those opposite who voted in this House to back the Gillard government's proposal to pass on the energy costs to consumers. That might be part of the 22 per cent increase.

I notice that the Minister for Environment is in the chamber. We are looking for funding to get rid of the bats. No-one knows how to get rid of the bats. I know how to get rid of the bats. I know that the minister and Campbell Newman promised that the government will get rid of the bats by whatever means necessary. Everywhere we looked in Charters Towers we had LNP members saying, 'We will get rid of the bats.' But they are dodging, weaving and hiding to the point of being invisible. All we want is for someone to come and say, 'We will get rid of the bats by whatever means necessary.' What we need is funding to employ two parks and wildlife officers to spend their time chasing bats all day every day—smoking them out, spraying them with hoses. I want to work with the minister and the council to get rid of the bats.

(Time expired)

 **Mr TROUT** (Barron River—LNP) (4.14 pm): I hope to bring the debate back to some reality after listening to the shadow Treasurer for the 'Country Music Party'. I stand and speak in support of the Queensland state budget 2013. The Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, has worked diligently and with foresight and maturity to deliver a budget that will eventually turn the worst of times into the best of times.

In early 2012, prior to the election that saw the LNP take the reins, the Queensland Labor government was like a horse pulled cart full of goodies bought on the never-never. Gifts of money and envelopes full of promises were flung to the breeze into the hands of the ever grateful people of Queensland. In their innocence, Queenslanders never questioned where the goods or the money came from. Little did they know that the cart and everything in it was heading straight for a ravine.

The highly respected American economist Thomas Sowell said—

The real goal should be reduced government spending, rather than balanced budgets achieved by ever rising tax rates to cover ever rising spending.

How true this statement is. High levels of debt impede progress. Rome was not built in a day and we cannot eradicate Labor's debt overnight. It is happening gradually. At the same time as spending is reduced, our economy is benefiting from policies that allow small businesses to thrive, farmers to produce, tourist numbers to grow, low-income earners to be housed, our disabled and sick to be looked after properly and our kids to be educated better.

To resist change is natural. Any good manager knows that involving employees in decision making to facilitate the change is at the basis of increasing production, efficiency and satisfaction. The Queensland Plan ensures everyone in this state is involved in our forward direction. The Newman government values input from all sectors of the community as proved by the Queensland Plan survey, the green-tape reduction survey, the health survey and the youth justice crime survey.

Under your energetic and unswaying leadership, Premier, we have opened new channels of communication with overseas investors, allowing the flow of capital into our state. We have taken many steps to increase interest in our state as a preferred tourism destination and facilitate increased airline traffic from South-East Asia.

We are actively building on our strengths—and we have many in this great state—but we have to address weaknesses that exist in our service infrastructure and increase our accountability, both of which are being addressed. At the same time, this budget recognises the necessity of investing in better quality services rather than the duplication of existing ones. The increase in the operating budget for the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service of \$39.4 million to \$620.4 million and capital funding of \$104.1 million to continue the Cairns Base Hospital development is welcome news.

With a rapidly escalating crime rate in the Cairns region I strongly welcome the news of \$2 billion being allocated to the Queensland Police Service. Additions to our police force in Far North Queensland under the LNP government have been applauded and are recognition of our growing need.


As the driver of our local economy, \$7 million to regional tourism operators to assist destination marketing will be a welcome boost for a rapidly resurging tourism industry in Cairns and its surrounds. We rely heavily on this industry to support employment and economic growth in this area. Latest figures released show more overseas visitors are coming to Queensland, led by a six per cent boost in international holiday makers, with almost 1.4 million overseas holiday makers spending \$2.1 billion on visits to Queensland.

Far North Queenslanders on low incomes will benefit from a \$26.1 million injection into social housing in the region. Residents from all around my electorate will welcome funds for the upgrading of the boat ramp at Yorkeys Knob and \$1.5 million for the crocodile management plan. Almost \$7 million has been allocated to remedial works on the Kuranda Range Road and over \$5 million for the Captain Cook Highway.

St John's Community Care in Redlynch will benefit from over \$700,000 for its Home Assist Secure program which helps people with a disability and people over 60 years of age who wish to remain living in their own homes. Community housing in my electorate has received over \$8.8 million. This LNP government strives for sustainable, long-term growth. We have taken strong and decisive action to ensure our economy will create good jobs and achieve and sustain a higher quality of life for our children.

From December 2011 to December last year the regional employment figure rose from 136,500 to 145,000 jobs and growth remains at relatively high levels. Trend employment growth for the year since this government came to power stands at six per cent. Our policies are working under sound, unswaying leadership and collaborative decision making. Into the future our vision will include the input of all Queenslanders through their involvement in the Queensland Plan.

This budget, coupled with the development of our Queensland Plan, acknowledged our long-term vision for the state as an alternative to a crowd-pleasing quick fix which will do nothing for the future health of Queensland's economy or the welfare of its people. It is geared towards economic growth, employment growth, quality of education and, very importantly, the health of Queensland citizens. I commend our Treasurer, his staff and all members of this government for the delivery of a sound and sustainable budget. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (4.20 pm): This is a budget that is clearly focused on growing Queensland's economy, rebuilding Queensland and building more resilient local communities. It is a budget that reverses the debt cycle Queensland has been stuck in over recent years and sets a strong foundation for solid economic growth in coming years.

The Newman government is an unashamedly pro-growth government and is a government that is delivering for Queensland and Pine Rivers. There is no doubt that this budget has been framed in difficult circumstances. We have the debt noose around the budget's neck—Labor's legacy of a

projected \$85 billion debt and years of deficit budgets to reverse. We have had year after year of floods, cyclones and storms that have battered Queensland communities and shaken some Queenslanders more than we are probably willing to admit.

Queensland, like other economies across the nation and world, is experiencing massive falls in revenue. No government can turn around a projected \$85 billion debt in just a year or two, and anyone who thinks we can is being unrealistic. However, we were elected with a clear mandate to fix this debt problem and, far from shirking our responsibility, this budget takes significant steps towards rectifying Queensland's debt disaster. Projections in this budget are that debt will peak at around \$81 billion instead of \$85 billion, meaning an interest saving to Queensland in the vicinity of \$750 million—a significant saving and a direct consequence of the strong action this government has taken to provide strong economic leadership for Queensland.

There is no denying this budget also includes some pain for Queenslanders. Rising electricity prices hit everyone hard and are never welcomed, similarly with the increase in the rate of duty on general insurance products and the emergency management, fire and rescue levy. However, for the record, let us be clear about why electricity prices are rising so dramatically: \$258 would be cut from the increases to electricity bills right now if the federal Labor government removed the carbon tax and renewable energy target green schemes, and the former Labor state government's well-intentioned but poorly executed solar rebate scheme will mean that those without solar panels will be subsidising those with panels to the tune of \$276 a year by 2015-16. Our government has honoured our commitment to keep the 44c per kilowatt hour rate until 2028 for customers who remain eligible. However, this poorly planned Labor scheme will continue to hit electricity users for years to come.

Whilst there may be some pain, the Newman government continues a strong record of providing cost-of-living relief for the Pine Rivers community. Let me mention some of the highlights of our cost-of-living assistance from this budget as well as last year's. It was the Newman government that froze tariff 11 last year, putting money back into the family budget from our electricity bills. The Newman government continues to provide electricity and gas rebates to eligible Queensland pensioners and seniors, including a \$230 per year electricity rebate. The Newman government is doubling the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to \$10 million in 2013-14 to ensure low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 if needed.

We have committed \$132.3 million over three years to freeze car registration fees, saving a family with a six-cylinder car \$22.61 in 2013-14. We have committed \$917 million over four years to reinstate the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty, providing savings of up to \$7,175 when buying a home. The amount of \$92 million was spent in 2012-13 to deliver a one-off water rebate of \$80 to households supplied by the SEQ bulk water grid.

We have committed \$158.2 million over four years to halve public transport fare increases due in 2013 and 2014, saving a rail commuter from Pine Rivers to Brisbane City approximately \$570.24 over the two years. The amount of \$39 million is being spent over four years to reward regular commuters by reintroducing free travel on the TransLink network after nine journeys in a Monday to Sunday week. For a commuter who travels to work in the CBD from one of the stations in Pine Rivers five days per week, that is a saving of \$5.84 a week, every week, for an adult go card user. Also, 175 Get in the Game vouchers, worth up to \$150 each, have been issued to families in Pine Rivers to allow more children to play organised sports whilst limiting the budget impact on families. The Newman LNP government made a commitment to tackle the rising cost of living and we will continue to take that commitment seriously.

This budget and this government also continues to deliver for Pine Rivers. The two budgets that have been delivered by Treasurer Nicholls in the past 12 months have provided significant funding for Pine Rivers. This year's budget sees \$68.39 million committed to add a third railway line between Lawnton and Petrie railway stations. This is part of a total \$168 million commitment to this project. This is a significant transport infrastructure project for Pine Rivers and the surrounding region and one that will enable more efficient and effective passenger rail services for Pine Rivers commuters. This is the only section of railway between Petrie and Northgate that is not three tracks, and this important link is being delivered by the Newman government.


Sometimes government spending is not flashy and it is not sexy, but it is essential to ensure an ongoing quality of life for residents. That is certainly the case for this budget's allocation of \$6.1 million to improve water quality and environmental compliance at the North Pine Water Treatment Plant. This allocation will provide funds for chemical dosing, sludge handling and filter

upgrades at the treatment plant and, whilst maintenance works such as these may seem routine, they are vital to ensure the ongoing capacity of the treatment plant to supply water to our community safely and efficiently.

The Newman government is committed to supporting Queenslanders with disabilities. We recently saw Premier Newman and the Prime Minister sign a historic agreement to participate in DisabilityCare Australia, and this budget continues to show the serious commitment that our government has made to Queenslanders with disabilities, and particularly for those within the Pine Rivers electorate. This budget commits \$14.8 million for child safety, disability services and social inclusion operating grants specifically for Pine Rivers residents with disabilities and their carers. This funding goes towards accommodation, respite, emergency response, support for school leavers, community care programs, domestic and family violence prevention, homelessness, seniors' participation, individual and youth support programs. This budget also commits \$6.5 million to fund extra respite for people with high-needs disabilities who are aged between 16 and 25 years and their families and carers and to establish Parent Connect. There is \$2 million for Fostering Families, a two-year trial of an intensive family intervention program to target neglect, and \$375,000 for counselling services for victims of child abuse and sexual assault, including access to telephone counselling for children from regional areas

This budget also provides other specific funding that will benefit Pine Rivers, including \$391,000 for Petrie Home Assist Secure and a \$100,000 Get in the Game grant for South Pine Sporting Complex for improved oval lighting. Pine Rivers residents and businesses will also benefit from other Newman government commitments in this budget including \$63 million to provide an additional 267 police officers across the state; \$537 million over five years to implement Great Teachers = Great Results; a further \$100 million as part of the Fixing Our Schools Fund to deal with school facility maintenance backlogs; \$6 million towards boosting prep teacher aide hours in schools of greatest need; \$1 million for the second round of Everyone's Environment grants projects; \$5.8 million to address the current waiting list for adults, adolescents and children requiring cochlear implants; \$147 million over four years to address the backlog of maintenance inherited from the former government at health facilities across the state; and a record \$82 million will be spent on the Safer Roads Sooner program to fast-track the rollout of proven safety treatments such as wider centre lines, audio tactile line markings, safety barriers and improving intersections and line markings.

This budget delivers for Pine Rivers. This budget is a significant step forward in building a better Queensland and building a better Pine Rivers. This budget is a demonstration of the Newman government's commitment to fix Queensland's finances and to grow a stronger Queensland economy to ensure that we remain a great state with great opportunities. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (4.29 pm): It is with great pleasure that I rise to respond to the Treasurer's budget delivered a couple of days ago in this House. I thank the member for Barron River and the member for Pine Rivers for bringing us back on track with a bit of sensible debate on this subject.

It is funny to see the difference that two days makes. On Tuesday we heard our Treasurer in this place outline his plan to put the state back in the black, to get us back where we need to be after the terrible legacy left by the previous failed Labor government. What have we seen in the two days since then? I sat in this place this morning and I listened to the Leader of the Opposition give her budget reply. I must say I was biting my lip through most of her speech. I really struggled to keep quiet when I heard the rubbish coming from the Leader of the Opposition. I waited for a plan; I waited and I waited. But there was no plan. There never is a plan. We heard from the Leader of the Opposition that there was a lot of things that the Labor Party would not do, but we did not hear what it was that they would do. They have no plan. They are fiscal deniers. They are budget deniers and they have absolutely no plan.

We then moved on to the two opposition speakers who spoke before me: the member for Dalrymple representing the north-west branch of the ALP, the ETU funded Katter party—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr HART: That was quite a rant. I was quite pleased to hear the member for Dalrymple actually speak about his electorate for a couple minutes before going off on some ineffectual rant. It was interesting to hear him say that the budget was not about getting rid of debt. I have news for him; the budget is about getting rid of debt. At the end of the day we have quite a large debt in this state and we have to start paying it back. That is exactly what our Treasurer has put forward a plan to do.

We also heard from the 'Premier-in-waiting', from the PUP or whatever it is they are calling themselves nowadays. He stood here and he gave us 'Clive-nomics'. What is 'Clive-nomics'? 'Clive-nomics' is about putting a whole bunch of employees into government and turning this state into one giant mine. We would all hate to see that. We did not see much in the way of policy from the leader of the PUP party either. We have heard in this place before some interesting theories espoused from him, and I will read from his website one particular interesting article that he put forward in a previous speech in this House. The article states—

Dr Douglas said a United Australia Party government would resume any assets sold by the Newman government, without any compensation to the purchaser.

Members can rest assured that is not going to give the people of this state a great deal of confidence in electing Mr Palmer as the Prime Minister of this country! If that is the sort of attitude that the leader of his state party is putting forward, that is certainly not going to help our economy one iota. I table that article for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Statement from website www.alex4gaven.com.au titled 'Alex Douglas MP will protect state assets' [2861].

I would like to speak about the overall financial situation of this state for a few minutes before I move on to my electorate of Burleigh. The budget forecast growth in this state of three per cent. The member for Dalrymple said we were moving into recession. I do not think that growth of three per cent indicates a recession, but maybe he knows something I do not.

It is important to point out that revenue forecasts have fallen by a massive \$5.3 billion since this government was elected last year and, of course, that has a dramatic effect on our budget. This budget includes a write-down in general taxation royalties of \$1.9 billion and a decrease of more than \$695 million in GST payments over the forward estimates. For the 2013-14 year the government will record a fiscal deficit of \$7.7 billion and, as we all know, the Labor Party has to take a large portion of the blame—in fact, all the blame—for that. The Newman government is focused on economic growth, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. By working together we are ensuring Queensland remains a great state with a great opportunity.

I would like to speak about some of the benefits in the budget for Burleigh. We all know that we have a massive white elephant in the Tugun desalination plant, a plant that cost \$1.2 billion to build. According to a 2011 Productivity Commission inquiry into the Gold Coast desalination plant, the operating and maintenance costs of that plant in 2011-12 were \$4,403 per megalitre. It is a white elephant, but we have it. We have to make it effective and we have to use it. It is a good emergency water supply. This government is moving towards minimising the cost of running that desalination plant by putting it into 'hot standby' mode with its use limited to the mitigation of critical supply emergencies. This will result in an annual saving of \$9 million.

There is also \$964 million in the budget for the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service. As we all know, the Gold Coast is a thriving community. We have to build on our health services. We have a fantastic new hospital underway and this amount of money will fast-track that hospital's development.

There is \$5.454 million for new accommodation at Miami State High School, which is 100 yards from my office. It has a backlog of \$4 million worth of maintenance.

A government member: \$4 million?

Mr HART: Yes, \$4 million. That is the most of any school in this state. Something has to be done about that in the future.

Burleigh is doing its bit for public housing. We have been allocated \$2.152 million for the construction of another 10 dwellings of public housing in Burleigh. There are 23,226 people currently waiting for public housing. Isn't that amazing? We are building 10 houses in Burleigh to go towards meeting that need. We are also putting \$26 million of initial funding towards the Commonwealth Games which are to be held in 2018. We have \$10.4 million of operating grants for child safety, disability services and social inclusion programs.

Mr Cox interjected.

Mr HART: I am happy that the member is glad we are to receive that.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as you would know, we have a police helicopter on the Gold Coast and this budget allocates another \$3 million towards continuing that service. Last Friday I went to the Westpac Lifesaver Helicopter Rescue Service. I had a flight in a rescue helicopter and I also had a look at the police helicopter while I was there. This is a boon for our state. We should have had a police helicopter years and years ago, but the last government absolutely refused to commence that

service. I heard firsthand from the officers how good this police helicopter is. They can sit four or five kilometres away from an event that is occurring. They can then turn their camera onto something and, using thermal imaging, they can see somebody hiding under a boat or behind a door. They can even see if the person has a gun. They can then direct police officers to exactly where that person is located. They can say, 'Turn left, go down that alley. He is standing behind that door and he has a gun. So be careful.' This is absolutely fantastic for the Gold Coast and for Queensland in general. I really hope the police minister moves towards establishing more of these police helicopters. I note the Westpac service is currently importing another helicopter, which will be painted in police colours—white and blue. That is going to be fantastic to see on the Gold Coast.

Madam Deputy Speaker, in conclusion, I am sure you are fully aware that the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, our local newspaper on the Gold Coast, marks us particularly hard. So if we see something from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* praising our budget we know that we are on track. I will quote from yesterday's *Gold Coast Bulletin* editorial. It states—

Budget not pretty but necessary

Premier Campbell Newman and his Treasurer Tim Nicholls have handed down a difficult and challenging Budget but it is a responsible document at a time when governments are simply never going to win a popularity contest.

Australians need to understand that the days of everybody winning a prize in state and federal budgets are long gone. Austerity is the new black for governments and with Europe continuing to do it tough, and the United States economy far from being resurgent, this trend will continue for some time.

Paying off the state's debt is Mr Newman's priority.

I hope the member for Dalrymple is listening to that. It continues—

Paying off the state's debt is Mr Newman's priority. And so it should be. Queensland's economy needs back its triple A rating and the projection is we will be back in surplus by 2016.

With those few words, I commend the Treasurer for this second fantastic budget, for getting this state back into the black, and I commend the bill to the House. I will table this for the benefit of the House.

Tabled paper: Gold Coast Bulletin online article, dated 5 June 2013, titled 'Budget not pretty but necessary' [\[2862\]](#).



Mr BENNETT (Burnett—LNP) (4.41 pm): I am proud to rise and support this strong budget, and I am proud to add to the debate. I do remind myself often of what a great honour it is to represent the electorate of Burnett.

One of the great things about today is that in addition to it being Queensland Day, it is also my 26th anniversary. To my loving and understanding wife, I say happy anniversary.

Those on this side of the House take their role in the Legislative Assembly seriously and they demonstrate their loyalty to their constituents and their party. In speaking to this appropriation bill, I acknowledge the role that the Treasurer, cabinet and my colleagues have played in attempting to fairly deal with the debt legacy of those opposite. To ensure future prosperity, we need to manage our state's assets and wealth creation for all Queenslanders.

Natural disasters have caused significant impacts in my region and other regions. Flooding in 2010-11 and 2013 caused major loss and damage: 4,500 properties were damaged, 500 businesses were affected, and many state and local government roads and rail lines were badly affected. It is welcome that this budget allocates \$4.2 billion in 2013-14, increasing to \$9.2 billion, to be spent on Queensland's much needed recovery.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight the disgraceful antics of the Australian Labor Party, which used my community as a pawn in their dark political games of disaster resilience funding. Never before had we had the opportunity to provide real resilience and sensible betterment investment. It was an insult to have \$40 million offered to Queensland, when we clearly needed over \$100 million. I hope and pray for a 14 September result that will see more common-sense economic and public finance allocated to a new approach to disaster recovery and preparedness.

We repeatedly see the incompetent Australian Labor Party fumbling the ball. I hear repeatedly from my constituents that they understand this government's obligation to make decisions to take action, to make our state's future better, and to make the electorate better. After years of neglect and poor representation, this budget delivers and puts Queensland first.

There was a huge impact on the agricultural sector, including sugar cane and fruit and vegetable production. This government is committed to the agriculture sector, strong policies, strong investment and recognition of the importance of a sustainable future. Local irrigators have been given the opportunity to take part in the local management review of Queensland's irrigation schemes. This is about giving organisations like the Bundaberg regional irrigators group an opportunity to demonstrate how these schemes will be transferred to viable long-term local entities.

I want to highlight the practical reforms that have been introduced to assist farming sectors in my electorate—practical reforms to Queensland's vegetation management framework, restoring balance to vegetation laws, marking the end of years of neglect in the agricultural sector. These new vegetation management laws represent the most significant reforms affecting the rural sector in decades, and they mark the beginning of a new era of production in Queensland.

Landholders will save money with the introduction of self-assessable codes of routine vegetation management and ways of managing weeds and pests. This government will assist landowners affected by the flooding. Growers will be able to benefit from \$20 million on-farm productivity and riparian recovery programs to deliver practical on-ground solutions to repair damage and better prepare for future events.

The establishment of a stand-alone agriculture department has seen significant advancements. The investment in sugar industry research and development is further evidence of this government's commitment to the Bundaberg region's farming industry. Additional biosecurity officers, recovery officers and fisheries recovery officers in Bundaberg are just some of the many reforms implemented to assist the farming families in my electorate.

I am supportive of the investment in the agriculture sector, especially the funding for sugar cane industry research and development. The peak agricultural organisation Growcom has said that the state budget has included a number of positives for agriculture, reflecting the LNP's commitment to the industry—one of the four pillars of our economy.

I note and welcome the Queensland Farmers Federation comments on the budget providing the potential to create positive outcomes for the farming sector: the Queensland agriculture strategy which includes a drought relief package; \$8 million over four years for healthy waterways; increased funding for coal seam gas regulation; funding over five years for initiatives that will protect the Great Barrier Reef; and \$8.5 million over four years toward a community service obligation for rural irrigation.

Rising input costs such as electricity and water remain some of the biggest challenges facing our state's farmers, and I look forward to working toward a suitable sustainable outcome.

I mention again the desperate need in my electorate to flood proof roads, especially the Fingerboard Road and the Essenden Bridge. We have lobbied hard on these issues, and I express my disappointment that there is no money in this budget to be allocated to the design and documentation of those essential roadworks.

I certainly have some great news to promote in the electorate, including the \$15,000 grant for first home owners and the boost to the construction sector. Funding for the Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services portfolio will increase to \$2.8 billion and, importantly, the budget delivers to some of Queensland's most vulnerable people, including those who have experienced domestic violence, elder abuse, children in foster care, and people with disabilities.

Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service has received a boost of \$8.3 million, around two per cent of its \$450 million budget. A total of \$2.8 million has been allocated to build long awaited dental centres in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. Work is to start this coming year. Further good news will be the \$97 million boost over four years for the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, plus \$325,000 to build a facility to provide autism early intervention services in Bundaberg.

On top of these big wins for the region, there is \$1.5 million for the replacement of the ambulance station, plus \$14 million for disability service grants. A separate amount of \$2 million will provide minor capital health projects and acquisitions, and \$2.14 million will go towards health technology repairs and replacements. A further \$8.3 million will increase Bundaberg and Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service's budget, empower the local board to tackle waiting lists, and enable infrastructure projects such as the oral health facility and autism early intervention service facility to go ahead.

In other good news, \$4.74 million is to be spent on the Isis Highway between Bundaberg and Childers and there is an increase in funding of \$5 million for the Bruce Highway with specific funding between Maryborough and Childers. Of course, we all talk about the \$160,000 available to our schools to fix up the backlog of maintenance. It is truly a great initiative and it is welcomed.

With reference to an electoral region that has a large span of disadvantage, I welcome the targeted measures provided for Queenslanders with low incomes and special needs. The concessional statement highlights the broader subsidies that are in place to improve assessability and affordability of services to all Queenslanders. The value of concessions in the Newman government's 2013-14 Concessions Statement is estimated at over \$5.1 billion. This is approximately four times the value of the concessions identified by Labor in its last budget.


In addition, the concessions continue. I will not read them out. We have all read them and we are very excited by them, but I do want to talk about the additional \$130 million for the freeze on car registration; \$900 million to reinstate the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty; and, of course, \$63 million for the tariff 11 freeze.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge investment in tourism and sport. Both were badly neglected by the previous local member but are now being managed and resourced for the benefit of my electorate. Country racing and national parks receive special treatment, and I thank the ministers.

The two aspects of the budget which give me the greatest pleasure and pride in our government are the record investments in health and schools. After years of neglect and black political days, there is now progress. There is now improvement, and I want to thank the local hospital board, in particular the previous chair, Gary Kirk, whose leadership drove the reforms needed. The Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service's chief executive officer, Adrian Pennington, is a strong and determined manager who delivers great and unprecedented results. The men and women who moulded these reforms need to be congratulated. I congratulate the Bundaberg Base Hospital.

The constituents who have seen record improvements in waiting times for surgery and treatment at emergency departments also say thank you to everyone involved. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the leadership team of the cabinet for its continued tremendous support to the region after the disaster events of January-February 2013. I could not have asked for more, and I am very, very pleased to be a member of this government.

This is an excellent budget for Queensland. It is also the Treasurer's second budget. I congratulate him and his ministerial and departmental staff on what has been a well delivered and well received budget. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Ms MILLARD** (Sandgate—LNP) (4.49 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the appropriation bills for 2013. Firstly, I commend the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, the member for Clayfield, on the delivery of a solid and sensible budget. This budget is not reckless with spending, as tough times and a mountainous legacy of debt dictates, but it is not short on concessions to help Queenslanders navigate the coming year—close to \$5.2 billion in concessions to be exact. I also acknowledge the Premier, the ministers and their departments, who have worked hard to put together a budget that makes substantial progress towards stopping the rot from spreading and destroying the potential of the Queensland economy and those of us who rely on it.

I note that 2013 began with yet more natural disasters in Queensland—a severe weather event with a budgetary impact of over \$9 billion. I saw some of the impact in my own electorate of Sandgate—obviously not as harsh as in some areas—and I commend our government for a \$40 million betterment package that will deal with the unexpected impacts of disasters by building resilience rather than simply rebuilding structures over and over again.

While our expectations of achieving a fiscal surplus in 2014-15 need to be readjusted to the following year, we are not caught entirely unawares. This is in contrast to what we recently witnessed in the dismal May budget result in Canberra with an awe-inspiring underestimation of \$17 billion in revenue. I am pleased to say that this government is prepared, this government is responsible, this government can do its maths and this government will not die trying to wildly spend money that it does not have.

Recently I celebrated, as did a vast majority of other members, my first year as an MP in government. We are solidly on our way in our first term of government and it is apt to reflect now not only on what is being handed down in this budget but also on what has already been promised and

delivered. Only the past can really tell us about the trustworthiness and effectiveness of our leadership. Here I believe the LNP government has excelled, and I will outline just some of the core promises our government has delivered on.

The \$7,000 stamp duty tax for primary home buyers has been abolished, making housing more affordable. Registration of the family car has been frozen to ease cost-of-living pressures on families. Labor's forecast fare increases over 2013-14 were halved and go card holders received extra concessions, resulting in total expected savings of up to \$2,000 for commuters over two years. Electricity tariff 11 was frozen and concession rebates worth up to \$282 per annum were put in place. There was also the \$80 water rebate for South-East Queensland households.

Seeing all of this, we can approach our future with confidence and listen to forecasts about declining debt-revenue ratios with trust. I note that electricity costs remain a significant concern in my community, despite recent measures, and I, along with my parliamentary colleagues, recognise that more needs to be done to tackle the inefficiencies. But I must also point out that electricity consumers could save roughly \$200 straightaway by simply losing the complete waste of space that is the carbon tax. Let me be clear: I am all for environmental responsibility, but there is no evidence to support that this tax is any more than a failed revenue-raising effort by the federal Labor government minus real environmental outcomes and reducing the spending power of households.

I turn now to my electorate of Sandgate. I am proud of the fact that I stand here representing my constituents in the full knowledge that this government has not only delivered on its promises to us but also brought about strategic and lasting improvements in essential infrastructure and road safety, education, community and disability services, and childhood sports participation.

A commitment to massive upgrades of infrastructure in my electorate was immediately launched after the election of the Newman LNP government. This budget sees a further amount of almost \$100 million committed in 2013-14 to complete the Telegraph Road overpass and the Sandgate train station upgrade, and the widening of the Gateway between Sandgate and Depot roads from two to three lanes as part of the Gateway Additional Lane project. Commuters in my electorate will also benefit from the \$16 million earmarked to upgrade the Gateway Motorway south of Nudgee Road to the Deagon Deviation. Now all we need is a federal conservative government willing to put some real money into our corner of the world so we can boast some of the best road and passenger rail infrastructure anywhere.

Nine schools in my electorate have received \$1.15 million to clear maintenance backlogs, and there is a further commitment of \$100 million state-wide in the 2013-14 budget to upgrade long-neglected school infrastructure. In addition, 10 of my local kindergartens have received \$5,000 each—a total of \$50,000—to upgrade their facilities. School safety flashing lights worth over \$60,000 have been installed at Nashville and Taigum state schools. Never before have we enjoyed such quality choices for the care and education environment of our children. The opposition may call this buildings and mortar—they were eventually going to run short of places to build school halls—but I say that we have to take care of the things we value and that spending now to prevent further neglect means our kids will not have to wear it for their future.

Community groups in my area have received government funding and grants from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund and Caring for our Community well in excess of half a million dollars to deliver social programs enhancing social and employment opportunities and protecting vulnerable citizens.

In the sports arena, government funding has increased participation and potential. The 4017 and 4018 postcodes boast many sporting clubs and facilities, many of which have been neglected. A sum of \$60,000 was recently allocated towards a track upgrade at the Deagon Racecourse, which will host its first race day meeting in over 70 years in September. Up to \$15,000 worth of vouchers were given to families to use for joining sporting clubs under the Get in the Game program, and 25 of our clubs have already registered for the July grants round. I have been impressed to see \$146,000 well spent on upgrades to lighting and facilities at the Sandgate Hawks and Brighton Roosters sports clubs since the 2012 budget. The Sandgate Golf Club also received over \$10,000 from our disaster relief program to assist sporting clubs with recovery following the extreme weather event experienced in January. I visibly see the difference this support makes to the morale and satisfaction of club trainers and our young, budding sports men and women. I applaud the tripling of the Get in the Game program to \$18 million per year so that these positive outcomes will continue to be realised.

In the 2013 budget the Sandgate electorate also stands to benefit from new funding. Yes, we must also exercise restraint following the wrack and ruin of our economy, but targeted measures are certainly not insignificant in terms of strategic rewards. Home Assist Secure Sandgate will receive \$259,000 to continue delivering home maintenance services to people aged over 60 years and to the disabled, enabling them to continue living in their homes. This valuable program has been shown to improve health outcomes and the emotional health of its clients. I know that HAS Sandgate provides an exemplary community service. Some \$3.8 million will be spent on locally based disability services, accommodation, respite and community care programs; \$1.7 million will be spent on placement and intensive family support programs under the child safety program; and \$153,000 will be provided in support of local domestic and family violence prevention programs. In sum, since this government has taken office, with what has been delivered and what is committed, the people of my electorate directly benefit in the order of some \$110 million, as far as I can quantify it.

More generically, I want to draw attention to other budget highlights of particular interest to my community. These include the recruitment of extra front-line police, with a further 267 to be employed this year, and \$1 million over four years being rolled out to strengthen the capacity of Neighbourhood Watch as a force against community crime. I personally have watched this grassroots organisation grow and have attended a number of new launches. I believe that this is a good initiative that recognises that effective public safety starts between neighbours in our very own backyard.

I commend the \$5.8 million health initiative to be rolled out by Metro North Hospital and Health Service to reduce waiting lists on cochlear implants for children through to adults, and the \$327 million fund to deal with the health maintenance facilities backlog. One practical example of this is the approval I recently received to have buildings at Brighton Health Campus finally demolished and removed after sitting empty and locked up for years due to serious neglect for many years before that by the previous government. This is another case of how we must literally stop the rot to move forward and rebuild.

With around 250 people in the Sandgate electorate sitting on the social housing register, I applaud the \$15.67 million Community Rent Scheme to provide transitional assistance to those in the high or very high need category, as well as a further \$6.4 million towards crisis housing.


I would like to speak in support of the over \$4 million in funding to boost agricultural and food security initiatives. This may seem far removed from our city electorates, but many of us realise that a strong and resilient agricultural sector means a secure food bowl, which in turn improves export potential and creates jobs. This sector is crucial to the quality and sustainability of living for all Queenslanders.

Last but not least I mention our local small business sector, which has by no means been forgotten by our government. Some 145 statutory decisions have been made to decrease regulatory burdens on business since the LNP government came to power in 2012. It is clear that this will be an ongoing process of reform and, in some cases, full-scale rejuvenation. I am pleased that Trade and Investment Queensland will become an independent entity with some teeth to exploit economic development opportunities and to find new markets that will better place us to take advantage of the Asian century.

I am proud to say that it is in the DNA of conservative governments to understand that businesses mostly need an environment conducive to growth. They do not need nor want handouts and certainly they do not need nor want a manual wrapped up in red tape. This is one reason why this Queensland government can boast some of the lowest tax income rates in Australia and the lowest rates of expenses growth since 1998-99. Just one illustration of this is the very budget papers we now debate—competitively outsourced to non-government printers, delivered in record time, of high quality and at a good price. Yes, we will always support small business—the mainstay of Queensland's economy—and this, I am proud to say, is one of the official trademarks of a conservative government.

In conclusion, this budget is responsible and restrained, with spending choices to guide Queenslanders out of the dark, debt-laden state that the previous government ploughed us into and into a strong, stable future. Despite restraint, key services remain central: health spending is up \$532.7 million; education is up \$707.4 million; housing services spending is up \$24 million; disability services spending is up \$1.4 billion, also paving a path towards a much welcome National Disability Insurance Scheme, also known as DisabilityCare; and spending on law and order is up \$129.6 million. This budget is balanced. Do we all want more for our electorates and our constituents? As previously mentioned in the past 12 months, of course we do. But it is only natural that if we do not pay down the debt and balance the books we will continue to receive less. So not

only does this budget attempt to balance the books literally; it also finds a balance between economic development imperatives and social needs and between economic responsibility and community concerns. I commend the 2013 Appropriation Bill to the House.


 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (5.01 pm): I rise to speak on the 2013 budget. I am very pleased that the budget recognises that Kuraby State School has long needed a new administration building, and \$1.218 million has been allocated to improving this small but growing school. There are three new housing developments in the near vicinity and the room that is the current administration is completely inadequate. The students and staff long suffered in a very unpleasant environment for many years under the previous Labor government. I am pleased to announce that work will start in August and be completed for the next school year. Also in this budget \$3.892 million in public library grants has been provided under the public library grants scheme to supply library resources to public libraries throughout Queensland. As a keen advocate for clean rivers and creeks, I am proud that this LNP government recognises the 20 years of neglect of the previous Labor government in allowing them to become polluted. Some \$2 million has been allocated to continue the Healthy Waterways program in South-East Queensland. Energex will establish a new zone substation at Parkinson to increase network capacity and improve reliability to many areas, including Stretton, at a total cost of \$18 million.

Some \$3.431 million is being provided to realign traffic lanes on the south-east arterial road, which is called the Pacific Motorway, to increase the capacity of the five-kilometre stretch of road which, during peak times, carries about 4,000 vehicles per hour. That has come in less than the projected cost of \$5 million stated previously, but the previous government was going to spend almost \$100 million on this project. So we have saved more than \$95 million just by using our heads. Warrigal Road Green Link bus priority works has been given \$6.5 million. The South East Busway from Woolloongabba to Springwood has been given \$1.289 million. Some \$15.82 million has been allocated for the South East Busway extension from Eight Mile Plains bus station to Priestdale Road. The South East Busway extension runs between Eight Mile Plains and Springwood. The first stage of the busway extends from Eight Mile Plains bus station to School Road, Rochedale, and includes provision for a future extension towards Springwood. It will provide faster and more reliable public transport options for communities in Underwood and Rochedale to Brisbane Technology Park in Eight Mile Plains and delivers an integrated transport corridor that balances the needs of active public and road transport users.

This section is being delivered as part of works to extend the Gateway Motorway southbound on-ramp to the Pacific Motorway, providing a more efficient and reliable motorway and supporting transport infrastructure with capacity to accommodate future growth. This provides a safer and improved connection for the Gateway Motorway and the Pacific Motorway. It will provide sustainable transport outcomes for the communities along the motorway corridor between Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road in Wishart and Mackenzie and the Pacific Motorway at Eight Mile Plains, Rochedale. The Gateway Motorway southbound on-ramp to the Pacific Motorway is one of Queensland's busiest on-ramps, with an average of 30,000 vehicle movements per day. Extending and upgrading the on-ramp alignment will improve safety and reliability for motorists, allowing more distance and time to merge with through traffic.

Some \$1.751 billion has been allocated to Metro South Hospital and Health Service for 2013-14 to deliver public healthcare services, including the reopening of obstetric and procedural services at the Beaudesert Hospital, the opening of the soon-to-be-completed QEII endoscopy suites, the opening of the expanded emergency department, and expanded maternal and child health services under the Mums and Bubs initiative.

Some \$97,670,000 will be spent on natural disaster relief and recovery arrangements. Recovery and reconstruction projects in the region will include funding for critical community infrastructure projects in partnership with the Australian government. This will top up funding by the Australian government under the Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements. Stretton will also benefit greatly from funding to the community at large, with \$3,517,000 going to child safety. Disability services will receive \$16,954,000, and I know this will be very much welcomed by Multicap and Kyabra in the Stretton electorate. Some \$1.581 million will also be provided for social inclusion projects. The total expenditure of programs mentioned in which Stretton has a share is \$2,371,000,000. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Dr DAVIS** (Stafford—LNP) (5.07 pm): 'Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the dead generations weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.' These words from Karl Marx might well apply to our Treasurer as he skilfully crafted his budget to palliate the debt and deficit resulting from the gross incompetence of the now dead Beattie-Bligh governments and the current walking dead federal government.

A government member: Well said!

Dr DAVIS: Thank you. Some challenges such as the massive non-productive debt and a damaged credit rating can be addressed through increasing productivity and skilfully targeted government spending. Far more dangerous are situations where financial constraints railroad governments into short-term strategies, particularly those of a structural nature that are contrary to the long-term interests of future generations. To illustrate this, I wish to start by describing a real-world scenario that is in the best interests of future generations. At 8 am on Wednesday, 30 November 2011, in-patients began the move to the new \$1 billion Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne. This new world-class, 357-bed tertiary paediatric hospital with state-of-the-art facilities provides the best health care and environment for patients, families and staff. It was announced in 2005 and commissioned on time and on budget.

This was achieved through a high degree of collaboration with a range of expert stakeholders and a total commitment to visibly complying with the public interest. That enabled the project to win numerous awards, including Project of the Year at Infrastructure Partnerships Australia's National Infrastructure Awards 2012 and the 2012 Australian Institute of Architects Victorian Architecture Medal. Furthermore, the project, coming in on budget, has allowed the Victorian government to recently announce the rebuilding of another major children's teaching hospital to serve Melbourne and Victoria.

I contrast that with a Beattie-Bligh nightmare that already weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living and will continue to do so. In 2006, after a seriously flawed process that did not comply with good planning practices or the public interest test, then Premier Beattie announced the development of a new children's hospital in Anna Bligh's electorate at a cost of \$700 million to be completed by 2011. Given its unfortunate pedigree, it is not surprising that here we are in mid-2013 with this hospital way behind schedule and way over budget to the tune of some \$800 million. Indeed, in this budget Treasurer Nicholls has had to inject hundreds of millions of dollars to allow compliance with construction contracts.

If the consequences of bad decisions and bad planning were just wasted time and money, one might just grin and bear it. However, the real danger is the long-term detrimental impact on children's and women's health services as well as research and teaching. In the haste by the Beattie-Bligh government to hand out favours to their political cronies, the consequences of closing Brisbane's Royal Children's Hospital were not adequately contemplated and, not surprisingly, remain structurally insoluble.

Similar to assurances provided by bureaucrats prior to the launch of the disastrous Queensland Health payroll system, assurances that we will simply power through the consequences of closing the world-class Royal Children's Hospital defy the real-world test. Highly experienced clinician leaders do not believe that the critical links between the Royal Children's Hospital and the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital can simply be broken without serious consequences for all stakeholders. This particularly applies in the case of complex obstetric services and neonatal care. There is also the matter of access for children and families not only in north Brisbane but throughout Queensland for those who wish to exercise their right to choice and contestability. Add to that the dislocation of children's health care from the massive investment in world-class research and teaching facilities on the Herston campus.

Just as payroll programmers say that the deeply flawed payroll system should have been tested before going live, so, too, the deeply flawed QCH decision needs to be tested before even contemplating the closure of the Royal Children's Hospital. The LNP Women called for this at an LNP council meeting earlier this year, stating—

That this State Council of the LNP calls on the State Government to maintain the Royal Children's Hospital at Herston, at no lower than its present level of internationally renowned patient care until a thorough review by an independent panel of experts can be undertaken, and report presented, of the long-term future of the health service to Queensland Children by Queensland Health and the report is to also look at the impact the relocation will have on allied health agencies such as the Queensland Ambulance Service.

There is yet another good reason to not close the Royal Children's Hospital, which was identified by the Hon. Mark McArdle when he was shadow health minister. In August 2009, he described the whole project as 'a very costly planning failure from the moment it was first announced' and—

As a result, the QCH has been built with fewer beds than promised, and will be at critical capacity as soon as it opens.

This view was further echoed in an interview with the LNP leader on radio station 4BC on 21 March 2012, as reported in the *Brisbane Times*, with the now Premier stating—

They are building a new hospital, which was a political decision. There won't be enough beds about two years after it's opened.

The Premier stated further—


The LNP is aware the new hospital won't achieve what is required so we have to have an approach of keeping facilities open or some of it open or expand elsewhere.

The need to consider keeping the Royal Children's Hospital open is further supported by demographic data. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Queensland is projected to experience the largest percentage increase in population, more than doubling the 2007 population of 4.2 million to 8.7 million people by 2056. As a result, Queensland is projected to replace Victoria as Australia's second most populous state in 2050. When it comes to metropolitan growth, the population of Brisbane is projected to increase from 1.9 million people to four million people. Specifically, when it comes to the population of children in the 10 years to 2011, Queensland recorded the largest increase in population aged under 15 followed by Western Australia and Victoria. Queensland also had the fastest growth in this age group, up to 15 per cent over this period.

Not surprisingly, the case for more than one specialised children's hospital is recognised in other major Australian capital cities. As a result of the new initiatives that I referred to earlier, Victoria has approximately one specialist children's hospital bed per 100,000 head of population. Should the Royal Children's Hospital in Brisbane be allowed to close, Queensland's ratio will drop to 0.78—20 per cent less than the Victorian standard. That will be greatly exacerbated by the population growth that I have just referred to. Suggestions that we should be putting paediatric beds into the Prince Charles Hospital is simply wrong, because that hospital does not have the critical on-site obstetric and other critical linkages that I referred to earlier.

I make no apology for having used my budget reply to focus on children's health services, because this sorry saga provides insights into why the Beattie-Bligh government has left this state in such a sorry condition both financially and structurally. It also highlights opportunities for this government to begin the process of recovery and rehabilitation—a process that has already begun. Some changes, such as applying the public interest test to the case for keeping the Royal Children's Hospital open, will require courage rather than simply dancing to the tune of dead governments.

I look forward to our fresh and capable government matching and exceeding Victoria's success story not only when it comes to children's health services but also across a broad range of government responsibility and leadership. Budgets are a critical tool in that process and I congratulate the Treasurer and his staff on this budget. I look forward to the next budget and commend this budget to the House.

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (5.17 pm): This budget directly reflects the deep wound that was inflicted on the state by the previous Labor governments in their almost 20 years of total mismanagement. It is a wound so deep that it will take the disciplined Newman led LNP government several budgets just to stop the bleeding. Last year's once-in-a-generation budget, delivered by our Treasurer Tim Nicholls, was aimed at stopping the bleeding and restoring the vital signs of life to the state finances that had not only been neglected but also been given no hope of reviving under Labor.

We all know the signs are still there, with the loss of our AAA rating, teetering on another downgrade, with growing debt and a deficit that has gone to over \$7 billion owing in part to the reduction in the revenue to the state. Some may say that this deficit has grown under an LNP government, but I say that it is only this LNP government, with its four-pillar economy focus, that will see the situation turn around. We have not only cut the waste but also allowed the green shoots of recovery to sprout. We are left again to make the hard decisions with only three options: increase taxes, reduce services or take on higher debt. Higher debt is not an option with the level we have currently and what is forecast for the future.

Since coming to office, revenue is down by more than \$4.5 billion—something that the previous Labor government never focused in its latter years. It was too busy spending. The budget will project a small deficit in 2014-15 of approximately \$300 million, which, if achieved, will be a huge turnaround

for the people of Queensland. This budget indicates a further decrease in revenue of \$1.2 billion, which has made it harder to achieve a surplus and with GST revenue down by \$531 million, it shows that at present the private sector and small business are fighting reduced revenues. I know that not only are small businesses finding it hard to increase their returns but also we still see the cost of living being a real issue affecting families.

I know that not only are small businesses finding it hard to increase their returns, we still see the cost of living being a real issue affecting all families. We recognised this coming into power and implemented the following measures: \$32.3 million over three years to freeze car registration fees for family vehicles; we are reinstating the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty, providing savings of up to \$7,000 when buying a home—this not only brings costs down for homeowners but helps to promote revenue growth through the construction industry; we froze tariff 11 electricity prices in our first year to ease the cost-of-living pressure from rising electricity which is a huge burden on this state and something this government and the Minister for Water and Energy, Mark McArdle, is tackling head on.

Federal Labor, backed by those opposite and their Green faction, must carry a large portion of the blame for putting pressure on families with green costs driving up electricity prices. Queensland electricity prices will be 18.9 per cent higher because of the impact of green schemes like the Solar Bonus Scheme, the Carbon Tax and Renewable Energy Target. It is vitally important for Queenslanders to understand that the Solar Bonus Scheme is costing households heavily, as the 80 per cent of households that do not have solar are contributing more than the 20 per cent that do. The overly generous Solar Bonus Scheme did not evenly pass on the real cost of poles and wires to support feeding solar back into the grid.

The Newman government is looking at ways to reduce the impact of green schemes on households. The previous government legislated for the solar feed-in tariffs until 2028 and this will cost other electricity consumers almost \$3 billion to support. We must be careful not to pass on the blame to those who signed up to the program. They acted in good faith and the Newman government will meet its promise to keep the legislated 44c per kilowatt rate for customers who remain eligible, but we need to have dialogue on how to make the system more equitable for the majority of consumers.

People in North Queensland and my city of Townsville appreciate the efforts of this LNP government in its subsidy of electricity costs through the Customer Service Obligation to the tune of about \$615 million, making our bills comparable to those in the south-east where they have competition in the market. Mineral processors such as Korea Zinc, QNI and the Xstrata copper refinery are vital in contributing to state taxes and, in Townsville, as our largest private employers, but they are all hurting due to rising electricity prices. If we want to see such industry remain, along with new developments in my region, it is important that we find better ways to provide energy more efficiently, reliably and at competitive prices.

In the agricultural sector, which I was once part of, irrigators will see their revenues continue to decline if we cannot do something about keeping the expense of their operations down. I do believe they know it is an LNP government that will achieve this and only an LNP government that would have the will to achieve this. Today we see the minister has capped electricity cost increases for irrigators at 10 per cent.

While we see this budget has funding cuts and increased taxes within its fabric, it has been done with an equity that sees all parts of the state engage in belt-tightening, from the metropolitan streets to our regional towns. This government came in with five pledges to the people of Queensland: grow a four-pillar economy; lower the cost of living for families by cutting waste; deliver better infrastructure and planning; revitalise front-line services; and restore accountability in government. It is those five pledges that I renew today as I stand behind the Premier and his cabinet with this budget. While they and all in this government have not finished the task yet of getting Queensland back on track, we have made huge inroads.

The four-pillar economy focus has helped in areas such as tourism and the resource sector. We have lowered cost-of-living pressures by freezing the family's car registration cost. We have initiated Economic Development Queensland to facilitate economic development throughout Queensland. Front-line services have been a priority. We have seen the restructuring of the Queensland Police Service which has taken more officers from behind desks and put them where they are needed—on our streets. The announcement that we are publishing the performance of all hospitals across the state so all Queenslanders can see their performance proves we are being accountable.

Under the LNP government, ministers will once again be responsible for their departments. This government's first action was to repeal the laws that made it legal to lie in parliament. Our accountability is not just shown with the monthly diaries of the ministers made public, it was started with a 100-day plan which led to our first six-month plan and then our second.

Reduced revenues to the state have altered our hopes of a surplus but we are still determined to achieve this while delivering on 148 actions announced in the six-month action plan. Some of the 148 actions include: 130 new and replacement ambulance vehicles and an additional 60 ambulance officers; conduct and promote a state-wide amnesty campaign for illegal and unregistered firearms; employ an additional 10 Indigenous rangers in Far North Queensland; release government's youth strategy; commence implementing the government's response to the Queensland Skills and Training Taskforce final report recommendations; funding for 700 schools to clear maintenance backlogs; implement a new Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme; establish the Queensland Mental Health Commission; launch a 30-year strategic plan for Queensland agriculture; and commence the JP pilot program in QCAT as part of our commitment to a swift and fair justice system.

From this year's budget I am pleased to announce the following great news announcement for Thuringowa: through the Transport and Roads Investment Program, \$16 million has been allocated towards the Herveys Range Developmental Road. This will fund pavement and rehabilitation works on a total of 24.5 kilometres of the Herveys Range Developmental Road starting at Gumlow Road. As this road services a Defence Force training camp which is important to our city, TMR is undertaking ongoing consultation with Defence Force personnel to ensure their operations are not impacted. This announcement will also please the 1,000 or so residents in Rupertswood and Rangewood.


The extension of the Townsville Ring Road will also get underway with \$4 million set aside in the 2013-14 budget. Residents in the city will all benefit once work is complete.

Funding to clear the school maintenance backlog will not only make our schools safer but also provide a better environment in which to learn. By cutting red tape, we can now allow individual schools and their P&C committees to maximise outcomes for their maintenance dollar by working with independent local contractors as evidenced by the experience of Rasmussen State School. Kirwan State High School has been allocated \$5 million to build new facilities, something I have fought for. As the largest school in the region, if not the state, it is long overdue. Thuringowa State High School will also receive over a quarter of a million dollars for refurbishment.

The Upper Ross Community Centre has an important role in the Thuringowa community but has outgrown its ramshackle building and outdated facilities. The commencement of funding announced in this budget will enable the centre to move nearby, adjacent to the Upper Ross PCYC and Men's Shed, to create a new community hub. This project is one I feel passionate about and I have fought hard to get it to this stage. The prospect of almost a million dollars towards breaking ground on the new centre fulfils an election promise I made to my constituents. I can guarantee that that means a lot of smiles in the Upper Ross, which I guess is to be expected as next door is the home of the Cowboys in 1300 SMILE Stadium.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Mr COX: They may do. We will see, member for Gregory. We knew going in that this would be a difficult budget. Treasurer Nicholls has made some tough but fair decisions, balancing our state's debts and the need to provide services. I feel we have achieved that balance, and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (5.27 pm): I rise in the House today to speak in support of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013. In the 15 months since our election, this Newman led government has concentrated on restoring confidence, reducing our reliance on debt, positioning our great state at the forefront and ensuring collectively that we are able to adapt to change and competition. Our continual growth and rebuilding will ensure that we are more resilient to future challenges as and when they appear.

As a government, we are acutely aware of the challenges faced by most families throughout our electorates. Like most household budgets under strain for various reasons, this government is making decisions to do without rather than recklessly increasing debt and mortgaging the wealth of future generations, as those opposite did consistently. We are aware, too, that there are some individuals or families that simply cannot bear further strain upon their household budget. This is why,

in this year's budget, we have made numerous concessions, many not previously offered. The value of concessions in the Newman government's 2013-14 Concessions Statement is estimated at over \$5.1 billion. This is around 3.7 times the value of concessions identified by Labor in its last budget.

Some of the concessions that are likely to be utilised by residents of the Ferny Grove electorate could be: \$1.2 billion in general public transport subsidies; \$409 million in assistance under the government managed housing rental rebate; doubling the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to \$10 million in 2013-14 to ensure low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 if needed; or the \$28.3 million increase in the electricity rebate scheme to \$136 million for eligible pensioners. Further, patrons of the train network will also have saved \$444.96 over a two-year period through go card concessions from the three-zone Ferny Grove station, a stark contrast to the 15 per cent year-on-year increases proposed by those opposite.

Many of the hardships faced by our government are a result of natural disasters and although we are not able to evade those events we are able to somewhat mitigate their devastating effects. The building of a more resilient Queensland is critical to our capacity to endure future events and to push through to the other side with less lingering and long-lasting impacts upon local communities and the overall Queensland economy. To assist, we have created a betterment fund of \$80 million that will enable us to replace damaged infrastructure, not with like for like but with improvements to ensure a more resilient Queensland.

Natural disasters and other events such as bushfires will continue to occur. At those times, many of us call upon the services of our police, fire, ambulance and SES personnel. To ensure that the people we call upon are well trained, equipped with the latest technology and have the capacity to respond to disasters, we need to contribute towards the maintenance of those services. The emergency management, fire and rescue levy will raise the \$240.4 million shortfall between the current expenditure and the existing urban fire levy. For most people within the Ferny Grove electorate, the levy will mean an increase of just \$10.80 per annum. Thinking back to the devastation caused throughout Ferny Grove, Ferny Hills and Arana Hills by The Gap storms or, more recently, the effects of ex-tropical Cyclone Oswald at Mount Nebo and Mount Glorious, that modest increase is a small price to pay for the invaluable service the communities received at the time of their greatest need. It is also worth noting that pensioners are able to receive discounts on the levy if the property being levied is their primary place of residence.

In addition to the state-wide commitments, the Ferny Grove electorate will receive a number of funding commitments to deliver local benefits. Some of these include the upgrade of Mount Samson Road near Samford Village by providing painted right-turn lanes into Burton Lane and Serendipity Drive, plus the improvement of road signs and delineation. The estimated project cost is \$1.2 million to be funded under the Black Spot program. Design is programmed for late 2013, with an anticipated start date in early 2014. During the 2011-12 election campaign I made a commitment to provide on-demand traffic signals at the entry and exit of Keperra Sanctuary on Samford Road. That project will commence early in the new financial year and will be completed towards the later part of the year. The cost of the new intersection, which will also include a pedestrian crossing, is \$1.68 million.

The final stages of the rail duplication project between Keperra and Ferny Grove will cost \$2.17 million in 2013-14 and \$1.065 million in 2014-15. The tavern and the final stages of the parking facility will open within weeks, bringing the total parking spaces to 1,000. The continuation of the 15-minute off-peak trial on the Ferny Grove line, along with the introduction of the Westect Automatic Train Protection system at a cost of almost \$30 million, will ensure that the TransLink rail network and services in our area are made as efficient and safe as possible. A further \$180,000 will be spent on upgrading intersections between Ferny Grove and Samford along Samford Road and, of most local interest I am sure, forecast for future budget periods of 2014-15 and 2015-16 an amount of \$3.3 million will be allocated for the provision of a bikeway between Ferny Grove and Samford Village.


A small number of projects other than road and transport infrastructure will be delivered in the coming budget period, such as \$100,000 towards the provision of shade at the Samford Riding for the Disabled facility and \$89,000 for batting cages at the Pine Hills Lightning Baseball Club. Both of those grants are part of the Get in the Game program, which has been significantly increased to \$23.1 million this year. There will be an upgrade of the facilities at the Mount Jolly Lookout costing \$363,000 and our share of \$5.4 million to be spent on local public libraries throughout both the Moreton Bay Regional Council and the Brisbane City Council local government areas. As part of our ongoing commitment to the Mums and Bubs initiative, the Metro North HHS will aim to increase its

number of in-home visits to newborns from 9,673 this year to over 13,000 next year. No doubt our \$5.8 million commitment to those with cochlear implant needs will also benefit individuals throughout my electorate.

My electorate will benefit through the continued commitment to roll out flashing school zone lights as part of our road safety campaign and through the additional front-line service personnel in the areas of policing, with the 267 new police officers, and in education, with 724 additional teachers and support staff. Our participation within the wider community will see us reap many benefits that will result from the increases in many areas, such as the \$1.4 billion we will spend in disability services, paving the way towards an effective national care package, previously known as the NDIS. Child safety will receive \$803,000 in operational grants and there will be \$354,000 provided to disability services throughout the Ferny Grove electorate.

Our children will embark upon their education with surety and stability in the knowledge that our \$707.4 million increase in education spending, taking the total to over \$11 billion, is locked and loaded, unlike the rubbery and uncertain national alternative currently underway. Schools throughout the electorate that continue to have outstanding maintenance on the register will benefit from the continuation of our \$300 million maintenance program to address the maintenance backlog left by those opposite. Our long neglected public housing sector will benefit through an increase of \$24 million, including \$1.4 million for the building of a six-unit block in Keperra.

In closing, I compliment the effort of the Treasurer and, in fact, the entire cabinet team in ensuring that this great state will build upon the efforts of our measures of last year to deliver a strong, prosperous and resilient environment that will deliver many great opportunities into the future. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (5.35 pm): Tonight I rise to support the Treasurer's second budget in this House as it is a tough but fair budget to plan for the Newman government's economic road to recovery, making Queensland a more resilient state into the future, helping both the urban and regional parts of this great state. The 2013-14 Queensland budget provides a fair balance between conservative economic management and increasing funding to provide important services, as well as concessions to ease the cost of living for everyday Queenslanders. The 2013-14 Queensland budget is about getting the priorities right and refocussing on the basics by increasing funding to the fundamentals such as health, education and community services. Unlike the Labor Party, the Newman government is getting on with the job of paying Labor's debt, being upfront and honest with Queenslanders about how we will govern in terms of both service delivery and cutting government waste. As the member for Lytton, I believe this budget elaborates on the work of last year and my 30-year vision for building a better Lytton by building a strong Queensland through the four-pillar economy.

Since the Newman government was elected, in 2012-13 the Queensland economy has grown by 3.5 per cent, which is the second highest growth rate of any Australian state, including our State of Origin rivals, New South Wales. This shows business and tourism confidence is coming back to our great state due to the measures the Newman government promised and delivered in last year's budget. The opposition and its federal Labor mates want to run down our proud Queensland businesses and play cheap political shots, similar to that of Paul Gallan in last night's State of Origin match. While I have heard numerous radio interviews where members opposite have talked about how bad this budget is for Queenslanders, the one thing that they are silent on is their solution to the debt left by their predecessors and inherited by the Newman government. We all know the Queensland Labor Party is the party of no position except debt, denial and deficit.

The Lytton electorate benefited greatly in education, cost-of-living concessions, national parks, sport, roads, child safety, housing and community services from the Treasurer's second budget. It must be an 'Old Boy' thing or just because each and every day I fight for the Brisbane bay side's fair share, which is something the good people of Lytton have not had for over a decade. Pensioners in the Lytton electorate and across this great state will benefit greatly from this year's budget through the new \$28.3 million hospital at home initiative which is designed to take stress off our local hospitals and emergency departments, \$80 water rebates and \$781 million in electricity and gas rebates. Under Treasury figures, pensioners in Lytton can access up to \$1,511 per a year in discounts on the council, water, gas, electricity, public transport and other services that the Newman government provides.

Therefore it honours my commitment to the Wynnum branch of the National Seniors, the Wynnum Manly and District Committee on the Ageing and other senior groups in Lytton that as their member I would reduce the burden of cost of living for the very people who worked hard in their early years and contributed so much to our communities. The families in Lytton are also big winners from this year's budget due to the Newman government's concession measures to ease their cost of living. For example, a commuter travelling from Manly station to the Brisbane CBD each day for work will benefit with savings of up to \$220 under the Newman government. This is in contrast to the Labor Party's election commitment to impose fare hikes on Lytton commuters of up to 15 per cent. Water rates are lower with the \$80 rebate, as I said earlier. The families of Lytton can also get their fair share of the \$513 million in rental rebates to help low-income families with the cost of housing on the bay side. The 2013-14 Queensland budget provides families in Lytton with savings of hundreds and hundreds of dollars. This is money in the pockets of the mums and dads of Lytton.

I will now move on to the specifics that will help build a better Lytton. For nearly five months my electorate office and I have lobbied the Department of National Parks, Sport and Recreation as well as the minister's office personally to fund a major upgrade of the mangrove boardwalk at Wynnum North which is used by thousands of constituents and tourists annually.

The Brisbane City Council showcases this infrastructure in its tourist guide. The boardwalk was built under the Bjelke-Peterson government but the Beattie-Bligh governments neglected the maintenance of this boardwalk whilst they were in government. Due to safety concerns from marine boars and rotten foundations, the boardwalk had to be closed for some months. I am thrilled to announce to the House that I promised in a speech in front of 150 seniors a month ago that I would get some funding for this project to assist in the reopening of the boardwalk. Today I honour this pledge with \$835,000 allocated to a major upgrade of this vital lifestyle infrastructure and Wynnum icon. My local newspaper, the *Wynnum Herald*, said on Facebook today—

The State government has allocated money in the budget for it, which is awesome news. We will have more in the Herald on Wednesday.

I am looking forward to reading the *Wynnum Herald* next Wednesday.

On Tuesday I look forward to attending the Brisbane Bayside State College P&C meeting to tell their parents and teachers that the Newman government will deliver over \$4.3 million in funding for new classrooms at the school to help provide a world-class education system. There will also be an additional 724 teachers state-wide to teach our kids. Wynnum State School will also benefit with \$1.16 million being allocated for construction of a new kindergarten on the school site. This will give families more opportunity for quality child care in the Wynnum-Manly region.

Lytton has been given its fair share of the \$16.37 million in funding to upgrade existing community housing. This is another way residents can benefit from this budget. For example, tenants in Chestnut Street, Petrea Court and Bride Street in Wynnum and Wynnum West respectively will benefit from improved facilities at their complexes into the future. They will be able to live in dignity. Pensioners in Lytton will also benefit from a \$317,000 funding allocation for the Home Assist Secure service at Whites Road, Lota. It provides assistance with repairs to homes and gardening and allows more seniors to stay in their homes on the bay side.


Road infrastructure is further funded in this year's budget. Some \$15.96 million has been allocated for construction of two new sealed lanes on the Port of Brisbane Motorway to ease the burden from trucks in Manly, Wynnum and Wynnum North. It will also help local freight companies with their productivity. I know that David Goodwin, the company director of Interport Cargo in the Lytton Industrial Park, will welcome this road investment with open arms. The budget delivers relief for small businesses with the removal of the waste levy which impacts greatly on smash repairers in Wynnum such as the Nitro Crew who had to pay the levy for Labor's incompetent financial management.

Disability services are a focus of the Newman government's second budget with the first instalment of Queensland's contribution to DisabilityCare Australia which helps families with relatives suffering from a disability. In addition, I welcome the allocation of \$2.43 million for Disability Services in Lytton. Thank you, Minister.

Child safety and social inclusion grants are another centrepiece in revitalising front-line services in Lytton with \$4.04 million and \$792,000 to assist with providing adequate services to help at-risk families in the region. There are too many positive schemes and programs for me to name that

will assist my constituency, but I will be knocking on as many doors as possible and attending as many meetings as I can to tell people that they are better off under the Newman government, that they are better off with me as their local MP than with the former member and former Deputy Premier.

In conclusion, I thank the Treasurer for his hard work. This is a common-sense budget not a sexy budget. It is one that brings the Queensland government back to the basics of revitalising front-line services, investing in health, education and roads to benefit Queenslanders for years to come. It is a budget that empowers communities and small business whilst providing tough measures to get our house in order and to pay back Labor's debt. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.46 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise in the House this evening to speak to the 2013-14 budget. Can I start by commending the Treasurer on the great budget he handed down this week. One of the first priorities of this government and this budget has been fixing the mess that was left by the Labor Party. Under Treasurer Nicholls and Premier Newman this state is now back on the road to fiscal recovery. As my colleague the honourable member for Lytton said, this is a back-to-basic budget. That is what Queensland needed at this particular time.

The main focus of this budget is rebuilding Queensland. It is about getting families back into their homes. It is about getting kids back into their schools. Importantly, it is about getting Queenslanders back into their communities. This budget was a particularly positive one for the people of Broadwater, and I would like to thank the Treasurer for that. We have seen nearly \$10 million in local commitments in my electorate. I am pleased that I am able to deliver that as the member for Broadwater.

We have seen some \$318,000 allocated to Coombabah State High School so that they might complete some refurbishment works. We have seen a further \$1.43 million for facilities renewal at the Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre. That is in addition to funding that we were able to give them last year. That is a particularly excellent facility. It hosts many international and national sporting teams as well as many students from right across the south-east corner. One thing that we are particularly committed to in this government is making sure that those facilities are indeed world-class.

We have seen a further \$378,000 allocated towards to the coastal management decision support system. For the benefit of the House what that effectively means is that we take water samples from the Broadwater and test them. We combine those with wind and tidal data that is taken from the seaway and we use that information to allow engineers at the Coombabah wastewater treatment facility to decide how much recycled water should be released.

We have also seen more than \$5 million allocated in Broadwater for local disability services. I am also particularly pleased to see that just around the corner from my office we will have a long-term supported accommodation facility. The government has committed \$150,000 towards that.

One of the things that we have seen in this budget is that the Newman government is committed to revitalising front-line services. That is why we have seen a total commitment of \$12.3 billion for the health department. That is an increase of 4½ per cent in terms of total spend. We have seen a commitment of \$11.4 billion in spending for education. That is an increase of 6.6 per cent. What that means is that we can commit to programs like Great Teachers = Great Results so that when we have good quality teachers in our schools we can resource them and we can encourage them, and we can encourage those teachers who want to undertake further qualifications like the masters program.

Also, just as importantly, from that \$11.4 billion in this budget we have been able to commit further funding to the Fixing Our Schools Fund. The Treasurer said that the state that some of schools were left in was absolute negligence. We had windows that did not close. We had toilets that did not flush. I believe that a quality education is the greatest gift we can give anybody. I cannot imagine that there are students at schools right across Queensland who had windows that would not close, who in the middle of summer had air conditioners that would not turn on and who shockingly had toilets that would not flush. Indeed, as the Treasurer said, that was pure and absolute negligence. So I am incredibly happy to see a further boost to the education spend, and, as I said, that is a 6.6 per cent increase.

Critically, we have seen an increase of more than \$64 million in the area of disability services. One of the things I think we need to be able to do as a government is to help people who really do need our support. We have committed \$1.4 billion to disability services in this budget. That will go a long way towards helping the establishment of DisabilityCare in Queensland.

One of the things I am particularly passionate about, and I know people in my electorate are particularly passionate about—and I will just take the time to acknowledge my guests from the electorate of Broadwater who are here in the gallery this evening, rather fortuitously timed I might say—is that we have committed more than \$4 billion in this budget towards law and order, and that is an increase of about \$130 million. Also, about \$930 million has been committed in this particular budget to housing services, and that is an increase of more than \$20 million.

In addition to revitalising front-line services, we have committed where possible to reducing the cost of services for Queenslanders. That is why we have seen more than \$5 billion worth of concessions across this state to help people who really need it. I am particularly pleased that one of the newer elements of our budget is that we now release a statement of concessions so that Queensland's know exactly what we are doing to help them, so that people in rural and regional Queensland know the kinds of concessions they are receiving so that they are not paying exorbitant power prices that are far in excess of those being paid by people in the south-east corner.

I said that this is a budget that delivers for my community, it delivers for our city and it delivers for our state. What we have seen on the Gold Coast is a contribution of more than \$215 million towards the completion of the Gold Coast University Hospital but also for the provision of new and additional services—oncology services, increased cardiac services and also neonatal intensive care services. We have also seen nearly \$250 million allocated to road and transport upgrades on the Gold Coast. That will include upgrades at Olsen Avenue and the Smith Street Motorway, which is a major arterial road that is used by many people in my electorate, and a contribution towards the rapid transit system that is currently underway and is due for completion mid next year.


We have also seen nearly \$100 million allocated to the 2018 Commonwealth Games, including the development of the athletes village and money for the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre at Southport. One of the things that we really have a great opportunity to do is to create a great legacy for our city. In order to do that, we need to make sure that the development decisions that we make about the Commonwealth Games are the right ones for our city. Earlier I touched on the fact that many international teams visit the Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre, and I anticipate that many Commonwealth countries will send their teams to train at the Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre ahead of the games.

Importantly, and very critically for me as the member for Broadwater, I am very pleased to see that we have a commitment of \$8.9 million in this budget for the very important Gold Coast Waterways Authority. This was a key commitment of the Newman government last year, and I am pleased to see the continued funding of such a vital independent authority on the Gold Coast. I am sure that all of my Gold Coast colleagues would agree it is vital that we make sure that our waterways are safe and particularly that our Broadwater is dredged.

I listened to the Leader of the Opposition's reply this morning and what struck me about her reply this year that was similar to her reply last year is that Labor continue to offer no solution. They do not seem to understand the great problems that they have created, and they do not seem to understand that some tough decisions need to be made in order to get this great state back on track so that we can get on the road to fiscal recovery and regain our AAA credit rating. Labor simply deny debt. They deny deficit. They do not have a plan for Queensland's future whatsoever. Queensland is a great state with great opportunity because of the great decisions that are being made by our Premier and by our Treasurer.

My colleague the honourable member for Stafford I think shocked us when he referenced Karl Marx when talking about the Treasurer. I would hope that he is a little more pleased to hear that I will be referencing Margaret Thatcher in my final remarks. Margaret Thatcher once said, 'Yes, the medicine is harsh, but the patient requires it in order to live.' Should we withhold the medicine? No. This government has made really difficult decisions because it is incumbent on us as a government to make those decisions.

Queenslanders elected us because they wanted change, and it is change that we are delivering. We are revitalising front-line services and we are increasing funding for health and education because that is what we should do. We are increasing funding for disability services because it is not only expected of us but required of us. This is a fantastic budget. I am incredibly proud to be part of this government, and I am incredibly proud to be the member for Broadwater as we deliver this budget for our community, our city and our state. I commend the Treasurer and I commend the budget to the House.

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (5.56 pm): I rise in the House tonight to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill 2013. The 2013-14 state budget is focused on growing our economy, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient for the future. Since the Newman government was elected we have unashamedly been a pro-growth government. While we are working to grow the economy, we are also continuing the task we began last year of rebuilding the state's finances—a task made all the more difficult after the January 2013 natural disasters. In tough financial times, it is important that we do not forget those on the margins of society, and I am happy to report that the 2013-14 budget includes a number of initiatives to deliver more housing for needy Queenslanders.

Due to the tough economic circumstances, demand for affordable housing far outweighs supply. As more and more families struggle to make ends meet, we have seen a rapid escalation in the number of households registering for social housing. Unfortunately, that increased demand has not been matched with increased supply. In fact, before the Newman government came to office, the only person investing in social housing in Queensland from the other side of the House, or of their flavour, was Kevin Rudd, but they seem to have ignored him. When the Newman government was elected, the public housing system was losing \$140 million a year. That is an extraordinary statistic and one that those opposite ought to be ashamed of.

Under their watch maintenance costs were rising, rents were falling and the waiting list had blown out by around 50 per cent in just three years. If things had kept going the way they were, it would not have taken much longer before the whole system collapsed under the weight of its own inefficiency. Thankfully, things did not keep going the way they were because the Newman government was elected, and we have begun overhauling the way social housing is delivered—replacing an old-fashioned, 1950s style system with a modern, flexible and, more importantly, supportive alternative.

While it would be nice to have the sorts of rivers of gold to help us along the way that those opposite were accustomed to, those days are gone. Right across the world and in every Australian state, governments of all persuasions are experiencing massive falls in revenue, and Queensland is not immune, with our revenue since March 2012 being over \$4.5 billion less than expected.

In light of the new fiscal reality, last year my department started work on a range of reforms that would allow us to do much more with less. That process began with a review of underoccupancy in public housing. I am sorry to say that those opposite had shown no real interest in stopping undeclared tenants moving into public housing properties without paying any rent. That review uncovered more than 1,600 people who had been living completely rent free in taxpayer subsidised housing. The additional rent from those people alone was estimated to be close to \$5 million. The department also restarted eligibility reviews to make sure our tenants had an ongoing need for social housing, and implemented three-year fixed term tenancies for new tenants to put an end to the expectation that social housing was, or is, an ongoing right for the rest of one's life.

Earlier this year we announced a three-strikes policy to crack down on antisocial behaviour in public housing. This was another area in which Labor's unwillingness to address a problem that was staring them in the face was costing taxpayers millions. Between 2008 and 2011 wayward tenants were issued with a combined total of 103,126 breach notices, yet over that same period fewer than 350 households were evicted. In the absence of any meaningful consequences, taxpayers were left to foot the bill of roughly \$5 million in unscheduled repairs and maintenance each year. Each of these initiatives will play a role in putting the social housing system back on a sustainable footing, but they will not be enough to help house the 23,000 households still waiting for a place to live. Doing that will require a significantly expanded service delivery role for non-government housing providers. Ultimately, we want to see the community housing sector take on the tenancy management function of the majority of the social housing portfolio and harness the efficiencies of the private sector to boost the supply of social and affordable housing.

The pilot program for this innovative approach is currently underway in Logan in the form of the Logan Renewal Initiative, a joint venture between the state government, the community housing sector and the Logan City Council, which will see an additional 1,000 homes built over the next 10 years. As part of this budget, the government is also working with Economic Development Queensland on a series of projects in priority development areas including Townsville, Mount Isa, Gladstone and the Gold Coast. These projects will increase the availability of social and affordable housing and reconfigure existing properties to more closely match the needs of families on the waiting list. Put simply, the type of properties we own are no longer suitable for the people whom we house. It

is not good enough to simply put a roof over someone's head; we need to ensure that it is appropriate for their needs. It is worth remembering that Queensland's social housing system was conceived and implemented in the aftermath of World War II, during a period when the average tenant was a low-income working family with a couple of kids. As such, the bulk of our stock tends to be detached three- or four-bedroom houses in the suburbs. These days, the largest group on the social housing register consists of people who are single, Centrelink dependent and often dealing with a significant physical or mental disability. As such, old-fashioned suburban houses are seldom a good fit.

As I said, it is not good enough to simply put a roof over someone's head. We also have to make sure that it is appropriate for their needs, which is why we are committed to renewing and reconfiguring our stock as well as boosting supply. This budget commits roughly \$400 million towards doing just that. This money will be spent building and purchasing new social housing in areas of high need right across the state in areas like Brisbane, Toowoomba, Townsville, Cairns and the Gold Coast. In keeping with this government's commitment to doing more with less, some of the construction activities will see old detached properties with high maintenance costs redeveloped into apartments that are not only more modern and functional but also more in line with the needs of our tenants. As well as building new properties we are also investing \$72 million of the total capital budget on improving existing dwellings throughout the state. Carrying out upgrades to existing social housing is an important part of the capital program: first, to ensure that these government assets continue to provide adequate functionality and amenity; and, second, to provide modifications to these dwellings to suit social housing tenants with a disability.

This budget also contains good news for the Indigenous community, with \$237.7 million set aside for Indigenous housing. That money will be used to start construction on at least 204 dwellings and complete construction on another 280. There is also \$44 million to be spent on general upkeep and maintenance. This money will deliver benefits for Indigenous communities right across the state—from Aurukun, which will see 26 units completed; to Kowanyama, 29 units; and Palm Island, 47 units. There will be upgrades in towns like Doomadgee, Mapoon and Mornington Island as well as new houses in places like Cherbourg, Kuranda and Yarrabah. Even in tough financial times there are things that simply have to be done, and addressing the shortage of appropriate housing in Indigenous communities is one of them. I am proud that this government is continuing to invest heavily in Indigenous Queensland.

As I mentioned before, it would be nice to have access to the same cushion of skyrocketing revenues that kept the Labor Party so comfortable in years gone by, but that is not to be. That those opposite managed to spend this state into the poorhouse, despite being in receipt of the sorts of revenue that most governments can only dream about, is a mark of just how incredibly irresponsible they were. The financial repair job ahead of us is a long-term task, a journey that will take a number of years to complete. But it is a task that we must not shirk if we are to deliver the services that the people of Queensland expect and deserve.

Because Labor has maxed out the credit card, we will need to be smarter and more efficient. We will have to become adept at doing more with less. We will continue to link up with the private and non-government sectors to use the limited funds that we do have to invest in new infrastructure and revitalise services, because the people of Queensland deserve better from their leaders than decades of debt.

This government is open and upfront about the problems and challenges that we face. Unlike the opposition, who got by on spin and trickery and refused to acknowledge that there was a problem until it was too late, we are determined to take Queenslanders into our confidence and to deal with these challenges together. This budget is a demonstration of our commitment to fix the state's finances and to grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we remain a great state with great opportunities for all.

I am also delighted about the benefits that have been granted in this budget for my electorate of Everton. One of the major announcements that was made was a grant from the education department for approximately \$7½ million to build a performing arts complex, a science complex and some additional classrooms at the Albany Creek State High School. This is an incredibly exciting development for the school, which has fought for this for many years. The school is renowned for its performing arts emphasis and has a strong body of work in the areas of drama, instrumental music, art and dance. They have won many awards right across the state and there is a very strong emphasis on the arts in this school community. They welcome this announcement. It was great to have the Minister for Education, the Hon. John-Paul Langbroek, at the school last year when the P&C

and the school administration presented their case. He went away highly impressed. It was great that this year, after intense lobbying by me, we received this funding for the performing arts complex. I would like to congratulate the P&C president, Mr Jim Harrison, and his predecessor, Mr Bevan Crooke, who campaigned for this for a number of years. This will be a great asset not only to the school community but also to the community at large because this will be a facility that everybody will be able to enjoy.


I am also delighted to see in the budget that \$360,000 has been put aside for the Bunyaville Environmental Education Centre. The Bunyaville State Forest is in the middle of my electorate. I often describe it as the lung of our electorate. It is a great spot to go out in the bush and enjoy when we have spare time. In the middle of that forest is an educational centre where many schoolchildren go along and learn about the environment and related matters. It is great to see that that facility will be improved with an extra injection of \$360 million.

It is also great to see that there is a continued investment in our schools through an additional \$100 million for the schools maintenance fund. This has been welcomed in my electorate, which has eight state schools. It is important that we have the best facilities for our students. This is, again, a sign of our commitment to make sure that that actually takes place. We are slowly but surely getting through that \$300 million backlog that we inherited. I know that my school community has welcomed this increased funding to ensure that the facilities in our schools are topnotch.

I am also delighted to see that the flashing lights program for school pedestrian crossings is still being rolled out. Albany Creek State High School was one of the first schools to benefit from that program and Albany Hills State School will be benefiting shortly. It is a great initiative of the Minister for Transport which ensures we have a very safe environment for our children.

Finally, I would just like to say how delighted I was to hear from the Minister for Sport about the increased funding for Get in the Game. This has been a fabulous success in my electorate, where the \$150 vouchers have been welcomed by those families which struggle to afford to pay their sporting fees, especially those with more than one child. We all know how important it is to have active kids. One of the best ways to ensure that they remain healthy is to be a member of a sporting club. This has been very, very welcomed, and the clubs themselves have welcomed the infrastructure funding that has come their way. The Mitchelton Football Club received \$100,000 to improve their dressing room facilities. It is great to see that this government is committed to our young people in particular, but also to sport as well.

In closing, I would just like to say that this is a budget for which the Treasurer should be commended. It is a responsible budget. It is a budget that will again set the foundation for the future, and I look forward to seeing the result in 12 months time while we continue to build this economy and make Queensland the great state that it deserves to be. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (6.12 pm): I rise to address the Appropriation Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2013. Several days ago I was asked by a journalist what I expected from the budget, and my reply was that provided there was financial support for front-line services such as hospitals, schools, support for the disability services, policing, and road maintenance and upgrades, then under the economic and fiscal circumstances we face I would consider that a sensible budget; a budget formulated with a view to ensuring that our children and grandchildren were not loaded down with a huge debt burden.

The budget handed down on Tuesday did just that and more. It has provided for the services we need, while at the same time reining in spending in order to have the opportunity in future years to pay down the debt and get back the AAA credit rating. But more than just providing the same front-line services, there is a built-in capacity to provide additional services such as more teachers with better training, better health services, more police, and the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, now known as Disability Services Australia.

Yes, there were tough decisions in the budget. High on the list was the increase in power bills—something which has come about by poor planning and poor decisions made by the previous state and federal Labor governments. There has been debate in the public forum about the reasons, and I will not repeat them here. But ultimately they were former Labor government decisions, and we are stuck with those decisions. However, the state government does provide support mechanisms for low-income households, including such things as an electricity rebate scheme, a pensioner rate rebate scheme, an electricity concession scheme for medical conditions, a rail subsidy scheme, a car registration subsidy, an oral health and spectacle supply scheme, a patient travel subsidy scheme, and other support programs.

The Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme provides one-off emergency assistance of up to \$720 per annum for a maximum of two consecutive years to assist low-income households who experience a short-term financial crisis and who are unable to pay their current electricity and/or reticulated natural gas account. The Home Energy Saver Scheme provides assistance to low-income households who are experiencing difficulty paying for their energy needs with information about easy and affordable ways to use less energy in the home, one-on-one budgeting assistance, information on whether they are getting the right rebates and assistance, links to other services that may be able to assist them, and help to access no- or low-interest loans to purchase energy efficient appliances. I encourage low-income households to seek all avenues of support, and my office will assist wherever possible.

The Maryborough electorate has been hard hit with floods in 2012-13 and floods and a tornado in 2014. While members of the community gave the most wonderful and unselfish support to their neighbours and friends, emergency services were also hard put to keep up with the demand. Helicopter rescues were needed twice for rural residents who were at risk from flooding, and there was one swift water rescue. This was minimal compared to other places, but serious nevertheless and very important. Our SES was kept very busy taking supplies and passengers to and from over the Mary River, putting tarps on roofs and generally caring for the community. This all comes at a significant cost. Fire and rescue services and our rural fires were all called upon for assistance.

We all use these services, and we expect to have them available at any time in the future. In order to ensure that they are available when needed, there must be a financial basis. This has resulted in the implementation of an emergency services fire and rescue levy on all rateable properties as a contribution—and I note the word ‘contribution’—to the cost. No-one likes paying, but the alternative is not something that we can consider as a caring community.

On the flip side to this levy, the Maryborough electorate has received \$73,000 to fund the purchase and installation of early warning systems and flood monitoring systems so that early flood warnings can be given to minimise damage to property and risk to life. The Fraser Coast Regional Council area, of which the Maryborough electorate makes up the largest geographic area—and which received the most flood and tornado damage—will receive in the order of \$9.672 million in Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements funding to support recovery and reconstruction projects in our community. This is a joint arrangement with the federal government.

Under this budget, the most vulnerable in our community are given additional support. The Treasurer announced a 4.7 per cent increase in funding for disability services to help ensure that young people with a disability who exit the care of the state or who leave school are supported. It will also help people with spinal cord injuries to leave the hospital and live in the community.


Some \$1.724 million has been allocated to Maryborough for the provision of infrastructure for long-term accommodation and respite care. An additional \$17.86 million has been allocated to our community for the provision of child safety services, disability services such as accommodation, respite, emergency response, support for school leavers, community care programs, and social inclusion programs such as community support, domestic and family violence prevention, homelessness and individual and youth support. This is a very significant increase in funding for this group of people, who are the most vulnerable in the Maryborough electorate.

The Wide Bay Health and Hospital Service have been allocated a 4.5 per cent increase in its budget. The increase in funding will support the staffing of the new rehabilitation unit in the Maryborough Hospital. It will also aid in the implementation of the Hospital in the Home program to support patients in their own homes rather than in hospitals, and there will be an expansion of maternal and child health services under the Mums and Bubs program. I commend the CEO and the hospital board for the management of their budget and for the increasing level of services being provided at the Maryborough Hospital, and I look to the further provision of services.

Our school students will benefit from the increase in funding in the budget for the Great Teachers = Great Results program, which will provide support, mentoring and scholarships for teachers to upgrade their skills. Schools in the Maryborough electorate have already benefited by over \$2 million in funding for maintenance, and they will benefit from some of the additional \$100 million which has been allocated to clear the balance of outstanding school maintenance. An amount of \$1.04 million has been allocated in this budget to the Aldridge State School to provide classrooms for the year 7s to transition to high school.

Other specific funding allocated in the budget for the Maryborough electorate includes \$30.699 million for a continuation of the manufacture of the Sunlander rolling stock; \$15.529 million for the establishment of a new 66/11 kilovolt zone substation and associated distribution feeders at Toogoom—and with all of the problems with electricity that we suffered during the floods, this is very welcome—an amount of \$1.529 million for the completion of upgrades to eight Indigenous community housing dwellings, and there is funding for intersection upgrades on the Bruce Highway.

In tight economic and fiscal times, the Treasurer has framed a budget which has provided not only the necessary ongoing funding but also funding for new services in those critical front-line service areas of health, education, disability support and policing, and also funding for flood recovery and resilience in the Maryborough electorate. I thank the Treasurer and his team for the work they have done and are doing to ensure that in the future our residents will have available to them the services they need. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (6.20 pm): I rise to speak to the 2013 state budget. This is a responsible and measured budget that will ensure growth, rebuilding and resilience in our great state and, I am happy to say, on the ground in Ipswich West. This is the LNP's second budget, but it must be noted that this is only the first after being in government for more than a year. The 2012 budget enabled the new government to take stock and stabilise Queensland's finances, and this is the budget that sees sustainable benefits taking hold and the future for Queensland's economic recovery really on the move. Queensland remains in a tough financial situation. However, the outlook is bright, with the green shoots of growth in the economy emerging.

We have heard much over the past year about how we got into a serious financial mess. I spoke enough about that in my speech in the 2012 budget debate. I will say that the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer would be described by Romy and Michelle as 'deludenoids' after what we have heard from them since Tuesday. But we have the Treasury now and it is time to focus on the future, although we should not forget the lessons of 14 years of Labor government.

There are some tough measures in this year's budget. That is as true as it was predictable. There will be household pain in the areas of insurance premiums and the cost of utilities, and we are concerned about that. We must deal with the cost drivers and focus on solutions, as we are all in this together. I heard nonsense in this place from the opposition about the breaking of promises. A good plan has short- and long-term measures and is based on strategy, not spin and the next headline. Enough of that. I am pleased that, despite difficult circumstances, there are great opportunities in this budget for improving the lives of my people.

I will outline some of the major aspects of the state budget. There is \$8.8 billion for community services including \$1.4 billion for disability services—up nearly \$65 million—and \$868 million for the NDIS. There is a record \$12.3 billion for health—up 4.5 per cent—including \$1.7 billion in infrastructure spending; \$327 million for the backlog maintenance program, fixing the neglect at our hospitals; an \$82.8 million injection into regional health; and \$28.3 million to take health care to people in their homes. Education spending is up 6.6 per cent, at \$11.4 billion. And transport gets \$5.5 billion.

Locally, my people will see \$7.5 million to assist with the transition of year 7 to high school. I am pleased to see that the fast-growing school community at Fernvale State School will benefit greatly again this year, with \$1.2 million to establish our new kindergarten and \$1.9 million in other capital works. I am extremely pleased to see a very wise investment this year in the trade and technical centre at Ipswich State High School, which will see almost \$4.8 million allocated to this terrific initiative which will provide trade skills to students from right across the region. There is a continuance of state school maintenance funding, with an additional \$100 million state-wide. I look forward to seeing my local schools dip into this to make sure our children have safe, quality learning environments, in some cases for the first time in many years.

There has been a lot of flapping of gums in the Labor Party about Gonski. I am pleased that this government will not be conned by the window-dressing and nonsense from Gillard. Gonski would see real dollars ripped from a number of my great schools—schools such as Ipswich North, Hagslea and Glamorgan Vale state schools—and my daughter's school, St Mary's College Ipswich, would lose a shocking 6.5 per cent of its funding. We know who would have pay to cover that: the parents who sacrifice to give their daughters a quality Catholic education in Ipswich. I wonder if past pupil the Leader of the Opposition will add that to her repertoire when she next uses the student body as a captive audience to spruik her political bile.

I have been very impressed with our West Moreton Hospital and Health Board, led by the lovely Dr Mary Corbett. They have done so much to make our region the best performing in Queensland, and Ms Lesley Dwyer as CEO has done the work to achieve a phenomenal turnaround. Locally we will see \$40.8 million spent this year in completing the Ipswich Hospital expansion, with \$30.4 million in addition to fund new and expanded services for Ipswich Hospital including chemotherapy, emergency and interventional cardiology services. So many people in my community have faced an almost two-hour trip to Brisbane hospitals. We will see less of that, and I know that those local services will mean so much and will improve the lot of some very ill people. The improvements in efficiency and additional services will only grow in subsequent budgets. I certainly look forward to that.

One of the major projects funded by the budget is the new rail maintenance facility at Wulkuraka. This will see an investment of \$110 million and 200 new jobs for the community. I will make certain that the concerns of locals are addressed. I look forward to bringing the railway back home to Ipswich. I might add that I have learnt that there are some serious issues with one of our local heavy manufacturers and that 30 people may in fact lose their jobs. This is no doubt a direct result of federal Labor's carbon tax and the resource rent tax. They should be ashamed. The federal member for Blair should stand up for the people of Ipswich, instead of kowtowing to Madam Gillard.

We will see \$1 million, in addition to over \$3 million in last year's budget, to complete the new fire and rescue station at Brassall. This places these crucial emergency services closer to residents. I look forward to the opening later this year.


I want to talk about roads, an issue that is so important to my people. We will see the Blacksoil interchange approach completion under this budget. As I have said many times, this project would no doubt be the most strategically important roads project in the entire region. I am grateful to see a further \$25 million allocated in this budget. I appreciate the commitment, given that Labor had tried to hide a \$24 million blow-out in the cost identified in late 2011, yet the member for South Brisbane and the Labor member for Blair continued to mislead my community about this as recently as 30 January this year. They are a disgrace.

Local roads improvement will see the maintenance and upgrading of our state funded roads. I am pleased to announce that my lobbying has paid off for residents, with \$2.5 million in the budget for the infamous intersection of Pine and Delacy streets at North Ipswich. We will long be in the transport minister's debt for this allocation. I am so appreciative of that, and I know that all of my people share that view. This is such a win for my people, after so many years of neglect and argy-bargy. I thank local residents for their support and for their ideas on this project. I know that the good people from the Department of Transport and Main Roads have really appreciated different points of view. The great thing about these consultants is that they do not charge a cent for their time. This is obviously a major traffic corridor, and I am really proud to have delivered a result for my very patient locals.

Very important to my electorate is the \$38.1 million to be spent on flood recovery and reconstruction works as well as remediation and hydrology models to provide security and peace of mind to residents and business owners. Importantly, the \$5.2 billion in state-wide concessions will provide offset relief for members in our community.

I congratulate the Premier and the cabinet, and particularly the Treasurer and his team, for their hard work in bringing down this budget. I know that some of the decisions were not easy. I am confident that the vast majority of Queenslanders will benefit from and appreciate the difference it will make.

Whether you are a rail worker from North Ipswich, a farmer from Brightview, a small business owner from Karalee or a pensioner from Brassall, this budget will ensure you have a better future in this great state with great opportunity. I commend the bills to the House.


 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (6.28 pm): I am privileged today to give my speech in reply to the honourable the Treasurer's second budget, which shows firm but fair leadership and is focused on growth, rebuilding and resilience. Queensland is a tough state. They do not make them anywhere else like they do here. No matter what is thrown at us—from bad weather to 20 years of bad government—we push on. Last year, when our government was given an overwhelming mandate by the people of our great state to get our economy back on track, we set out to rectify the years of economic mismanagement left behind by the ALP and work towards arresting the debt—stop the bleeding so we could start the hard slog of earning back our AAA credit rating. Opposition members

continue to try to distract the public from the reality of the position in which they left our state—our communities, our home. Through union-led rhetoric, since March last year the opposition has done nothing more than provide a sideshow to distract the public from their own culpability in all but destroying the Queensland economy.

Our commitment to build a four-pillar economy is already having a positive impact on our state. It is vital that we continue to get these policies right as we take forward our plans to drive down the cost of living and transform our economy. This is not an easy task. Despite the vigilant efforts of the honourable the Treasurer over the past 15 months, there is still an immense task ahead. However, we have slowed the runaway train that is our state debt.

Queensland is an energetic state, vibrant and bustling with enthusiasm. We are poised to reclaim our position as the No. 1 state in the Federation. Like our government's first budget, this one forms a crucial building block in shaping our state's future.

Sitting suspended from 6.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

 **Mr PUCCI:** Logan is in the heart of the south-east. From our urban areas to rural acreages, we encompass everything that is wonderful about being a Queenslanders. Despite the negativity of the opposition, this budget strikes an equal balance between rebuilding our economy and the growth and resilience that puts our community on the right path for a strong future. Logan residents will benefit from this budget with improved infrastructure, better healthcare facilities, more front-line services and an array of state-wide grants that will strengthen our community. Our community was ignored by the previous government and infrastructure upgrades were virtually nonexistent. This budget has allocated \$8 million towards the upgrading of the Browns Plains bus station. Each time I visit this station during morning and evening peak hours I all too often hear from constituents and bus drivers alike of how the station is falling into disrepair. This \$8 million will see a refurbishment of the existing station, the development of four new bus bays, sheltered seating, security cameras and lighting that will provide 24-hour video surveillance and kiss-and-ride areas with bicycle storage facilities.

A government member: A great result!

Mr PUCCI: An excellent result. During the upgrades the installation of much needed go card facilities will occur and will come as a great relief to Logan commuters. These upgrades are expected to be completed in 2014 and will meet the growing needs of passengers and improve bus time reliability. Our community will also benefit through the allocation of \$1.096 million for the overlay of pavement along Waterford-Tamborine Road. This upgrade will undoubtedly support the needs of this crucial infrastructure—an arterial road that connects growing rural areas such as Logan Village with dense commercial and industrial regions of the greater Logan region.

A government member: Another great result!

Mr PUCCI: All great results. These investments are proof that the days of being ignored are over. It is proof that our community is front and centre in the mind of this government. The upgrades will benefit commuters, bus drivers and local businesses, and I am happy to see that our government is listening.

As our community continues to grow, so do her demands. Efficient and viable health service is a must for any community. Since the election of our government last year, the turnarounds that have occurred in the health sector have been phenomenal. The investment made by our government towards health care in the region can be seen in the \$1.751 billion allocation to the hospital service. This figure will support the opening of the expanded emergency departments of the Logan Hospital and further expand the maternal and child health services under the Mums and Bubs initiative. Our government is also unashamedly tackling mental health care across Queensland. Earlier this year our government passed the Mental Health Commission Bill. By reforming the administrative processes when dealing with mental health, we can make a path for more efficient and effective care. Residents of Logan will have access to a mental health community care unit as part of state-wide funding to the tune of \$28.2 million that will enhance mental health care and its subsidiary support services.

Logan residents will also see a total of \$67.1 million dedicated to continue the expansion of the Logan emergency department that will increase capacity and improve patient flows. This budget will also see renewed operating grants available to people in Logan which will assist in costs associated with disability services to the tune of \$4.464 million. This is strong support to members of my electorate who suffer from or care for family members with disabilities. These opportunities are

separate to a further \$868 million being invested state-wide through the DisabilityCare Australia initiative. With recent legislation such as the Disability Services (Your Life Your Choice) Amendment Bill, those with disabilities and their carers will have greater access to financial and physical support.


Our government's record of improving community safety is unprecedented in Queensland history. This budget re-enforces our ongoing commitment to boost police numbers as well as alternative options for addressing youth justice. With a total of \$63 million being invested into the Queensland Police Service, our government's ongoing commitment to have 1,100 officers on the beat is well on its way to fruition. Since March last year my electorate of Logan has benefited from 40 new police officers who have come to the region. This budget has also allocated a total of \$13.7 million across the state to maintain, enhance and upgrade youth justice facilities. Additionally, families of Logan will be pleased to hear that we are receiving \$2.223 million toward child safety programs.

Despite the claims of the opposition, education is and will always be a priority for our government. Unlike the opposition, which has a flavour for gimmicks, our government has practical, viable and measurable solutions—real solutions—for our next generation. Our government will offer real opportunities and not some pipedream off in the never-never. We are investing \$537 million to roll out our Great Teachers = Great Results initiative. This will see our government generate 724 new teacher and support staff positions. In combination with achievements such as new teacher aides for prep classes and e-kindy, our government is making strides in making Queensland the No. 1 state in education. On top of this, Logan public libraries will have adequate supplies and library resources due to the investment in the \$1.135 million Public Library Grant Scheme.

Our Logan will also benefit through a \$273,000 allocation for the refurbishment of Park Ridge State High School. Bringing our schools up to scratch is an ongoing priority for our government. For too many years our schools were neglected. In this budget, like the one before, our commitment to clear the backlog of maintenance is firm, with an allocation of a further \$100 million to assist schools and their P&Cs to address urgent maintenance issues. I am sure that schools across my electorate are eagerly awaiting further support to bring their grounds up to par. Education in Logan will also see a boost with the ongoing commitment through the technical trade centre school program, with Flagstone State Community College receiving \$2.8 million for the program. Logan will also benefit in the housing arena, with \$8.5 million of funding for upgrading public rental housing, Indigenous housing projects and community housing projects. This investment in housing is also an investment in jobs, no doubt helping our construction industry and all trades and suppliers to that industry.

It is well documented the devastating impact that recent natural disasters have had on our communities and our economy. My electorate saw the highest water levels since 1974. Being spared during the 2011 flood, communities such as Flagstone, Logan Village, Chambers Flat and Jimboomba were not so lucky this time. Across the state this budget will provide funding to communities like Logan to not only rebuild but also add measures to mitigate natural disasters in the future. When the Logan River broke her banks, debris and other objects were swept into the river. Over time such debris naturally found its way into our waterways. In a question on notice to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection tabled last November, I asked the minister what steps the government is taking to help restore the health and quality of the Logan River. I thank the minister for his response, which detailed that the department is working on a policy framework to allow industries that potentially impact on water quality to use innovative and cost-efficient approaches to compensate for their impacts. I am pleased to announce that South-East Queensland will receive \$2 million for the Healthy Waterways program.

Other steps our government has taken to support the natural wonders of our great state are an investment of \$11.7 million towards the Koala Habitat Program. This ongoing funding commitment will deliver real and practical outcomes to conserve Queensland's koala population. Preservation of our local ecohabitat will not be left behind as our community continues to grow. As we are a quickly growing community, Logan is also receiving \$28.6 million of capital funding for a \$45.9 million project to increase our electricity network capacity. Our state has taken the second step in getting back on our feet. It is a long road ahead until we enjoy the prosperous economy we once had, but this government will not let up. We will achieve our goal of regaining our AAA credit rating and getting our economy back on track. We are finishers; we are not afraid of hard work. This can be seen in our Treasurer's tireless efforts in that he, ably supported by his ministerial and departmental staff, has delivered a budget that is focused on economic growth, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. By working together, we are ensuring Queensland remains a great state with great opportunity. Together, we can make it happen.

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (7.39 pm): I rise to respond to the budget papers. This is without doubt the most depressing budget I have had the unhappy task to address in my 15 years in this House.

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr WELLINGTON: I believe that the lights have gone out in Queensland and that the operator of the switch is the Premier and the Treasurer, who is in the House this evening. They have totally destroyed the confidence of Queenslanders and there can be no question about that. This budget is like the government: big on rhetoric and completely lacking in substance. It is nothing more than a doom-and-gloom package that is preparing the groundwork for a fire sale of valuable Queensland assets.

The people I talk to are depressed and angry. Thousands have lost their jobs and many more are waiting in fear for the axe to fall. With no job security, there is an overwhelming feeling of doom and gloom. People are not spending. Houses are not being built or bought. People are staying at home. They are not attending cafes. They are not attending entertainment. They are not going on holidays. They are saving every penny, because they are worried about what might be around the corner.

Many considered our last Labor Treasurer to be arrogant and out of touch with Queenslanders. To me, this Premier and his leadership team can be tarred with exactly the same brush. Yes, I mean the Premier and his leadership team. I see this budget as preparing the groundwork for a fire sale of valuable Queensland assets when we all know that the real estate market is very depressed. And guess who benefits? The LNP lobbyist mates who are in the loop.

Our state is going backwards at a fast pace and this budget offers no solution. We see no initiatives to stimulate investment. We see thousands of people who invested in solar hot-water systems now concerned about the government's future plans for them. They all thought that they were doing the right thing for Queensland and the right thing for our environment. Look how this government has destroyed Queenslanders' desire to do the right thing. We should be embracing solar power generation with vigour and enthusiasm led by an excited and innovative state government.

On the topic of government incentives to invest, I refer members to the Premier's pet project, the new state government Executive Building, which I understood he specifically demanded—'This is what I want.' I understand that this project is destined to bring a windfall multimillion dollar rental for the LNP mates who build it. I understand that it will cost Queenslanders over a 30-year period in the range of \$4.5 billion. So I say to Queenslanders that I believe that this Premier is just like some previous premiers: all spin and no substance. I believe that the records show that he has lost credibility in what he promises one day and how he delivers the next.

Guess what the government's catchphrase of the year is? Contestability. To me, contestability is simply the ability to contest, to have a game or a competition. If the Premier is so sure that his catchphrase is going to fool the people of Queensland, I challenge him to stand for the seat of Ashgrove at the next state election, because I do not believe there will be any contest at all. I predict that the Premier will be out on his ear whether he chooses to stand for election in the electorates of Ashgrove, Moggill or wherever, because Queenslanders are sick of being treated like fools. They do not believe the Premier and his premiers-in-waiting when they talk about no further cuts to services. They do not believe that the Newman government is not going to sell off more government assets. They do not believe the gobbledegook about contestability. I do not know who dreamt up the jolly word.

While on this topic of contestability, I note that this morning in our parliament the member for Gaven made an announcement advising that, in his position as leader of the United Australia Party, the party has now been registered with the Queensland Electoral Commission. So now the Liberal National Party will have a real contest at the next state election. It will have a real contest with a moderate conservative party led by the member for Gaven. Queenslanders will now have a real choice to the Newman government extreme agenda. This government did not want the member for Gaven—the former chairman of the PCMC and the former chairman of the Ethics Committee—because he would not do its bidding. The member for Gaven is a moderate man who is going to lead an alternative conservative party. Let us see the election be brought on.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! Honourable members, I really cannot hear the member.

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Some government ministers claim that we are not going to have the privatisation of government services. They talk about having a contest between the public sector and the private sector and whoever comes up with the best options wins. Of course, the government will meet with its mates—the lobbyists—over fancy lunches. Whether that appears in any record, I do not know. Perhaps we need to talk to Santo Santoro or some of his colleagues. They will have their discussions and guess what? The government will set the terms of the tender documents. So the government will say what it wants and I think we all know what the final outcome will be. A while ago someone suggested to me that maybe Nambour's disabled have been ignored by the Premier in their pleas for disabled access to the Nambour Railway Station and that they should have pooled some dollars and got in contact with the Premier's and the Treasurer's favourite lobbyist, Mr Santo Santoro. Who knows? Things may have happened.

I note that the Minister for Transport and Main Roads is in the chamber. I recognise that he is doing the best he can. I want to put on the record my thanks for his support for the proposed car park extension at the Nambour Railway Station. I understand the Nambour community is ecstatic about the minister's move. I have to say that I think it will not cost many dollars, but I think the returns to the state and to my community will be significant. So I again thank the minister for his support. Hopefully, we can see the building being pulled down soon and more cars parked on that site.

Prior to the 2012, my mailbox, along with every other mailbox in this state, was bombarded with electioneering material claiming that the Liberal National Party would deliver us from the evil of the Australian Labor Party, offer us salvation and build a fantastic four-pillar utopia based on construction, mining, agriculture and tourism. The Premier promised a new public Sunshine Coast hospital, as planned by the previous government. I think they were his exact words. That certainly is not what the Premier is now proposing. My money is on a private entity such as Ramsay Health Care operating this so-called public hospital when it finally happens. Let us wait and see what happens.

The Premier and the premiers-in-waiting promised Queenslanders that they would lower the cost of living for families by cutting waste and reducing water prices and reforming electricity tariffs to save families in the order of \$330 a year. Instead, we see people facing a massive electricity price hike of over 20 per cent. Our insurance premiums are set to rise and we now have a new fire levy. But they still expect all our volunteer rural fire brigade members to do the work free of charge. What a disgrace! Where is the respect for volunteers in Queensland? There is nothing visionary in this new tax or this new levy. You can call it what you choose. I agree with Tony Abbott, the federal leader of the Liberal Party, because he talks about a big new tax. So we have in Queensland a sign of things to come if Mr Tony Abbott gets his way and his party is elected to form the federal government. We will see more big new taxes just like what we are seeing in this budget here before us.

This government appears to be completely oblivious to the people who sit shivering in their homes because they cannot afford to turn on the heating, or the people who will be eating their meals in the dark because they are not game to turn on the lights. The Premier keeps saying he is sorry. Hand on heart he says, 'I'm sorry.' Yet in the same breath he blames Labor. So we have a conditional apology. What happened to saying, 'I take responsibility. I have been the Premier for 12 months and this is where I am going.' It is not Labor that brought on the fire sale of our valuable Queensland assets. It is not Labor that wasted \$300,000 for a talkfest in Mackay and I understand that the total cost is over \$4.6 million. You cannot blame Labor for that. It is not Labor that refused to make sure that land sold in the Mary Valley was sold on the open market so that we all knew that it was sold for the highest and best price. I raised this matter with the Auditor-General's office. Guess what? The Auditor-General's office agreed with me that the best way to make sure that the land was sold for the highest price was to have an open sale on the open market.

This government promised to deliver better infrastructure and better planning and to share the proceeds of the mining boom to build roads and provide critical local infrastructure. That is another broken promise. We are still waiting. The Bruce Highway between the Sunshine Coast and Caboolture needs upgrading. Where is the money going to come from to fund the infrastructure needs of the new Caloundra South city? My bet is that a lot of it will come from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council ratepayers and not from the government's developer mates. Maybe that was one reason so many residents of the former Noosa shire said, 'I don't want to be part of the Sunshine Coast Regional Council. I do not want to have to foot these bills in the future. I want to be part of the Noosa council.' I do not blame them for taking that position.

Last year, the Deputy Premier announced the go-ahead of the southern interchange to the Sankeys Road section of the Cooroy-Curra Road upgrade and I understand committed in the vicinity of \$395 million for the completion of the roadworks on the Cooroy to Curra section of the Bruce Highway. In this year's budget the Treasurer announced \$65 million for the Cooroy southern interchange to Sankeys Road. I wonder how many more sod-turning photos this government wants to get from the same announcement. That amount of \$65 million is a long way short of the promised \$395 million. They have learnt some pretty good tricks from the previous government, so who knows.

As for the railway line improvements, can I say zilch. Where is the duplication of the railway line to Nambour? I realise that the priority list of the Minister for Transport is decided by the Premier and the minister's hands are tied. The record shows this rail duplication project is of little importance to the Premier and the Treasurer. It is on the record. One only has to look at the Premier's answers to my questions on notice. The Premier has admitted to parliament that he has not bothered to discuss funding for the railway line with the Prime Minister, instead he has simply had the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—who is here and I thank him—make a submission to the federal government for the duplication of the Beerwah to Landsborough railway section. I refer to the Premier's answer to question on notice No. 55.

I repeat that, if the state government put money on the table, I believe it would be a significant incentive to a future federal government to come to the table. At the moment we are seeing all this argy-bargy between the Premier and the Prime Minister because we have a federal election just around the corner. We all know a Tony Abbott-led federal government is not interested in the rail duplication on the Sunshine Coast. He has made that very clear. But guess what? Now there is an alternative to the Liberal National extreme Abbott-led federal government. We have a new moderate conservative political party, the Palmer United Party. I understand the United Australia Party, led by the member for Gaven, Dr Alexander Douglas, is affiliated with the Palmer United Party.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Berry): Order! Member for Nicklin, sit down for the moment. Members, let us just take stock of the fact that the member has to finish his speech. I appreciate that there is a fair bit of argy-bargy, but I am entitled to hear what he is saying. I call the member for Nicklin.

Mr WELLINGTON: I have met with Mr Palmer from the Palmer United Party.

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order. This is a bill for an act authorising the Treasurer to pay amounts. I do not recall any mention of a puppy party or their adherents—I suppose they would be fleas. I ask you to rule on relevance.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I rule that it is indirectly relevant. I call the member for Nicklin.

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I refer the Treasurer to submissions members have made from the government and opposition during this debate to date.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Nicklin, you are on the periphery of it.

Mr WELLINGTON: Thank you. I have met with Mr Palmer from the Palmer United Party, candidate for Fairfax, and he agrees with me that there are significant benefits to be gained for our whole Sunshine Coast region with the duplication of the railway line to Nambour. I hope he and his other candidates for the federal election can get to federal parliament and give our region a voice it has not had for so long. I have no doubt that Clive and his team will bring significant change to the current state-Commonwealth relationship for the benefit of all Queenslanders and hopefully all Australians.


I refer to an article contained in the *Sunshine Coast Daily*. In it the Newman government is reported as promising to protect prime agricultural land and instead fast-tracked coal seam gas industry applications and said to hell with environmental impact advice and serious safety concerns to our Great Artesian Basin and the Great Barrier Reef. The record will reflect what is happening in Queensland in relation to these important issues.

Another broken promise from the Premier and his LNP leadership team was the promise to revitalise front-line services for families, to get back to basics and deliver quality services such as health, transport, police and education. Instead the government sacked thousands of public servants, including front-line staff—nurses, doctors, police, hardworking cleaners—and closed essential health

and community services. It need not keep up the pretence that these workers took voluntary redundancy because it just will not wash. I quote from one of the nurses in my electorate who said—

I could see the writing on the wall. I could see what the Newman government was doing. It's as if health isn't about health anymore, it's about dollars, and I feel the onus isn't on the caring aspect anymore. It's not about how we can support you to support the patient anymore.

It is all about budgets.

 **Mrs RICE** (Mount Coot-tha—LNP) (7.55 pm): I am certainly very pleased to make a rational contribution to the debate on the government's second budget this evening. Like my colleagues before me, and I have no doubt those who will follow me, I certainly recognise that out of necessity this budget is focused on economic growth, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient for the future. As the Treasurer has said, this is a no-frills, no-nonsense budget, delivering the front-line services Queenslanders expect while also fostering economic growth. It is the right budget for the current stage in Queensland's recovery from the policies and neglect of the former government.

I would particularly like to acknowledge and thank the Treasurer for his diligence and hard work in pursuing economically sound and financially prudent measures—something this state had not seen for a very long time until the Newman government came to office. That goes a long way toward getting Queensland back on track. As I have said previously, I am proud to be part of a government that is genuinely concerned about the future of Queensland. I am proud to be part of a government that has a plan for the future.

In the electorate of Mount Coot-tha this budget delivers in a number of ways. I know that the school community of Rainworth State School is delighted to receive capital funding that will see an additional 12 classrooms built this year. These additional classrooms will enable this growing school the space it needs to accommodate its growing enrolments now and into the future. Additional, fit-for-purpose accommodation is something the school community has been pursuing for some time and I am certainly pleased that this infrastructure will be completed in time for the 2014 school year. Still focusing on the investment in our schools, last year this government announced that it would spend \$200 million to provide every state school in Queensland with up to \$160,000 to fix existing maintenance issues inherited from the previous Labor government. Thanks to that funding, Bardon State School, Milton State School, Petrie Terrace State School and Red Hill Special School all had their maintenance backlog cleared. The extra \$100 million commitment in this financial year will work towards clearing the backlog of Ithaca Creek State School, Toowong State School, Rainworth State School and the Queensland Academy of Science, Maths and Technology. I know that this has been welcome news to all those school communities.

The 2013-14 budget also sees the allocation of \$100,000 for Brisbane Basketball Inc. to provide new flooring for one of its indoor courts at Auchenflower as part of the Get Playing, Get in the Game program. When members of Brisbane Basketball Inc. heard that they had been successful in this grant program they were absolutely over the moon. The membership of Brisbane Basketball, and, importantly, kids right across Brisbane wanting to be part of an energetic and fun team sport, has been growing astronomically in recent years. The ability for Brisbane Basketball to re-floor one of its courts through this funding means that it will be in a position to meet this growth in members but will also be able to host more regional and interstate competitions.

Both providers and individuals across my electorate will welcome operating grants of \$1.335 million for child safety; \$7.149 million for disability services and \$1.895 million for social inclusion programs. At the broader Brisbane region level, the Metro North Hospital and Health Service will receive more than \$2 billion in 2013-14 to deliver public healthcare services, including funding to address the current waiting list for adults requiring cochlear implants and expanded maternal and child health services under the Mums and Bubs initiative.

I am also pleased that there is more than \$16 million for upgrades to public rental housing properties, \$1.064 million for upgrades to Indigenous housing properties and \$798,000 for upgrades to community housing properties. The community will also benefit from \$3.892 million for the Public Library Grant Scheme to supply library resources to public libraries throughout Queensland and, very importantly, more than \$97 million for recovery and reconstruction projects in the region, including funding for critical community infrastructure projects in partnership with the Australian government.

Queenslanders deserve to live in communities where they feel safe and I thank the Minister for Police and Community Safety for his commitment to ensuring that adequate resources contribute to creating safer streets. Queenslanders will have more police on the beat as a result of a \$63 million investment to deliver a further 267 additional police officers, in addition to the 300 additional police officers already recruited in 2012-13 as part of the government's commitment to provide an extra 1,100 police officers over four years. There is also a significant investment of \$38 million for new police vehicles and \$3 million to continue police helicopter services across the Gold Coast and South-East Queensland.

Over four years, \$3.5 million will go towards the Newman government's Justice of the Peace pilot project, which will allow JPs to hear some minor civil disputes in the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal. In relation to the wonderful work JPs do in our community, last week I was certainly pleased to host a professional development session for JPs in my electorate and, together with the Attorney-General, thank those JPs, particularly those who have served for more than 25, 40 and 50 years. When the Attorney-General talked about the QCAT pilot project, those in the room showed both support for and interest in being part of this pilot, which is welcomed.

On the public transport front, I commend the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for his continued commitment to delivering more frequent, reliable and affordable public transport services. These measures include \$158.2 million over four years to halve public transport fare increases due in 2013 and 2014 and \$39 million over four years to reward regular commuters by reintroducing free travel on the TransLink network after nine journeys in a Monday-to-Sunday week.

I also highlight that the Newman government has fully delivered on its cost-of-living commitments, which include more than \$132 million over three years to freeze car registration fees on more than 2.5 million family vehicles, saving a family with a six-cylinder car \$22.61 in 2013-14; \$917 million over four years to reinstate the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty, providing savings of up to \$7,175 when buying a home; \$92 million in 2012-13 to deliver a one-off water rebate of \$80 to households supplied by the SEQ bulk water grid; and \$63 million in 2012-13 to freeze the standard electricity tariff, tariff 11, excluding the cost of carbon.


In my role as Assistant Minister for Technical and Further Education, I am delighted that this budget also enables us to undertake the massive reforms that we need to undertake in the VET sector. If we are to grow a strong four-pillar economy, Queensland must look at ways of boosting productivity and increasing participation in the workforce. To boost productivity we must minimise skills shortages. Therefore, training funds must be focused not just on providing training for the sake of providing training but providing training for emerging needs in the economy. By focusing our investment in training towards skills needed by employers, we will drive labour market productivity and realise the benefits that come from increased workforce participation. Perhaps most importantly, we are creating an effective, contestable training market that will build the sector's overall capacity and lift quality by encouraging innovation in service delivery, course content and training outcomes.

Since the Newman government was elected, we have been unashamedly a pro-growth government. Over the past year, green shoots have well and truly started to sprout in Queensland. In 2013-14, the Queensland economy is expected to grow by three per cent, which is the second highest growth rate of any Australian state. In 2013-14, employment is expected to grow at 2.25 per cent, growing to 2.75 per cent in 2015-16. By comparison, employment in Australia is expected to grow by 1.25 per cent. With labour force growth predicted to be slightly below employment growth, the unemployment rate is forecast to fall steadily over the forecast period. We are doing everything we can to get off the back of business and cut red tape to help the economy grow, to create more jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders.

As others have recognised, while we work to grow the economy we are also continuing the task we began last year to rebuild the state's finances—a task made all the more difficult after the January 2013 natural disasters. With floods, cyclones and storms battering Queensland communities year after year, the government is determined not just to rebuild Queensland but also to increase our resilience to the natural disasters we know will happen again and again. In relation to the task of rebuilding Queensland, and as a result of the recent flooding caused by ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald, which touched the electorate of Mount Coot-tha, the cost is forecast at \$2.5 billion. The cost of this disaster, coupled with other significant recent disasters, amounts to \$9.3 billion over the 2012-13 to 2014-15 period and the total cost since 2010 is \$13.8 billion. A sum of \$2.5 billion will be spent to rebuild after ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald, including roads funding of \$400 million in 2013-14 and state assets and assistance funding of \$84 million in 2013-14. It will also include local government asset funding of \$432 million in 2013-14.

Just as we are working hard to rebuild damaged infrastructure—our roads, our water treatment plants, our bridges—we are also working hard to rebuild the state's finances and make the budget more resilient to the financial challenges we face. Right across the world and in every Australian state, governments of all persuasions are experiencing massive falls in revenue. Queensland is not immune, with our revenue over \$4.5 billion less than expected since March 2012. The financial repair task is a long-term task—a journey that will take a number of years—but it is a task we must not shirk if we are to become more resilient to the economic challenges that come our way. Rebuilding the state's finances is vital if we are to deliver the better services the people of Queensland expect and deserve. We are investing heavily in giving children a better education through our Great Teachers = Great Results plan, injecting record amounts of funding into health care and increasing funding to assist people with disabilities and their carers.

The Newman government is open and upfront about the problems and challenges we face now and in the future. We are determined to take Queenslanders into our confidence as together we deal with those challenges. In closing, this is a budget that is, quite simply, sensible and responsible. This budget will provide Queensland with a strong foundation to recover and grow a strong and resilient economy into the future.

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (8.06 pm): I am proud of what I have been able to deliver so far for my community and I am proud of what this Newman government is achieving for Queensland. This budget consolidates last year's budget. Last year, many hard decisions had to be made. The Commission of Audit clearly identified the untenable position the LNP government was left in after years of Beattie-Bligh Labor. We were elected overwhelmingly to address the dire state of affairs Labor left us with. The people of Queensland get that, as a state, we were living way beyond our means and that, for pure political purposes, the former government ran a debt level that will impact all Queenslanders for many generations to come unless we take our medicine.

Often medicine does not taste very good, but we know it is designed to help us heal. Labor's legacy is one of debt and mismanagement. We will need to take a course of medicine over an extended period before we can find our equilibrium, but thanks to the Newman government we are on our way. It will take discipline, effort, sacrifice, planning, privatisation and determination before we are again in a position where our AAA credit rating is restored and our financial position is once again able to be managed with typical budgetary measures. However, it will be a long time before the debt is paid off and it will be a millstone around our collective necks as Queenslanders. We will never stop reminding people that Labor fairly and squarely owns this issue.

How good would it be if Labor had saved a little for a rainy day during the boom times? Imagine if they had been forced to live within their means, just like any one of the thousands of families here in this state have to. Imagine the programs we could implement right now. Imagine the people we could be helping right now, if it were not for ideology driven 'Laboromics'. This budget builds on last year's effort. It is not a superstar budget and, unlike me, it is not sexy. However, like me, the budget is workmanlike: sound, secure, steady as she goes and sticking on the plotted course.

I said in my maiden speech that Australians have a very keen sense of what is fair, and this is a very fair and balanced budget. The people I represent are finally getting their fair share of the pie. Since coming to office I have been working hard to accomplish that. Some of the specific items for my electorate in this year's budget are: \$1.176 million for a new kindergarten at Jinibara State School—the member for Morayfield and I have put out a joint press release on this; \$1.176 million for a new kindergarten at Undurba State School; \$391,000 for Petrie Home Assist Secure, which supports and assists over 5,000 people; \$68.390 million for the continuation of work constructing a third train line from Lawnton to Petrie; \$170.626 million for the Moreton Bay rail link—that is federal, state and local government funding; \$500,000 to complete work on the \$26 million upgrade of the Narangba train station; \$4.7 million for disability services including services such as accommodation, respite, emergency response, and support for school leavers and community care programs; and \$1.8 million for child safety services, including programs such as placement and intensive family support.

On top of this, I want to reiterate that over the last 18 months since being elected we have delivered the following for the people in the electorate of Kallangur: \$250,000 for safety upgrades at Dakabin train station; 350 metres of sound barrier to be installed south of Kerr Road on the highway; major repairs to Anzac Avenue; delivery of the rebuild of the AJ Wyllie bridge on time and on budget; three new police officers at the Petrie Police Station; an additional police car for the region; more than \$1.5 million for repairs, refurbishment and upgrades at Dakabin State High School; \$160,000 for each

of our state schools, except the special school, which needed \$91,000, to address their maintenance backlogs; \$800,000 to rebuild the Boundary Road bridge; \$350,774 for 19 community groups from the gambling or Jupiter's community funds; \$45,000 across nine kindergartens in our community; \$409,593 for the Pine Rivers Bears playing field redevelopment in partnership with the council, which contributed over \$1 million to the project; \$9,250 for the Dynamos Netball Club under the Get in the Game program; establishment of a minor trauma centre in Kallangur, greatly improving emergency medical facilities in our community; and \$930,000 over three years for respite care for disabled adults.

I am proud of what I have been able to deliver for my community so far. I am proud of what this Newman government is achieving for Queensland. We also gather our resources as the Queensland community to ensure everyone has a fair go and to help reduce what otherwise may be a load too heavy to carry for some. We do this through a series of concessions including: \$615 million to Ergon Energy for the uniform tariff policy so that those in regional Queensland can access electricity at the same price as those in South-East Queensland; over \$1.2 billion in general public transport subsidies; \$144 million towards the livestock and regional freight contract; \$409 million in assistance under the government managed housing rental rebate; \$97.7 million over four years to boost the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, which assists patients access specialist medical services not available within their local area; and doubling the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to \$10 million in 2013-14 to ensure low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 if needed.

In addition to concessions contained in the Concessions Statement, the Newman government has fully delivered on its cost-of-living commitments that in this budget are still helping people. These include: \$132.3 million over three years to freeze car registration fees; \$917 million over three years to reinstate the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty, providing savings of up to \$7,175 when buying a home; \$158.2 million over four years to halve Labor's public transport fare increases due in 2013 and 2014; and \$39 million over four years to reward regular commuters by reintroducing free travel on the TransLink network after nine journeys in a Monday-Sunday week. If people leave Petrie station and get off at Central station, this concession saves working folks using public transport approximately \$314 a year. That is a real saving.

Some of the budget highlights are also very consistent and continue with the plans we laid out for Queensland with a focus on front-line services. For example, education receives \$537 million over five years to boost teaching and discipline in schools as well as \$100 million extra for school maintenance, to a total of \$300 million, and over 700 new teachers. Crikey, what a record! Disability services receives \$886 million for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and \$106 million to meet the demand for disability services over the next four years. Health receives increased funding: \$384.3 million over four years to operate and maintain the Health payroll system—imagine what we could do with that \$384 million if Labor had not screwed it up; \$147 million over four years to address the backlog of hospital maintenance; \$80 million to give regional and remote Queenslanders access to better health care; \$9 million over five years for dementia research; and \$5.8 million to reduce waiting lists for cochlear implants. Police and Community Safety receives: \$51.5 million for ambulance facilities, including 155 new ambulances; \$46.4 million for new fire and rescue facilities; 267 new police officers; and \$70 million for new police equipment, including \$8 million for three catamarans.

This is a fantastic budget in tight times. On this day, Queensland Day, I am proud of what I have been able to deliver for my community so far and I am proud of what this Newman government is achieving for Queensland. This is a fair budget, delivering to Queenslanders a fair outcome as the Newman government continues the work of reining in Labor's debt and getting Queensland back on track.

I have not touched on some of the policies that have been delivered to help the state's economy, but I can assure business that Queensland is the place to do business. While I know there are businesses at the moment that are hurting, there are some good early indicators that confidence is returning, and with the initiatives from this government I am confident that business will pick up and business will again be thriving in Queensland.

This is a great state with great opportunities and finally we have a great and fair-minded government. Kallangur is a most satisfactory place and becoming even more so. I would like to publicly acknowledge the collegial support I receive from the members for Morayfield, Murrumba and Pine Rivers. We work together to ensure that our region gets its fair share. I commend the bills to the House.



Hon. IB WALKER (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (8.16 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the budget and to give due credit to the Treasurer for the tremendous job that he has done. We have heard words coming from the Treasurer himself and from others in describing this budget—words like ‘no frills’, ‘no nonsense’, ‘solid’. I think that vastly understates the job done by the Treasurer in the budget that was delivered in the House a couple of days ago. The skill that the Treasurer has exercised in achieving the result that he has is, in my view, nothing short of magnificent.

The graphs that drive this home to me—and I am sure drive it home to my constituents in Mansfield and constituents in all other electorates who have it pointed out to them—are the two graphs on the back of the short explanatory paper.

Mr Johnson: It says it all.

Mr WALKER: As my colleague says, it says it all in two very simple graphs. The first shows the interest-revenue ratio of the budget—the green line being the Commission of Audit’s expectations and the blue line being the 2013-14 budget line. The important difference of course is the difference and the gap between those two lines which in fact shows the total interest savings to Queenslanders as a result of this government’s efforts. Those interest savings are \$3.3 billion from 2011-12 to 2015-16. That is money that will go back into the pockets of Queenslanders and go into front-line services and go into putting the budget back where it should be.

The second graph is the debt-revenue ratio. Here we see the green line showing where the Commission of Audit expected the debt-revenue ratio to run and the blue line showing the 2013-14 budget. It shows the debt-revenue ratio peaking in 2013-14 and then starting to get towards more sustainable figures.

That is clearly the task of this government, the task that it set itself, the task that it promised the people of Queensland it would deliver—and it has done that in spades. I believe the Treasurer deserves due credit not only for a budget that could be described as ‘no frills’, ‘solid’ and ‘no nonsense’ but also for a budget that is more than that, one that has achieved a significant amount for the people of Queensland. I am certainly happy to take it back to my constituents in Mansfield and show to them that the government has indeed lived up to its promises.

The issue of living up to its promises is another matter that I want to raise, in particular in relation to the speech from the Leader of the Opposition today and, in fact, the line of questioning that has been carried on by the opposition throughout this week seeking to point out that in their view this government has not held to its promises regarding cost-of-living decreases. In my view the Premier, those who have answered the questions this week and indeed the facts speak very much for themselves, and that is that this government has indeed delivered on its promise to reduce the cost of living for Queenslanders.

Let’s go through the measures: the freeze on car registration; the principal place of residence concessional stamp duty rate reintroduced; the \$80 one-off water rebate; the halving of public transport fare increases in the years ahead; the free trips after nine trips taken on the TransLink network; the freeze of the standard electricity tariff—all things promised by this government and all things delivered by this government. It is a very simple equation and one which our constituents understand quite clearly, that this government has indeed delivered on the promises that it made and has taken to heart the issues of cost of living that affect all of our constituents day to day. So I am quite convinced—and, I am sure, as I said, those who look at these matters seriously are convinced—that the smokescreen thrown up by the Leader of the Opposition and her colleagues cannot stand against proper scrutiny of what in fact has occurred.

The other issue I wanted to talk about in relation to the budget generally was what I think is a great innovation by the Treasurer in producing this Concessions Statement booklet. I urge each and every member of the House to look at this carefully themselves and in fact to take it back to their electorates and to show their constituents exactly how the government is providing significant concessions to people. They are important concessions and ones that are worthwhile in delivering a great standard of living to our Queensland residents. I picked up on a couple in particular. I am looking at page 22 of that booklet, at the program called Home Assist Secure.

Mr Ruthenberg: Great program.

Mr WALKER: It is a great program, as the member for Kallangur rightly says. Its budget allocation increased this year from \$17.4 million to \$17.9 million. In my own electorate of Mansfield the services are wonderfully delivered by the Mount Gravatt Community Centre—and I am thinking of Ian Lang, the chairman, and Lynn Rose, the CEO, who deliver services that might sound very basic but are very important and are really important grassroots, living-standard issues. They provide services such as fitting light bulbs for residents, supplying and servicing smoke alarms, carrying out electrical safety repairs to light and power sockets, repairing leaking toilets and taps, unblocking sewers and drains, repairing hot-water systems, raising and lowering beds, installing handrails and ramps, fitting wooden rails to stairs—all very practical things. That program is a great example of one of the concessions provided by this government, increased in this budget and, as I said, provided in a tremendous way by my own Mount Gravatt Community Centre to the people of the Mansfield electorate. I am very proud that the government is able to continue that concession and indeed increase it to some degree.

The other set of concessions that caught my eye were those that relate to the concessions administered by my own department. They are on page 25 of the booklet. They relate to things like concessional entry fees to the Queensland Art Gallery—\$2.3 million in concessions last year; and \$2.7 million under the current budget. The Queensland Performing Arts Trust also has concessional entry fees, as does the Museum. There are venue hire rebates through the Queensland Performing Arts Trust and through the State Library of Queensland which allow community groups to use those important facilities at concessional rates.

It is an important booklet, which importantly sets out in full the concessions available to Queensland residents. Again, those concessions are supported on a continuing basis by this government and increased in many instances, notwithstanding the fact that we are in a dire budgetary situation due to the circumstances we inherited from the previous Labor government.

I now want to turn to my own electorate of Mansfield. Many of the speakers tonight have gone through the considerable benefits that have been delivered to each of their electorates by the Treasurer's budget. I just want to pick up a couple from my own electorate, but they are important ones. The Mansfield State High School, where I was very pleased to host the education minister a week or two ago with all of the principals from my Mansfield electorate, has been allocated \$7.872 million to spend on new classrooms for that wonderful campus. James Sloman, the principal there, and his team will be able to deliver an even better standard of education to the children of the Mansfield State High School community through that great expenditure which will see new classrooms built at the Mansfield State High School.

Continuing in the school area, the Rochedale State High School is another tremendous school within my electorate. I remember quite early in my elected term going down there and meeting with Karen Tanks, the principal, and with the chief representatives of the P&C as we started to grapple with the issue of year 7 coming to that school and how that was going to be designed and fit into the campus of the Rochedale State High School—a campus which has the wonderful attraction as part of my electorate of being in a semirural setting. It is a wonderful campus at Rochedale. Tremendous education is happening there, as well as now a \$5.3 million, almost \$5.4 million, investment in year 7 classrooms and other improvements to that campus that will see it deliver an even better product to the people of Rochedale.

Moving aside a little to the sporting area, we have a great soccer team in Mount Gravatt, the St Paul's Uniting soccer team. David Valentine and the team there have been developing the Yandina sportsground on Wecker Road. We have been able, through a Get in the Game grant, to contribute another \$100,000 towards a new clubhouse with changing rooms, toilets, referees rooms et cetera. That is a great cooperative effort there. The Mansfield cricket team, Barry Clifford and his team, also play on the same fields. That is a great example of being able to cater for soccer and cricket together and to develop a real community centre there at Yandina Park, just opposite the Citipointe campus, which is a tremendous development for our local community there. So I commend the Treasurer for those allocations. I am sure that they will be well received by the people of the Mansfield electorate.

I will now move on to those elements of the budget which affect the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts, because there is a significant DSITIA budget of \$862 million which will assist the Newman government to deliver its commitments to Queenslanders in the fields of science development and delivery, innovation, ICT and the arts for all Queenslanders. My department's objectives are to strengthen industries in the knowledge and digital economy through science, technology and innovation; to strengthen cultural and economic outcomes for

Queensland through a vibrant and creative arts and cultural sector; to provide efficient and responsive service delivery across and beyond government; and to be an accountable, capable and high-performing organisation with a great culture.

The key elements of the 2013-14 DSITIA budget which will help us achieve those outcomes are: \$9 million of funding to the Centre for Ageing Dementia Research to achieve real impacts for dementia patients, and I will speak about that in some detail in a moment; the establishment of a long-term monitoring station to investigate the emissions profile of coal trains in South-East Queensland; launching the wastewater tracking and electronic reporting system, WaTERS—a data management system that receives, stores and provides timely reports on water monitoring data collected by licence holders under the Environmental Protection Act.

We are also going to provide the first tranche of Queensland government funding to support construction of the Townsville component of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine. This is a great commitment—\$42 million in all—which will see three campuses of this institute established: in Townsville, Cairns and somewhere within the Torres Strait. When we were in the Torres Strait a week or two ago for community cabinet, I was able to look at one possible site on Thursday Island which might in fact house the campus that will be located in the Torres Strait. So it was good to start looking and start thinking ahead to the third campus in the trilogy of campuses that will form the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine.

While I was on Thursday Island I also had the chance, with my arts hat on, to visit the Gab Titui Art Gallery. It is a wonderful art gallery that presently is being renovated. That renovation is just about to be finished. It includes a magnificent glass wall so you can look out to the water from Thursday Island. It is a great repository of Indigenous art. There are some valuable treasures there as well as some contemporary Indigenous art. It was great to see it on my visit to Thursday Island.


Returning to the budget provisions, DSITIA is going to continue to progress the one-stop-shop vision to provide access to government services and information. It will continue to enhance the user functionality of the open data portal—a very important initiative of this government—and extend publishing of departmental data sets including ICT program and project performance data in conjunction with Assistant Minister Stevens. The department will be planning the implementation of a whole-of-government approach to address the long-term management and preservation of the Queensland government's digital information assets. We will continue to work with government agencies and with industry to drive the ICT agenda.

Earlier I mentioned the Centre for Ageing Dementia Research grant, and it is a very important one. It is one that I know has been close to the Premier's heart and one which I am pleased to say my department will administer on behalf of the government. In the 2013-14 state budget there is a \$9 million commitment over five years towards the Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia Research located at the University of Queensland. I was pleased to be out there recently with Professor Perry Bartlett and Dr Jurgen Gotz looking at the wonderful work being done at that centre. You really get the feeling that they are on the verge of a breakthrough in Alzheimer's and dementia research. It is this government's proud boast that we are contributing to help them close that gap.

The amount of \$9 million over five years, subject to an appropriate business plan being presented to us by the University of Queensland, will deal with this dementia issue which is, in fact, the leading cause of disability in older Queenslanders. It imposes significant costs on our health system which are going to increase as the years go on. It certainly poses great concerns, and families of dementia patients bear a lot of weight as a result of this illness. The number of Queenslanders affected is projected to increase markedly as the population ages—potentially to more than 200,000 people by 2050. So a judicious investment today will lead to great savings in the future. That is precisely why we are doing this.

The University of Queensland is one of the top three universities in Australia for neuroscience, performing at well above world standard, and we are going to capitalise on that expertise. For me and my department, with our interest in science and innovation, it will mean that researchers of the quality of the Queensland Brain Institute will attract great researchers from the rest of the world, and that is what this grant will help do. Not only are we dealing with a health issue; we are also dealing with the ability to build up our research and scientific base in Queensland. I am very proud that my department, through the good work of the Treasurer, will be able to deliver that.

My portfolio of Science, IT, Innovation and the Arts is a key enabler and a catalyst for a clever, connected and creative Queensland. I welcome the opportunities that have been given to us by the 2013-14 budget, which will assist this great state to provide great opportunities to all Queenslanders.

 **Mr KING** (Cairns—LNP) (8.33 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill 2013. While last year's budget was the most important in a generation, the 2013-14 budget is a responsible, steady-as-she-goes blueprint that consolidates the reforms and tough decisions our government made last year. Indeed, going forward this budget shows the debt will be \$6.2 billion less in 2014-15 and around \$8.7 billion less in 2015-16 than the figures projected in the independent Commission of Audit.

There can be no escaping the fact that this budget was framed in difficult circumstances, and I note that during the very tough State of Origin game last night I had the opportunity to have a chat with the Treasurer to get some more background on just how difficult this budget was to put together. Firstly, we are continuing the colossal clean-up task of debt, deficit and debacles such as the health payroll system bequeathed to us by the former Labor government. Secondly, natural disasters and falling revenues made the Treasurer's job even more difficult than it already was not least because of the millions of dollars in extra interest payments wasted every single day on Labor's mountainous debt and the loss of our AAA credit rating.

Having painted that fairly grim picture, I can say that the bright shining centrepiece of this budget for Cairns is possibly the most important issue facing our great city, and that is the provision of hospital and health services. This budget has delivered a massive \$40 million increase in funding to the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service. That represents a 6.8 per cent increase on the previous year, significantly higher than the state-wide rise of 4.5 per cent. While our government cannot turn around 14 straight years of Labor's underfunding of Far North Queensland health services in just two budgets, that \$40 million boost announced in this budget is the most significant step towards correcting that traditional imbalance that our city could have hoped for. This incredible boost to the operational budget of our health services comes on top of a \$104 million funding boost to continue the Cairns Base Hospital redevelopment, the \$28 million Hospital in the Home program trial which will now be rolled out across the state. Indeed, over the past few months I have met with exceptional nurses who deliver this service to Cairns patients and I am very thankful that the value of this program has been recognised and will be expanded.

Continuing on this theme of boosting health funding in Cairns, I point out that one of the most significant investments in health care that our region has ever seen was the announcement of \$3 million to help fund a PET scanner, a vital piece of 3D-imaging equipment for which our oncology specialists have been lobbying for many years. I sincerely thank the health minister for recognising this desperate need for a PET scanner in Cairns. Previously, each year 350 patients from the Cairns area travelled to Brisbane or Townsville for this service. The staggering fact is that 350 more patients choose not to travel and miss out on this vital examination because of the tyranny of distance. Our hospital anticipates that up to 700 patients per year will now use this vital facility. This is the first time this service has ever been delivered in Cairns. It is a service I fought for and am incredibly proud to deliver in this budget.

As I travel around my electorate there is a sense of gratitude that finally there is a government that appreciates the unique health needs and complex disease burden in our hospital catchment that stretches from Tully in the south, west beyond Croydon and right up to the tip of Cape York and Torres Strait. Increasingly, our hospital and health services are treating PNG nationals seeking treatment for very serious ailments including TB.

Mr Johnson: Which are not in the budget.

Mr KING: I take that interjection from the member for Gregory. The funds for that are not in the Queensland health budget. I renew my call here tonight for the federal Labor government to meet its obligations and provide the estimated \$10 million that Cairns Base Hospital is owed for the treatment of these PNG patients.

This budget, one of growth, rebuilding and resilience, continues to chart the course laid down by the Treasurer in last year's budget, providing a clear path to growth and diversity for our local economy. This budget contains \$38 million over the forwards for dredging Trinity Inlet. This will pave the way for increased cruise ship and naval activity. Major industries like this will help buffer Cairns from the economic shocks and tremors often experienced in our mainstay industry of tourism.

And there is \$2 million of the \$8 million attracting aviation fund to bring new airlines to Queensland. Indeed, we have seen the impact that this fund can have on tourism in our region. Our tourist accommodation has had an absolute bumper year, kick-started by this fund being utilised to bring China Eastern direct lights to Cairns for the very first time. This budget confirms that, so far, we are the only level of government to have committed money to the revitalisation of the Cairns CBD. Five million dollars will kick-start a stunning redevelopment of Lake Street in Cairns.


I will take this opportunity to again call on the federal government to meet its obligations to Cairns, and I call on Senator Jan McLucas to match this \$5 million commitment from the massive \$370 million budget which her government has allocated for the G20 meetings in Queensland.

A government member interjected.

Mr KING: We will be very lucky. To market Cairns—in what is shaping up as a stunning event schedule over the next two years—is \$7 million on offer for regional tourism operators, including Cairns, to undertake destination marketing. The Cairns Convention Centre has received \$350,000 for an upgrade project, and the \$80 million for Great Barrier Reef protection projects will help safeguard our most treasured tourist drawcard.

This budget will also prepare our key secondary schools for the influx of year 7s. There is over \$7.6 million for new classrooms and buildings at Cairns State High School, Trinity Bay State High School and Woree State High School. I know that the hardworking P&Cs in Cairns warmly welcome the school maintenance fund, including the increase of \$100 million which has helped to clear the significant backlog of repair and upkeep works around the ageing schools in my electorate.

The people of Cairns will also benefit from state-wide initiatives from this budget, including \$537 million for our Great Teachers = Great Results program, \$868 million for DisabilityCare—or the NDIS, as it was known—and \$63 million towards our target of an extra 1,100 police officers. While it is a steady, responsible budget, it is incredibly healthy. It will take better care of our people and patients and our economy with projects that will bring long-term economic value to our city. I congratulate the Treasurer and his team, and I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (8.42 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the Appropriation Bills 2013. I congratulate the Treasurer on his second fiscally responsible state budget—a budget that continues to build on the hard and often difficult work that our government has delivered in its first 12 months in office.

We all remember why so many on this side of the House were elected in March 2012 and why so few on that side. We were left with an ever-growing debt; a fiscal deficit that was haemorrhaging. The stark reality is that not one, but a number of generations were going to be left with the responsibility for repaying the waste and mismanagement of years of incompetence. The Treasurer has shown that when tough decisions are made, the ship can be stopped. We can now start to turn it back around to get this great state with great opportunities back on track.

When I delivered my maiden speech in May last year, I highlighted five priorities that my community and I believed were important to focus on in my first term. They were to fight for improved public transport, including a lower cost path; to improve educational outcomes; to improve the safety of our children around schools; to work towards a sustainable and liveable environment; and finally, to secure funding to recognise the importance of how sporting clubs contribute to our community.

I can advise the House that the Newman government and I are delivering for Bulimba on all of those priorities. We halved the planned public transport increases of 15 per cent that the former Labor government was going to implement in January 2013, and our government has committed to doing it again in January 2014. In addition to this we introduced the weekly go card concession, where, after making nine journeys, any additional trips in that week are free. Over the next two years, the average saving for a constituent in Bulimba will be more than \$375. These are real cost-of-living initiatives that will just keep on giving.

I welcome our government's commitment to continue to improve educational outcomes through an increase of \$707.4 million to education. This increase includes our recognition of creating improved pathways for our teachers which will equal great results, a \$537 million initiative that recognises that just throwing money at schools, as the federal government proposes, does not—and will not—improve educational outcomes. In fact, across my electorate of Bulimba, five schools will be worse off under Gonski. That includes Balmoral State High School, Morningside State School and Cannon Hill Anglican College, and yet the local Labor federal member is silent on this matter. He is too busy worrying about whose sign is bigger. Or is it acknowledging that his son and his staffers are posting intimidating video clips of the Glasson's Gladiators? He must be worried.

A government member interjected.

Mr DILLAWAY: I will take that interjection. On 14 September, I trust that the people of Griffith will act on that concern by making change a reality.

Over the past 12 months, I have delivered on local educational outcomes for early childhood education by providing over \$930,000 to local kindies and day care centres. I have had the pleasure of opening a number of new playgrounds, including the Bulimba Child Care and the Bulimba Preschool and Kindy. I also had the pleasure of opening the refurbishment of the new kitchen and other improvements at Hawthorne Limited Hours Care. All this, while at the same time the federal Labor government ripped \$197 million of national partnership funding from the early childhood sector to fund their flawed Gonski plan. Yet again I have not heard a murmur from the local federal member, who was all too happy to have his photo taken at those openings but made no commitment to fight to retain this funding. Nothing.

I also welcome our government's continued commitment to both chaplains and schools and additional teacher aides for prep students. I have witnessed firsthand how the new teacher aide and Jonathon, the new chaplain, have changed the lives of students at Murarrie State School. This was no more evident than when I helped Jonathon out at one of the chaplains breakfasts earlier this year and saw how the children welcomed a new role model into their school community.

The maintenance backlog has been a significant issue across the seven state schools in Bulimba, and none more so than at Balmoral State High School. Balmoral had a maintenance backlog of over \$1.1 million, and the first instalment of \$160,000 from the Fixing Our Schools fund has gone a long way to addressing the state of the school, thereby improving the educational outcomes to the students. I welcome our government's further commitment of an additional \$100 million to address the \$297 million maintenance backlog that the former Labor government left Queenslanders. Balmoral State High School will again benefit from this extra money.

In addition to this initiative, Balmoral State High School has also received funding to refurbish their library, \$92,000; resurfacing of their tennis and basketball courts, \$135,000; hard-surface grants, \$230,000; and \$225,000 to undertake the refurbishment of five classrooms in preparation for Flying Start in 2015. That is a total of \$842,000 for Balmoral State High School. This is in stark contrast to the efforts of the former Labor government, who ignored this important school within my community. There is the potential loss under Gonski of \$250,000 in funding to Balmoral State High School unless the local federal Labor member for Griffith steps up and fights the fights he should be fighting. This is a further unwarranted attack on this great local school.

A government member: He is too busy travelling.

Mr DILLAWAY: He is too busy travelling. In total, over \$1 million has been allocated to maintenance alone across Bulimba. With the additional commitment in this budget to further clear the maintenance backlog, more money will be flowing into the local community and to local businesses. This is because my seven state schools opted to take their business directly to the market, which is a great injection to the many small businesses who are doing it tough under the current economic conditions.

It is also my pleasure today to announce that in this budget, capital works will be undertaken at both Bulimba and Morningside state schools. Bulimba will receive \$4 million of additional classroom accommodation, which was a welcome announcement by the school community. Bulimba is bulging at the seams and even with the loss of year 7 in 2015, the school will still grow in size. Morningside has been allocated \$291,000 to start the construction of their new pool amenities block, which is not only used by students at Morningside but by other schools, including Balmoral State High School and local swimming clubs.

Other monies that will improve on local educational outcomes include \$221,000 to Cannon Hill Anglican College for preparation for their move from prep to year 3 that I raised in my maiden speech as a matter which I would fight hard to obtain. \$2.7 million has also been allocated to Lourdes Hill College to accommodate their incoming year 7s. All up, in the past 12 months in excess of \$10 million has been provided or is planned to be provided in the coming period to support education in the Bulimba electorate.

I also welcome our government's continued commitment to road safety with the announcement of our road safety plan. The community has welcomed the announcement of flashing school lights to both Hawthorne Road, to support students at Lourdes Hill College, and Wiles Street, to support students from Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School. This is another priority delivered for my community. I will continue to lobby the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for additional school zones to improve local school safety.


On Wednesday I had the pleasure of showcasing Bulimba State School to the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection on World Environment Day. This school is once again up for a Premier's sustainability award next Friday. I wish them well. The school community already has several cabinets full of accolades that show the level of importance my community places on working towards a sustainable and liveable environment. This was not the first time the minister had visited my electorate of Bulimba. I had the pleasure of having him announce the winners of the first round of the Everyone's Environment grants at a local site. I welcome this grant initiative, whereby an extra \$1 million has been added to the funding pool to make a total of \$4 million in 2013-14. I look forward to working with my local community groups to apply for these grants. In fact, Wayne Cameron from B4C was not going to make an application in round 1 until I impressed upon him that it was an opportunity too good to pass up. Wayne is very grateful for my persistence as he secured \$43,000 for two local projects.

As a former sports tragic I know the importance that should be placed on sport and the community clubs that deliver it. That is why our government's announcement in tripling the funding available for the Get in the Game package is a fantastic outcome for the Bulimba community. In the first round we were able to provide Get Started vouchers to 39 local children who otherwise may not have been playing sport this year. That equates to an extra three football teams out on the park every weekend—a great outcome.

Bulimba was also fortunate to secure \$156,000 in Get Playing funding. This included \$56,000 for the Southside Pony Club, who came to me last year asking how they could update their ageing and leaking clubhouse. We identified the Get Playing funding stream—and voila! I was also able to deliver \$100,000 to the Cannon Hill District Netball Association. Vicki came to me last year with a plan to attract more games and players to the netball courts, but they needed a playing surface upgrade. This money, along with money obtained through successful application to the gambling funds, sees all courts ready for that long-awaited upgrade.

In recent weeks I have had a number of meetings with sport and recreational committees that have identified new projects for the community's benefit. These include a new solar roof for the Brisbane Sailing Squadron, a gymnasium for the Morningside Panthers and a safety boat for the TS *Gayundah* Navy Cadets. I will fight hard to secure this funding in the coming rounds of Get Playing.

I have delivered on the priorities that the Bulimba community set out for me and I will continue to fight for every dollar available. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (8.52 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the appropriation bills 2013. The 2013-14 budget, introduced in this place by the Treasurer on Tuesday, is a responsible budget focused on repairing the state's finances, rebuilding after natural disasters, funding core services and growing the economy. It is a sober budget as well.

The unfortunate fact is that when we came to power in March 2012 the Queensland government's finances were in a mess. In June 2012 the Commission of Audit predicted that the government's debt would hit \$100 billion in 2018-19 unless urgent action was taken. If we had done nothing it would have meant an interest bill of \$115 million a week that all Queenslanders would have to pay back—or, put another way, \$685,000 per hour. Urgent and tough reforms were needed just to stabilise current levels of debt, let alone pay off debt and move towards regaining Queensland's AAA credit rating.

I am happy to say that the reforms of our first budget, in 2012-13, are continuing to have a positive benefit, with these benefits being reinforced through the 2013-14 budget. The Queensland budget will now return to fiscal surplus in 2015-16, with a small deficit of \$244 million estimated for 2014-15.

General government expenses have grown by only 1.1 per cent in 2012-13, representing the lowest expense growth for the state since 1998-99 and demonstrating that the government is serious about getting our expenses under control. Under the previous government expenses grew by 8.9 per cent per annum on average over the 10 years to 2011-12.

Unfortunately, despite this important progress we have also seen large declines in revenue—a decline of \$4.2 billion since the 2012-13 budget, including \$2.6 billion since December 2012. The recent natural disasters and changes to the timing of federal payments have also hit the budget hard, with ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald and the flooding that followed bringing destruction to 57 Queensland local government areas from January to March 2013.

Despite the very difficult fiscal situation the state faces, we have still managed to deliver key initiatives for Queenslanders in this budget including: an additional \$868 million over the period to 2018-19 to support the implementation of DisabilityCare Australia, the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland; an additional \$147 million over four years as part of a \$237 million program to address the health maintenance backlog; increased funding of \$83 million over four years to support and enable better access to healthcare services for Queenslanders in regional, rural and remote communities; an additional \$9 million for dementia research over five years for the Centre for Ageing Dementia Research at the Queensland Brain Institute to leverage the centre's capabilities and achieve real benefits for dementia patients; an additional \$5.8 million for cochlear implants to clear the backlog for people with moderate to profound hearing loss who are on waiting lists; an additional \$537 million over five years from 2013-14 as part of the Great Teachers = Great Results program to focus on professional excellence in teaching and support the autonomy of Queensland schools; and an extra \$100 million to fix our schools, bringing total additional funding under this government to \$300 million over three years to deal with the legacy of the huge maintenance backlog that Labor left behind.

Today in her budget reply speech the Leader of the Opposition claimed that Labor believes in investing in schools and accused this government of having no compassion when it comes to schools. I ask the Leader of the Opposition, and indeed her whole team—six out of seven were members of the former government: how compassionate was it to leave our state schools with a \$300 million maintenance backlog? There are cement footpaths in dangerous disrepair, broken toilets, bubblers that do not work, rotting handrails and guttering—and the list goes on. I am proud that the government is prioritising the revitalisation of our state schools.

On 13 March 2013 we announced the first ever betterment fund, worth \$80 million, to allow us to rebuild stronger and more resilient infrastructure for the next natural disaster that befalls Queensland. We have made a \$40 million contribution to the fund in this budget, matched by the federal government. We had asked the federal government to match a Queensland commitment to \$100 million to create a \$200 million fund, but they would only come to the party with \$40 million. We will continue talks with the current federal Labor government and the federal coalition to do whatever we can to secure more federal money to match our commitment.

I will now talk about regional Queensland. More than 75 per cent of the government's capital expenditure will take place outside of Queensland. The budget also confirms a number of other initiatives focused squarely on regional Queensland: \$83 million to enable better access to healthcare services to Queenslanders in regional, rural and remote communities; \$94.9 million for the recently doubled Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme; \$145 million for rail transport subsidies for livestock and regional freight; \$30 million for the Geological Survey of Queensland to expand resource exploration; \$11.1 million for irrigation water price subsidies; and \$620 million to support the uniform tariff policy to make electricity prices comparable for regional Queenslanders. I, as much as anyone, was dismayed to see the recent announcement by the independent Queensland Competition Authority—I know that the member for Nanango was also shocked—that electricity prices will rise substantially next year.

Mrs Frecklington: Very shocked.

Mr NEWMAN: I take that interjection. The member for Nanango is indicating shock. I know that this is a big blow for households and businesses grappling with the cost of living and doing business. In this price rise we are seeing the consequences of past poor decisions and mismanagement coming home to roost. Successive state and federal Labor governments have decided to load inefficient and costly green schemes into the electricity price, with terrible results. In 2012-13 we froze prices at 2011-12 levels, with the only increase due to the federal Labor government's carbon tax.

Unfortunately, the budget situation we inherited and the tough economic climate mean that we cannot afford to keep subsidising prices. Having said this, we are making sure that vulnerable members of society are protected by increasing the electricity concession by 22.6 per cent to \$282. That is \$5.2 billion in concessions for Queenslanders in areas like electricity, water, transport, housing, health, education and training—3.7 times what Labor offered in its last budget. We will also soon be announcing major long-term reforms to drive significant decreases in network costs. We are very conscious of cost-of-living pressures on families and we continue to deliver on our cost-of-living commitments, including freezing car registration fees on the family car, saving Queenslanders \$132.3 million; halving Labor's public transport fare increases; reinstating a lower stamp duty rate for the family home, saving Queenslanders \$917 million over three years; and delivering a water rebate of \$80 to South-East Queensland households, saving Queenslanders \$92 million in 2012-13.


I am also pleased to report that this budget delivers on promises I made to the great electorate of Ashgrove. I want to take this opportunity to update the House on activity in my electorate. Indeed, in her budget reply speech yesterday, the Leader of the Opposition called on me to spend time in the electorate and meet face to face with my constituents to really hear what they are saying. I say that that is pretty rich from someone who spends a lot of time out of their electorate. The Leader of the Opposition is more frequently seen in the cafes, bars and trendy restaurants of inner-city Brisbane, West End and South Brisbane, as I understand it. It is a bit rich coming from a member who we know was unable to attend meetings called by her constituents when the former Labor government was closing schools in her own electorate.

For the peace of mind of the Leader of the Opposition, I am very happy to reassure her that, since being the member for Ashgrove and dedicating Fridays to spending time in the electorate, I have had one-on-one meetings with over 120 constituents, held over 10 community corners and hosted six meet-and-greet events where I meet with all kinds of people and listened to their concerns as well as their feedback and great ideas. Recently I also did an electorate-wide survey, which I note the Leader of the Opposition made mention of in this place this week. May I say it warms my heart that she has been reading my local electorate newsletter. In this survey I asked my constituents their views on a whole range of issues. More than 1,500 responses have been received to date and I am looking over and reading those responses to know exactly what is on people's minds and what issues are important to them.

Before I talk about what the budget delivers for the people of Ashgrove and just reflecting on that survey, it will dismay the Leader of the Opposition to know that 80 per cent of my constituents oppose tough controls on bats to deal with health and safety issues. That would probably dismay the Leader of the Opposition. I think the figure was 65 per cent of people were actually supportive of Public Service cuts rather than suffering higher taxes. These are matters that I am sure clearly indicate the Leader of the Opposition has not a clue what the people of my electorate are thinking and shows that the policies of this government are actually aligned to the people of my electorate and their needs and wishes.

In relation to the budget and the electorate, as well as clearing the inexcusable maintenance backlog in the eight state schools and two high schools in my electorate, this budget delivers on \$10 million in further upgrades and new facilities. The important Samford-Wardell intersection upgrade has commenced and this budget commits the remaining \$44.5 million needed to get the job done. User-friendly transport is vital to many constituents in my electorate, and this budget locks in \$1 million to build a new park-and-ride facility at The Gap, with construction due to be completed by the end of this calendar year. Public housing is extremely important, as are Home Assist services, and this budget provides both for constituents in my electorate. There is \$18.2 million committed to update and maintain public housing in the inner-north Brisbane region and \$232,000 will be dedicated to helping the inner-west Home Assist service. I am also very pleased that the Ashgrove electorate will benefit from \$4.9 million in disability services and social inclusion services, as well as \$2 billion for the Metro North Hospital and Health Service.

The Queensland government is open and upfront about the problems and challenges we face both now and in the future. We are determined to take Queenslanders into our confidence as together we deal with those challenges. I want to thank the Treasurer and this team for the hard work that has gone into this budget. This budget is a demonstration of our commitment to fix the state's finances and grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we remain a great state with great opportunities for all. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr CAVALLUCCI** (Brisbane Central—LNP) (9.04 pm): I rise to both welcome and endorse the Appropriation Bill 2013—the Newman government's second budget delivered on Tuesday by our esteemed Treasurer. Indeed, it is a budget that again focuses on fiscal discipline, growth, rebuilding and resilience. Our budget is a demonstration of the LNP's commitment to fix the state's finances and grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we remain a great state with great opportunities. It is clear that after years in the wilderness Queensland is back in business, as is my own electorate of Brisbane Central after years and years of neglect from the former Labor members of my electorate, their absolute incompetence demonstrated for understanding local issues and talk predicated by bluster but ultimately followed by failure to deliver. Indeed, the former elected members of my electorate—and let us not exclude the pedigree of those seven who sit opposite—can be likened to a couple of bad tenants you just cannot get rid of: they come into the House, they trash the place and they leave it for us to come in here, clean up the mess and pick up the tab.

By working alongside the Premier, Treasurer, ministers and local organisations, we have been able to secure record investment for Brisbane Central. I am delighted to report that, since the bad tenants have been kicked out, my electorate has changed—and changed dramatically—and the 2013-14 state budget invests strongly in Brisbane Central. This budget supports our diverse community, promotes our unique and cherished inner-city lifestyle and continues to provide cost-of-living relief to our hardworking and dedicated residents, small businesses and families. This is a true LNP budget where the future growth and security of our state and its people come first, second and third and the overrated political games perpetrated constantly by the tired and out-of-touch opposition come a distant last.

Indeed, the most exciting piece of news for my electorate is the announcement of \$6½ million over two years for 18 new classrooms at Kelvin Grove State College. Since my first day in office I have been working with principal Regan Neumann and Minister Langbroek on understanding the needs of my local schools and then working to deliver outcomes. I am committed to properly planning for student growth and maintaining our schools, delivering the best educational outcomes for all students in my electorate. It is exciting news for our community, our parents, teachers and students, who are already benefiting from the \$300 million program of clearing the maintenance backlogs. Construction on the new classrooms is expected to commence later this year and will ensure that Kelvin Grove students have access to more world-class facilities.

In addition, I welcome \$6.4 million for the Spring Hill Ambulance Station. This significant investment in my community will mean improved services and health infrastructure in Brisbane Central. We also have committed \$2.2 million for a CCTV upgrade at the Brisbane city watch-house. This builds on some of our work in this area already and shows our determination to work with local police officers to tackle crime and make our streets and suburbs safer. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the Treasurer and Minister for Communities for the enormous investment in my electorate for vital community services. Our budget delivers \$19.2 million for disability services such as accommodation, respite, emergency response, support for school leavers and community care programs; \$11.4 million for social inclusion funding for programs such as community support, domestic and family violence prevention, homelessness, seniors participation, individual and youth support; and \$5.8 million for programs such as placement and intensive family support.

The Brisbane Central electorate is diverse. That is something that I am proud of and will defend for as long as I am the member. I can say from the outset that I will always fight for funding to look after those in need and the vulnerable in our community. I look forward to working alongside the not-for-profit groups in my electorate to continue to support those in the inner city who need extra assistance. I am thankful for this record investment. I know it will go a long way in our continued efforts to address homelessness and disadvantage in the inner city. For the more active members of our community, this budget delivers \$8.6 million for the North Brisbane Cycleway project, which includes Windsor in the northern part of my electorate, as well as \$2.7 million for a new 25-metre indoor heated pool and additional rugby union field at Herston. This will be welcome and long awaited news for the Ballymore rugby family.

Our budget also delivers \$29,000 for a new irrigation system at the Downey Park hockey fields. It is investments such as those that demonstrate our commitment to maintaining the active inner-city lifestyle that we all enjoy. I also welcome \$27.9 million for a new Energex substation at Kelvin Grove to increase network capacity and improve reliability to cater for the continuing growth in that area.

Although as a government we are delivering policies to grow the economy, we are also continuing the task that we began last year to rebuild the state's finances—a task made all the more difficult after the January 2013 natural disasters. Not only did those natural disasters devastate many Queenslanders—as they did for many of my constituents of the electorate of Brisbane Central; their homes, their businesses and, in many cases, our hearts—they also delivered a huge whack to the state's finances. With floods, cyclones and storms battering Queensland communities year after year, the government is determined not just to rebuild Queensland, but to increase our resilience to the natural disasters that we know will happen again and again. Just as we are working hard to rebuild damaged infrastructure—our roads, our water treatment plants and our bridges—we are also working hard to rebuild the state's finances and to make the budget more resilient to the financial challenges that we face.

Whilst the Labor members in opposition nip, carp, scream and pout on the sidelines, with not a single economic policy or alternative being offered, the Newman government is getting on with the job of cleaning up their mess, paying back their debt, returning our AAA credit rating and returning to surplus. Yes, a surplus—a foreign concept to the members of the Labor Party. It is important to note

that, despite how inconvenient it is to the scare campaign and dishonesty of those opposite, right across the world and in every Australian state governments of all persuasions are experiencing falls in revenue and Queensland is not immune, with our revenue over \$4.5 billion less than expected since March 2012. I have always maintained, both in my former career as a businessman and now as an elected member, that it is how you deal with setbacks that define your character. Our steadfast Treasurer has been honest and upfront about the financial situation that Queensland finds itself in. We are determined to take Queenslanders into our confidence as together we deal with these challenges. It is about getting the balance right and it is about Queensland's future, which is bigger than any member in this place. The Newman government is serious and committed to the financial repair task. It is a long-term task. The former government spent a decade trashing the finances. They simply cannot be fixed in one. It is a task that we will not shirk from if Queensland is to become more resilient to the economic challenges that come its way.

This budget continues to implement the Newman government's promises and commitments to provide cost-of-living relief for residents and families. This budget provides concessions to Queenslanders amounting to \$5.1 billion. Those measures range from over \$1.2 billion in public transport subsidies; \$409 million under the managed housing rental rebate; \$97.7 million over four years to boost the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, which assists patients accessing specialist medical services not available within their local area; and doubling the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to \$10 million to ensure that low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 if needed. That is on top of the many cost-of-living measures that we implemented in the first LNP government budget, such as \$132.3 million to freeze car registration fees for more than 2.5 million family vehicles; \$917 million to reinstate the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty, providing savings of up to \$7,175 when buying a home; \$92 million to deliver a one-off water rebate of \$80; and \$158.2 million to halve public transport fare increases.


Those cost-of-living measures that we have delivered and the measures announced in this budget stand in stark contrast to the record of those opposite when they were last in government, even though it is a period of history that they have surprisingly deleted from their memory. We might have to talk to the honourable Minister for Health to see if he is aware of any known diseases, the symptoms of which include the infliction of instant amnesia on a large group of people at once and why it seems to affect the members of only one political party. For the benefit of the House, I will go through them again: abolishing the fuel subsidy, which was another broken election promise; introducing a waste tax, costing nearly \$100 million a year and which I am delighted to say that we have abolished; increasing motor vehicle stamp duty; increasing car registration fees; and supporting a carbon tax, which contributes about \$109 to the typical residential customer's bill. What a shameful legacy those opposite have. Is it any wonder they are embarrassed to talk about it.

I ask members to compare that record to the record of our government, which has provided real, everyday cost-of-living savings for Queenslanders. As I move around my electorate on a daily basis I know that our government has provided cost-of-living relief. There is more to be done, but we have made significant progress and residents and families are achieving far better outcomes under this government than ever before.

Although the members of the Labor party would have us believe that the challenges facing our state can all be solved by borrowing more money and loading it onto the government's credit card, like they have been famously known for in government at a state level and even more shamefully at a federal level, thanks to our Treasurer we have charted our way back to surplus and getting the economy back in the black and back on track. The reality is that the dark days of Labor debt and deficit are now just two budgets away from becoming a distant memory—much like the former Treasurer himself, although I see from some of his recent vitriol on Twitter that he is suffering from that classic Labor disease of relevance deprivation syndrome. Perhaps he and the former bad tenants of the electorate of Brisbane Central could form a post-election loss support group for those unable to move on and let go—or, to make it clear, process and maybe comprehend why their former constituents wanted change.

As part of this government, I am proud to say that we are doing everything we can to support small business in the electorate of Brisbane Central and we are seeing the results. If we are to deliver the better services that the people of Queensland expect and deserve, rebuilding the state's finances is vital. This is a great budget for my electorate. I am proud to be part of the Newman LNP government—a government that is delivering for the people of the electorate of Brisbane.

In relation to my final comments, earlier I spoke to the member for Lytton and asked him when he wrote his speech. He informed me that he wrote it this morning. I wrote my speech three days ago. I would like to refer to a line from my own speech, which I asked the member for Lytton if he managed to steal. This budget is not sexy, but it is what a budget looks like when an accountable government lives within its means. It is what my constituents have to do on a daily basis and what governments always must. It is a demonstration of our commitment to fix the state's finances and grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we remain a great state with great opportunity. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (9.16 pm): I rise this evening to make a contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2013. This budget strikes the right balance between ensuring a strong financial future for Queensland and investing in better-quality services and infrastructure for all Queenslanders. Our government is investing heavily in giving children a better education, injecting record funding into health care and increasing support for people with disabilities and their carers. An amount of \$8.2 million has been allocated for disability services, child safety and social inclusion in the Mudgeeraba electorate. This is the second responsible budget delivered by Treasurer Tim Nicholls in difficult fiscal times and it sees a 16.5 per cent increase in health funding for my local area.

As a healthcare professional and registered nurse, this additional funding will go a long way to ensuring that people in my electorate have access to first-class health and disability services. An amount of \$96 million has been allocated towards completing the Robina Health Precinct and more than \$7 million has been allocated towards the expansion of the Robina Hospital. There can be no more solid evidence against the campaign to scare residents regarding the future of the hospital than a significant investment from the government in this budget.

Robina Hospital is not closing. Recently, there has been a particularly nasty, unfounded and scurrilous attempt by the Queensland Nurses Union to scare nurses and other health professionals into believing that an LNP government is either closing down public hospitals or privatising them. That is false. Robina Hospital is not up for sale and nor is the government closing its accident and emergency department or closing the hospital entirely. Robina Hospital is here to stay and in state hands. It is a vital part of my electorate's local infrastructure.

The new university hospital is a great addition to the Gold Coast's health infrastructure, but it is no replacement for a hospital that is on our back doorstep, which is beneficial not only from a convenience perspective but also from a safety perspective. It is time the QNU came clean and told nurses that a percentage of their union dues funds Labor Party campaigns. This is the same union that remained silent while nurses were not being paid during the \$1.2 billion Health payroll debacle that occurred under the watch of Anna Bligh and her Labor government. The QNU should acknowledge this government's significant investment, and continued investment, in Robina Hospital and, indeed, health services across the Gold Coast and abandon this campaign. If the union was truly interested in disseminating the truth to its membership, it would be ensuring that all of its members were well aware of this investment in Gold Coast health services.

This budget continues the Newman government's commitment to Queensland's roads. This government, in the short period since the last election, has built a significant track record in this regard. In my electorate of Mudgeeraba alone we have had some big wins in local transport over the past six months. The first sod was turned on the M1 upgrade between Exit 77 and 79 in March. The additional two lanes that will be added over the next 18 months will be of great benefit to motorists and I appreciate their patience whilst construction continues. This budget outlines an additional \$40 million to ensure that construction continues. As the member dubbed 'member for the M1', I welcome the Newman government's continued commitment to much needed road upgrades, which traditionally were ignored by Labor governments for many years.

The Old Coach Road roundabout in Reedy Creek takes an extraordinary amount of traffic and is a significant bottleneck for motorists. Following an approach to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads, funding has been allocated to improve the traffic flow and the Department of Transport and Main Roads, in conjunction with council, are in the planning stages for a solution. This will most probably involve the installation of traffic lights and the addition of an extra lane.

The sound barriers at Encamp Street in Reedy Creek are now in the consultation phase. Residents of Encamp Street have been fighting for a solution to the increasing noise coming off the M1 for years now and it is great that we are finally seeing some action from the government for the

benefit of these residents, residents who were ignored under the Labor government. People deserve to enjoy their homes in peace and quiet. It took the election of an LNP government to deliver for these residents, as sustained campaigning by myself and local residents fell on deaf Labor ears.

Within the year we will see the stabilisation of the landslip above Beechmont Road between Bottletree Lane and Nerang-Murwillumbah Road. The design is close to completion and includes cleaning the slip face of loose debris before installing over 100 self-drilling rock anchors in the upper sections of the slip area. Drainage will be installed to channel water away from the site and the slip face concreted to reduce the risk of debris working loose in future wet weather events. Site and weather conditions permitting, the Department of Transport and Main Roads expects stabilisation works to start in mid-2013 and to finish in late 2013. Under Labor, the residents of the hinterland were either ignored or punished by the government. The Newman government continues to demonstrate that we are fighting in their corner.

As of Tuesday, we have completed the work on Beechmont Road, with residents finally receiving the road infrastructure they deserve. It has been a long journey to reach this end, and I would like to thank Better Roads for Beechmont for their support and commitment to this project. They supplied the people power needed to get this done and have campaigned with me for years now to make Beechmont Road a better and safer road. No longer does Beechmont Road hold the title of the worst state controlled road in Queensland. This is an investment of more than \$11 million in our roads infrastructure.

Speaking of significant commitments, the Robina interchange has been delivered and continues to improve in regard to traffic flow with the continued monitoring of the Department of Transport and Main Roads. The department will soon start installing fixed-road hazard signage on Beechmont Road and Gold Coast-Springbrook Road to increase safety during road closure events such as landslips or flooding. The signage will also improve driver and traveller information for those roads most at risk of closure. The signs will be almost three metres wide and panel hinged to allow the message to change from 'rock fall area' to 'road closed ahead' and fitted with lights that will be set to flash when a warning is necessary or a closure is activated. Installation of the signs is expected to start shortly and take about four weeks to complete. This project is on the back of a suggestion I received from a constituent. Only weeks later the project was approved by the minister and set to go ahead. This is in such stark contrast to what was happening under the previous government, with petitions, letter writing campaigns and ministerial representations making little difference to their actions. The best solutions come from the people affected. We have demonstrated that we are listening and, not just that, that we are getting things done.

After four years of campaigning and a tragic fatality, we have delivered on flashing lights for the Somerset Drive school zone. Parents and residents have literally begged the former government for these to be installed. It took a change of government to get it done. The program to roll these lights out across the state, saving lives and putting parents' minds at ease, continues to be funded in this budget.


The Newman government's Fixing Our Schools Fund has wiped the maintenance backlog of eight Mudgeeraba state schools since its establishment in last year's budget. Ten Mudgeeraba schools received a total of \$946,948 in funding towards fixing existing maintenance issues inherited from the previous government. The continued funding in this budget for the Fixing Our Schools Fund will ensure this good work continues. Robina State High school has been allocated a further \$341,000 in this budget for much needed refurbishments. I know the community will appreciate our continued support.

We continue to support our local community groups so important to the fabric of a community, especially those a bit more remote than others, sporting groups like the Gold Coast Mountain Bike club which received funding for the next stage of their track at the Hinze Dam and groups that run significant events that bring our community together like the Mudgeeraba Show Society. Organisations designed to help our at-risk youth, like the Bornhoffen PCYC, have been supported significantly to improve their facilities.

It should not be forgotten, however, that some of the things that affect communities the deepest are not necessarily big-ticket items. For the community of Springbrook, for instance, we have removed the shackles and cut through red tape so that the Gold Coast City Council can finally install markers along Springbrook Road to improve local safety. We have given the same community a chance to name the local and historic bridges, an initiative bizarrely held up for what seems like

decades despite community efforts. Even things like ensuring that a school has a permanent principal rather than the revolving door policy that operated under the previous government where principals would have a brief hinterland excursion before heading back down the mountain never to be seen again or having the opportunity to make a huge difference. They do not cost a single extra dollar. We delivered that in Springbrook this year and it will make an enormous difference to the school, an institution that is at the heart of that small community.

Our commitment to cut through bureaucracy and red tape is not just rhetoric. We are delivering commonsense solutions to often simple problems, but problems that have lingered for no decent reason other than they have been made without real people in mind. We are delivering on a very personal level for people who really just wanted government to give the okay, get out of the way and lend a hand, not necessarily deliver grand funding announcements. We have the runs on the board regarding listening and delivering for our local communities. We will continue to do so and this budget enables us to do so. We maintain our commitment to delivering front-line services for Queenslanders, supporting our health system, looking after our most vulnerable and delivering on infrastructure, all while delivering in a responsible manner. I congratulate my good friend the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, on his second budget and look forward to continuing to work with him and our government to make this once more a great state with great opportunities. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (9.27 pm): I rise to make my contribution to debate on the Appropriation Bill 2013, the Newman government's second budget for the people of Queensland. The 2013-14 state budget is a demonstration of the commitment we made on March 24 last year. We promised to get this great state back on track and I am pleased to say that we are well on our way. Our children and families deserve better services and they should expect better services. This is a long-term task, a journey we must embark on. Rebuilding the state's finances will ensure we can deliver better services and better government for all Queenslanders.

After another summer of disasters we are also focused on building resilient communities for the future. Making sensible decisions around rebuilding damaged infrastructure will ensure we are making our communities more resilient for the future. This is a budget for a strong Queensland, for growth, rebuilding and resilience. Yesterday the editor of the *Gold Coast Bulletin* Peter Gleeson had this to say about the Newman government's second budget—

Premier Campbell Newman and his Treasurer Tim Nicholls have handed down a difficult and challenging budget, but it is a responsible document at a time when governments are simply never going to win a popularity contest.

Australians need to understand that the days of everybody winning a prize in state or federal budgets are long gone. Austerity is the new black for governments and with Europe continuing to do it tough, and the United States economy far from being resurgent, this trend will continue for some time.

Paying off the state's debt is Mr Newman's priority. And so it should be. Queensland's economy needs back its AAA rating and the projection is we will be back in surplus by 2016.

This is not a glamorous budget. We have made no headline-grabbing, big-spending promises without thinking about how we will fund them, unlike my colleagues in the Labor Party. This budget builds the framework for the next generation—not the next election. This is not an irresponsible budget; this is not a Labor budget. We are a pro-growth government focused on rebuilding our damaged economy still recovering after two decades of Labor waste. We are cutting red tape, reducing the burden on business and changing the way we do government. For the people of Queensland, the Gold Coast and my electorate of Southport, there are plenty of good-news stories in this budget.

Commendation must go to the Treasurer and his team for striking the right balance between stabilising debt and investing in better services for all Queenslanders. This budget will inject into our health services record funding of a massive \$12.3 billion, up 4.5 per cent from last year. This is a clear commitment from the government to better services, better infrastructure and better delivery of healthcare for the people of Queensland. The Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service, chaired by Ian Langdon, who has done a fantastic job of managing the delivery of the city's health services, will receive a \$964 million share of this record spend. That represents an increase of some 16 per cent on last year's \$827.8 million for the Gold Coast. That is close to \$1 billion worth of investment into Gold Coast health services.

This is a government with a proven track record of delivering on promises for a better Queensland health system. I congratulate Gold Coast Hospital staff and the health board chair, Mr Ian Langdon, on their 20 per cent improvement to waiting times at Gold Coast emergency

departments in the past six months. In September this year, the new Gold Coast University Hospital in my electorate will become operational. This year's budget includes \$63.5 million for expanded services including cardiac surgery, trauma services, radiation oncology and neonatal intensive care. Gold Coasters will soon have access to world-class healthcare professionals and five-star facilities. With the opening on 19 July of the new Griffith University's health centre just across the road, health students will be part of and have access to one of the biggest and most modern university teaching hospitals in the southern hemisphere.

The education of our children is one of the most important investments we could ever make. This year, the Newman government has increased its education spend by 6.6 per cent to \$11.4 billion. This includes \$537 million for the Great Teachers = Great Results plan, which is a set of practical initiatives focused on improving educational outcomes and recognising and encouraging our state's teachers. On the Gold Coast, \$34 million will be directed towards schools as year 7 joins high school, a successful trial of which is currently running at Southport State High School in my electorate.

This budget reaffirms our government's unwavering commitment to law and order, with spending up \$129 million to \$4.1 billion. Funding will continue for the Gold Coast police helicopter with another \$3 million committed to deliver that essential service for our city. Last year the Gold Coast received an extra 24 police officers, an increase of 27 per cent. This year we will also share in 267 new police officers committed as part of our promise to deliver more front-line services. The Newman government is getting tough on crime and helping to clean up our city's image as we re-establish ourselves as the tourist capital of Queensland. The initiatives that our government has introduced over the past year, including tougher anti-hooning laws, tougher penalties for sexual offenders, new tough child exploitation laws and boot camp trials for young offenders, are just some of the examples of the Newman government's commitment to getting tough on crime.

I acknowledge the great work of my colleague the member for Currumbin, the Hon. Jann Stuckey. She is doing a great job growing our city's tourism industry. The new Gold Coast 'coming soon' commercial is absolutely outstanding. The Gold Coast is cementing its title as a must-see destination for foreign tourists. In the past 12 months, 173,000 Chinese tourists visited the Gold Coast. That is an increase of 34 per cent and is only just short of the record number of 180,000 Kiwis who visited the Gold Coast in the same period. Now with direct connections between the Gold Coast and Asia from airlines such as Scoot of Singapore, Air Asia from Kuala Lumpur, China Southern, Jetstar, Virgin Australia and QANTAS which is again flying into the Gold Coast, the choices are easy to make. With the second annual DestinationQ forum to be held on the Gold Coast, our government's commitment to the tourism industry is clear and intentional.

Much good is happening in Southport and on the Gold Coast. As we continue working on business and tourism for the coast, it is worth noting that the tide is finally starting to change. ABS census estimates released earlier this week show that people are returning to the Sunshine State and to the Gold Coast. According to those estimates, the Gold Coast population has grown by 10,629, which is up 2.1 per cent in the past 12 months. That is double the previous year's estimated growth and is trending towards the annual growth we became accustomed to earlier this decade. On top of that increase, home approvals are improving with 2,500 dwellings approved in the current year. The Gold Coast City Council is expecting new approvals to normalise over the next few years to around 4,000 dwellings per annum.


I am so excited about all the fantastic things that are happening in my electorate. Once again people across the coast are referring to Southport as the city's CBD. The Gold Coast City Council recently resolved to seek state government approval for the establishment of Southport as a priority development area. Fast tracking development and planning approvals ahead of the Commonwealth Games will ensure we get the best possible outcomes for Southport as we work towards 2018, when the Gold Coast takes the world stage. The heart of Southport's CBD will soon be home to a brand-new and modern Chinatown and international business precinct. Thanks to the hard work of Councillor Dawn Crichlow, Ted Fong and the Gold Coast Chinese community, my state colleagues and council, Davenport and Young streets will receive a multi-million dollar makeover to create a vibrant business and cultural destination.

This budget includes \$26 million to progress planning for the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. Another \$33 million has been allocated for the redevelopment of the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre, which is set to become a world-class swimming venue for events such as the Pan Pacific Championships to be held next year. A sum of \$41 million has been allocated for the early works for

the redevelopment of the Parklands priority area for the Commonwealth Games Village. There are plenty of other things happening in my electorate. In Southport, roads will also receive more funding with \$35 million allocated for the Smith Street and Olsen Avenue interchange and upgrades. A further \$178 million has been allocated to fund the completion of the Gold Coast Rapid Transit System, which is to be up and running by later next year.

I doubt there would be many other electorates in the state with so much development activity happening right now. But just as important as investing in our growth and economy is investing in our communities and families. This government's budget commits \$8.8 billion to be spent on community services this year. I congratulate the member for Aspley, the Hon. Tracy Davis, for her hard work in delivering better outcomes for our most vulnerable, that is, our children and young people. In Southport, social inclusion services will receive nearly \$6.5 million to continue their vital work supporting the community. Organisations providing programs such as domestic violence prevention, homelessness and youth support will continue to be funded and supported by our government, recognising the important contribution those organisations make in our communities. I have a large proportion of the Gold Coast's public housing properties in my electorate, so I am pleased that social housing on the Gold Coast will be given a boost with \$10.6 million dedicated to the expansion and improvement of properties and services.

On Tuesday, the Treasurer referred to last year's budget speech, which was themed around the notion that 'confidence is everything'. I could not agree more. The Gold Coast and my electorate of Southport are starting to buzz again. People are starting to get back their confidence. People are delighted with the outcomes of the hard decisions that this government has had to make in stabilising the state's finances. As Assistant Minister for Planning Reform, I have been privileged to see first-hand some of the many plans on the drawing board for the city and other parts of our state. It is an exciting time to be in Queensland and it is an exciting time for the Gold Coast and for Southport. Confidence, previously damaged by the global financial crisis and an obstructive Queensland Labor government of some 20 years, is definitely returning. The 2013-14 budget provides a framework for growth, rebuilding and resilience. It outlines a brighter future for all Queenslanders and is getting this state back on track. We are a great state, with great opportunity. As Assistant Minister for Planning Reform and as member for Southport, I commend this budget to the House.

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.39 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the consideration of the budget bills introduced into the parliament by my friend and colleague the Treasurer earlier in the week. The task of addressing the legacy of 14 years of failing Labor government has been a huge one for us. I sat on the Cabinet Budget Review Committee and I understand the full extent of the difficult decisions that had to be made both in the LNP government's first budget and more especially in this the second budget.

This task of addressing the financial legacy of the previous government has been a monumental one. Undertaking the fiscal repair task has involved many, many difficult decisions. I acknowledge and understand the impact that some of those decisions have had on a whole range of Queenslanders. I also acknowledge and understand the enormous task that that represented for my colleague the Treasurer and all of the people who were involved in putting together the budget that the House is considering tonight.

It is a budget that is based on the theme of growth, rebuilding and resilience. It is important that even in taking the decisions based around austerity that we focus on the key principal of growth. It is only by growing the Queensland economy that in future we will have more income in the budget such as this one to deliver for the people of Queensland those essential services that are the core responsibility of the Queensland government. But it is worth noting as we consider this undoubtedly tough budget that those core responsibilities have and are being delivered.

When we look at what I believe are the core responsibilities of the state government we see that for Health, for example, the spending in this year's budget is \$12.3 billion, up 4½ per cent. To be able to lift Health spending in a budget year such as this, with all of the constraints and all of the challenges, is indeed a remarkable achievement. But it demonstrates that this is a government that is addressing the horrible financial legacy of the previous government but maintaining the front-line services which are the state government's core responsibilities. To boost health spending by 4½ per cent in this budget to a total of \$12.3 billion is a noteworthy figure that every Queenslanders should be aware of. It stands in stark contrast to the cutbacks that my colleague the Minister for Health has spoken about so many times that the federal government has inflicted upon the people of

Queensland, where they cut \$103 million from the health budget across Queensland and caused enormous heartache to a whole range of areas across Queensland, some of them unfortunately in my own electorate.

The other area that is undoubtedly a key responsibility of a state government is education. In this budget there is total spending of \$11.4 billion. That, too, is up 6.6 per cent. That too represents a remarkable achievement. Even in these times of austerity, even within the range of constraints that have been applied to this government in trying to undertake that fiscal repair task and address the legacy of the previous government we have been able to boost education spending by 6.6 per cent.

So in those two areas of state government activity—the two core responsibilities of a state government, health and education—we have lifted spending. That is a key message for Queenslanders. Even as we struggle with the enormous task of rebuilding the state's finances we are boosting the spending in the key areas of state government responsibility—health and education. They are things that are important to every Queensland family—health and education. The key services that any state government has to deliver have received increased funding in this budget. That is something that needs to be made very clear because it is too easy to focus, as some of the media have done, on the cutbacks and on the difficult decisions that have had to be made to make that spending on health and education possible.

We could look at a couple of the other key areas. Community services takes another \$8.8 billion of the state budget. Transport takes \$5.5 billion of the state budget. They are remarkable amounts of money to be spending on what too are core areas of state government responsibility.

Unfortunately, this budget is also about rebuilding. It is about rebuilding the state after yet another year of natural disasters. The figures in the budget highlight just how much those natural disasters have cost the state. It is a significant amount of money; a huge amount of money over a period of two to three years. In 2010 the figure was put at \$2.1 billion, in 2011 it was \$7.1 billion, in 2012 it was \$2.1 billion and in 2013 it is \$2.5 billion. We have seen quite an extraordinary run of natural disasters which has cost the state budget dearly. That is money that would have been very much appreciated by those of us who sat on the CBRC facing that monumental task of rebuilding the state's finances after the legacy of so many years of failed Labor government. That was not to be.

The state government had a responsibility to undertake that rebuilding task. That rebuilding task is going full steam ahead as we meet here to consider this budget. It is gratifying to know that in those communities that were affected by the latest natural disaster that the rebuilding task is progressing at a much greater rate and in a much more seamless fashion than it did in 2011. That is because of the decisions that have been taken by our government, by Minister Crisafulli and by the cabinet to ensure that the Queensland Reconstruction Authority works closely with local government to make sure that that rebuilding task is progressing and progressing at a rate.

Some \$2.1 billion is the figure in the budget this year that is being spent on road reconstruction alone. Some \$2.1 billion will be spent to reconstruct the state's roads. There is another range of figures in the budget that indicate the relief measures from the latest natural disaster. Spending includes: \$5 million on the community recovery package; \$10 million on a clean-up and recovery program; \$1½ million on industry recovery officers; \$10 million on an environmental recovery program; \$3 million for enhanced concessional loans and grants; and \$1½ million for the badly needed and much appreciated rural financial counselling services. They are the figures that indicate the impact that those natural disasters have had on the Queensland economy and indeed on the budget decisions that we have had to make.

The third element of the theme of the budget is resilience. Of course this is an issue that has received much attention and much discussion since the latest natural disaster. It was brought home to me very vividly when I stood on a new bridge just north of Monto that had been washed away. The new bridge cost \$7 million. As the local member I worked hard for a long time in opposition to try to get the previous government to recognise the importance of building that sort of infrastructure. I finally got that \$7 million bridge built. As an opposition member can I tell members that that is a big achievement. To get a \$7 million bridge built in your electorate as an opposition member is a huge achievement. It was there for a very short period of time and then all the approaches to the bridge were washed away in the 2011 flood. Of course there was a huge cost involved in fixing that, only for it to be washed away again in 2013. So this was a \$7 million bridge and in two years out of the next three years it was washed away. It brought home to me the requirement to take a different approach towards the rebuilding program and to build in an element of resilience that had not been there before.

The case that I think best illustrates the need for some resilience in the reconstruction process was the Gayndah water supply. In the budget documents there are some quite spectacular photographs that indicate that, like the bridge at Monto, it was washed away twice in three years. It is good to see that the Gayndah water supply was one of the first projects funded from the funding that has been made available in this budget for betterment and to increase that level of resilience.

This budget contains a figure of some \$40 million for betterment across the state. It is regrettable that it is such a small amount. I know that it is only \$40 million because the Commonwealth government were very reluctant to pay their share of the money that was required to make that betterment fund much larger. Over \$1 billion worth of applications were made by councils to that betterment fund, and that indicates the need for an increased amount of spending to address that issue of building in resilience to our disaster response capacity.

The budget is certainly, I think, a gratifying step in the right direction, a gratifying step on a long road to recovery from probably the biggest disaster to ever strike Queensland, and that was the financial disaster of almost 20 years of a Labor government—a much greater disaster than anything Mother Nature could inflict upon us and which resulted in an ongoing cost that is almost incalculable. But some of those terrible financial trends have been turned around in just two LNP budgets, and that has been made very evident by the graphs in the budget documents.


There is no better illustration, as in the old expression of a picture paints a thousand words, than to look at some of those graphs to see the interest to revenue ratio and the debt to revenue ratio and to see where those trend lines were heading under the former Labor government and where those trend lines were heading in the Costello Commission of Audit report that was produced for this government by Peter Costello and his commission. To see the way that those trend lines have been turned around is gratifying to those of us who undertook the huge challenge of addressing the former Labor government's financial legacy, but it should also be gratifying to the people of Queensland to know that there are competent financial managers in charge of the Queensland budget now.

There are competent financial managers in the LNP government who will over time address the terrible legacy of the former Labor government and who will over time be able to ensure that there is a considerable amount of money available to spend on the things that are badly needed right across Queensland, particularly in regional Queensland can I say to honourable members. Regional Queensland has lacked the investment that it deserved over the period of 20 years. The Labor government never had a focus on regional Queensland. It never had a focus on regional communities. It never invested in regional communities to the extent that they deserved. Regional Queensland never got its fair share under a Labor government.

One of the reasons I am in politics at all is to ensure that regional Queensland gets its fair share. And I can assure the people of regional Queensland that, as we address this horrible financial legacy of the previous Labor government, as we address that terrible financial situation that the 14 years of the Beattie-Bligh government and the six years of the Labor government before that left the state of Queensland in, we will make sure that regional Queensland shares in the benefits that will flow from addressing that financial situation.

There are some spending amounts in the budget which would indicate that regional Queensland certainly has not been forgotten in this year's budget. For example, in my own particular electorate, we are spending \$6.6 million to upgrade the Biloela Hospital facilities. Biloela is the biggest town in my electorate. Biloela Hospital is a regional hospital. The hospital at Biloela was in an atrocious state. The former government would not invest the money that was necessary to bring that up to a basic standard. That is one small example of the way this government is ensuring that those key facilities that deliver those core services in regional Queensland are not forgotten in these times of austerity that are completely necessary to address the terrible financial legacy of the previous government.

In conclusion, I commend my colleague the Treasurer for the herculean task he has taken on in presenting this budget to the House. It is, I think, a budget that will serve the people of Queensland well. It will ensure that the financial challenge that we have undertaken is advanced, and that will be to the benefit of all Queenslanders eventually. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police and Community Safety) (9.55 pm): I would like to thank the Treasurer for the 2013-14 state budget, which has been the result of careful planning and obviously a considerable amount of hard work. The Treasurer has succeeded in striking the right balance for a state that still faces many economic challenges. The 2013-14 state budget is

focused on growing our economy, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient. Rebuilding the state's finances is vital if we are going to deliver the better services that the people of Queensland expect and deserve.

Our emergency services and the Queensland Police Service are vital in helping Queensland continue to grow and remain a safe place to live, work and play. This government has provided the largest ever budget of more than \$2 billion for the Queensland Police Service for the 2013-14 financial year to ensure that the Queensland Police Service can continue to protect communities across this great state.

This year the government will continue to fulfil its commitment to providing 1,100 additional police officers over four years. Some \$63 million of the police budget has been set aside to fund the further 267 additional police officers to start in 2013-14 and continue to fund the 300 additional police officers who have already started within the QPS in the last year. I stress that these officers are additional police, over and above the natural attrition rates.

The Gold Coast region has already seen the benefit of having a police helicopter in their region. Some \$3 million has been set aside to continue that service and establish a permanent police helicopter wing in South-East Queensland. Police are also continuing to improve on their links with the community. The government has provided another \$1 million to Neighbourhood Watch and Crimestoppers to help revitalise their programs. This is a part of the government's four-year commitment to these particular organisations.

This government is also committed to ensuring police officers and staff have the best equipment and facilities available to help them continue to perform their duties to an outstanding level. More than \$70 million has been set aside to purchase new and upgraded operational equipment including vehicles and marine vessels for the Queensland Police Service. A further \$17.7 million has been provided for capital works programs across the state and another \$22.3 million for information and communication technology.

We will be helping make our communities more resilient by investing \$149.8 million in capital purchases and \$4.4 million in capital grants to support paramedics, firefighters, corrections and of course our emergency volunteers. We have allocated \$51.5 million to complete replacement ambulance stations and facilities at Calliope, Cleveland, Emerald, Kingaroy, Tara and Gladstone. And we will be starting work on replacement ambulance stations at Bundaberg, Collinsville, Pittsworth, Russell Island and Injune. We will deliver 155 new and replacement ambulance vehicles—that is 25 more than last year. And we will complete the redevelopment of the state-of-the-art Spring Hill complex and ambulance station.

We will also invest \$46.4 million in fire and rescue facilities and urban and rural fire appliances. This will see the completion of the new fire and rescue station at Brassall, as well as replacement stations at Clifton, Millaa Millaa and Mareeba. We will also start work on replacement stations at Ingham and Pomona. Importantly, we will also deliver 28 urban fire appliances and 40 rural appliances—16 more than last year.

An amount of \$40.5 million will be spent on upgrades at our prisons. We all know too well the impact that disasters have had on our great state. As such, we will be enhancing disaster management training and expanding education to ensure that we are better prepared when emergency situations occur. We will also continue to support our hardworking emergency volunteers. We will implement the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry recommendations by delivering 15 flood boats. This year we have gone beyond that and will deliver another 12 flood boats because we know how important they are during a disaster. As part of the capital grants for SES and rural fire brigades we will also deliver \$4.4 million in funding.

Over the past five years Queensland has had to endure extreme weather conditions, testing our resources, courage and resilience. Many Queenslanders have had help from our emergency services: flood boats, swift-water rescue, roofing, tree removal, helicopters, evacuation centres—and the list goes on. In tough times with tough budget conditions everyone needs to chip in to help pay for these services. This government is now broadening what was the fire levy to also help fund our emergency services. This will not help pay for it all, but it will decrease some of the burden. To broaden the application of this levy, the new emergency management, fire and rescue levy will apply across the entire state. This expanded levy will ensure that the funding for Emergency Management Fire and Rescue Services is placed on a sustainable and certain footing so the government can continue to deliver the services as and when they are needed.

Earlier this year Assistant Minister Ted Malone completed a review into the Rural Fire Service in Queensland, which the government had agreed to in principle. The review recommended a new model which supports volunteers and returns decision making to local officers with local knowledge. The Rural Fire Service is the backbone of the state's protection from bushfires and there are approximately 35,000 rural fire volunteers in communities across this great state.


Last year I appointed former Australian Federal Police commissioner Mick Keelty to lead a major review in Queensland's police and emergency services. Mr Keelty has been asked to investigate the operational and response capabilities of the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Queensland Ambulance Service, Emergency Management Queensland and Queensland Correctional Services. A substantial review of the state's police and emergency services has not occurred for more than a decade. I want to ensure world's best practices are set and that all services work together as closely as possible for the benefit of all Queenslanders. The review is investigating current organisational structures, operational decision making, emergency response capabilities and interdepartmental cooperation. I look forward to viewing Mr Keelty's final report in the coming months.

It has been a tough year for my electorate of Bundaberg in particular, which has felt the brunt of Mother Nature's fury. I am pleased to see several initiatives in the budget which are designed to help the courageous people of my electorate and the Wide Bay region. The Bundaberg area has been the hardest hit by this year's natural disasters, and that is why this budget has allocated over \$203.7 million for local government recovery and reconstruction projects across this great state.

There is also \$12.8 million to expand and improve social housing. The Wide Bay region has also benefited from government initiatives in health, education and infrastructure.

On the emergency services side, the Queensland Ambulance Service has been allocated \$1.5 million to start work on the replacement of the station at Bundaberg which was flooded. This will flood proof this vital facility into the future. The Queensland Police Service will also receive half a million dollars worth of upgrades to CCTV, an important initiative for the Bundaberg watch-house.

I conclude by commending the Treasurer for the 2013-14 budget. The budget is a demonstration of our commitment to fix the state's finances and grow a stronger Queensland economy so that we will remain a great state with great opportunities for all Queenslanders.

 **Mrs CUNNINGHAM** (Gladstone—Ind) (10.03 pm): I rise to speak to the 2013-14 budget. I believe that the budget this year has shown more optimism than the budget delivered 12 months ago. I know that my community is appreciative of that. Whilst people have acknowledged that the financial situation that this government inherited was exceedingly poor, they still needed to see that there was some benefit in the budget for those who work on a daily basis to support their community.

A number of projects have been funded in the budget for the Gladstone electorate. I would like to place on record my appreciation to the relevant ministers for the support shown to the electorate. Certainly the electorate has borne a great deal of pressure in relation to seeing the economic benefit to the state progress, particularly in view of the LNG projects.

I would like to thank the Minister for Police and Community Safety for the continuing funding of the ambulance centres at both Gladstone and Calliope. Calliope is a township—and it is still called a village on the town plan—that is growing exponentially. There are around four or five subdivisions occurring in various parts of the Calliope township at the one time. The ambulance station used to be a single-person station—and it still is. Previously it was staffed by a gentleman from the old school. Many of the older residents used to go and visit him to have their blood pressure taken and to have general checks because there was no public transport to town. This new centre will certainly improve the service available but, more importantly, it will improve the conditions for the ambulance officer who both lives and works out of that ambulance centre. The Calliope ambulance services not only Calliope but also the Boyne Valley as well as parts of the Bruce Highway and the Dawson Highway. As a result, they are called out to a lot of accidents. A good, modern centre at Calliope is essential. The same is true of Gladstone. Gladstone city has grown over the last few years and I do not believe it will be too long before we will need a second ambulance station there. The redevelopment of the current station, though, is certainly welcome.

Some \$5.3 million has been allocated for the construction of additional classrooms at Gladstone State High School. With the local growth and the introduction of the year 7 cohort to Gladstone State High School—and Toolooa State High School was one of the trial sites—that additional room will be required. I remember when a departmental officer came to look at Gladstone and Calliope in relation to the sale of the Calliope high school site. He believed that the extra rooms

that are going to be constructed at Gladstone State High School will accommodate students coming from Calliope. However, I think that is optimistic because of the population growth in Calliope. There has been no community criticism of the sale of the education site at Toolooa. There has been no public criticism of that sale, but there has been resounding criticism of the proposal to sell the Calliope high school site. I have raised it in this place and I still ask the minister to review that decision.

Money on the Indigenous housing side is welcome. Across the five local government areas that make up the Fitzroy statistical division, \$1.26 million has been allocated for investment in Aboriginal housing. Some 19 properties in the Gladstone Aboriginal and Islander Cooperative Society holdings are also going to be upgraded to public housing standard. We have a number of Aboriginal and Islander tenants and I am certain that they will appreciate that upgrade.

Money for the Department of Transport and Main Roads is also welcome. Some \$46 million has been allocated for improvements to the Bruce Highway and the Dawson Highway. Included in that amount is \$23.28 million for the Calliope crossroads. That is a huge interchange. I am not sure that you should call an intersection a magnificent intersection but it will be. It is a significant piece of engineering and it is so essential. There has been a number of fatalities at Calliope, some due to the nature of the intersection and the fact that it is a major crossroads. Also, sadly, some have been due to poor calculation—that is, human error. Irrespective of the cause, there are families who have been significantly affected. I know that that upgrade will address so many of those issues in terms of safety. I am very thankful that the state government as well as the federal government have funded that upgrade. There is also work to be done on the Dawson Highway.

As in each of the budgets, there is work at the Gladstone Area Water Board that will be done in terms of water infrastructure. Much of that infrastructure is in relation to heavy industry in the region, but it will obviously assist domestic users. I have spoken in this House about the decision by the government not to pay dividends to the Gladstone council. I certainly hope that that can be reviewed, because the Gladstone council has faced a lot of stress in relation to industrial development. The fact is that the local community has not shared as much as we would have liked in the benefits of that large industry development. Today I had a meeting with the minister, and I welcome his open discussion. I look forward to speaking with him further.

There has also been over \$150 million allocated to the Gladstone Ports Corp, part of which will be allocated to capital works at the Reg Tanna Coal Facility, and also for the completion of the harbour's tug facility, which is directly related to the growth in traffic. Going to the area of police, there will need to be an investment in the water police. They need a permanent home, and I do not believe that that is in the budget this year. I have not found a line item which addresses that. They are not working in appropriate circumstances now. It is not centralised, and their response time is negatively affected because of the layout of their facility—well, the bits and pieces that are regarded as a facility.

There was money allocated by the minister for healthy harbours. I understand that that is predicated on matched funding from LNG. I have no reason to believe that that will not occur. Minister Powell has reinforced his support for the healthy harbour. It certainly is a focus for the community in Gladstone. Even though there is a lot of industrial development in the harbour, Gladstone still has a huge boating community. I know that the minister for state development has family that has lived in Gladstone. I am not sure if they are still there. Fishing and water based recreation is very, very popular in Gladstone, and certainly safety in the harbour and in the harbour precinct is necessary. The healthy harbour is contingent on the community being able to enjoy that pastime.

There has not been any funding allocated for the Kin Kora roundabout that I have been able to identify, and I will just put that caveat on it. Of all road infrastructure in Gladstone, that would be the priority. I believe that that is acknowledged and agreed to by the department. The Kin Kora roundabout is a pressure point. It does not happen all day long, but three or four times a day there is significant queuing which causes drivers to make unsafe and unwise decisions. I know that ministers who have come to my electorate have been caught up by the queuing at the Kin Kora roundabout, and I think they are surprised at the amount of time you spend sitting at the car waiting to get through that intersection. I certainly hope that there is funding for that and that I just have not been able to identify it.

I have raised issues concerning policing and community safety in Gladstone, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. Local companies are funding additional policing resources during Friday and Saturday nights. I am hope that funding will continue, but certainly there is a lot of disorderly and unacceptable conduct. It is not major crime, but it has been noticed that the increased police presence significantly improves that behaviour. As a result of the restructuring of the police service in

Gladstone we have lost the superintendent's position, and that is regrettable. We are now funded under Rockhampton. I would ask the Minister for Police to join with me in a watching brief to ensure that Gladstone is not disadvantaged because of that funding arrangement.

I also look forward to working with the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning in relation to the next round of Royalties for the Regions. Gladstone did not get any programs up in the first round, and I know Mayor Gail Sellers was extremely disappointed in that, as were others. We had a number of shovel-ready projects for that round, but we were unsuccessful. I certainly look forward to working successfully with the minister in the next round.

Affordable housing has been an issue of great concern in the region. Ironically, as the pressure on housing starts easing—and it is only just starting—we have had quite a significant amount of units being built. The percentage of public housing units is unclear, but certainly it is an opportunity for the minister to get affordable housing by buying those unit developments, and I know that the minister for housing, the Hon. Tim Mander, does have the community's concerns at heart. He is a very compassionate minister, and I am sure we will be able to work cooperatively to see some improvements in that area.

I think the priority in my electorate at the moment is health, and it has been for some time. I am very grateful to the Minister for Health for his continued concern and support for the Gladstone Hospital. He and other ministers have been to my electorate. I invite any ministers who want to come. I will ensure that you get a good seafood lunch—if not from Gladstone Harbour, then from the vicinity. I reckon that anyone who wants to come up and make some funding promises to Gladstone, I can make sure—

A government member interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Maybe. I can make sure that you get an excellent lunch.

Mr Seeney: I only got spaghetti, not seafood.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Yes, but what good spaghetti! That was during the floods. You are lucky you did not get a tin of baked beans and a can-opener!

Health is the issue of prime concern, and I am very encouraged by the activity and the attitude of the minister in relation to the Gladstone Hospital. We have a new director of medical services in Gladstone, Nicki Murdock, and she is also very proactive. A number of initiatives have been funded in this budget. One which is certainly welcome is the establishment of an acute primary care centre to assist with emergency department presentations and after-hours presentations. The specialist outpatient department will relocate to the community health centre. I know that is in part because HACC services have been reduced or transferred and are now being provided by other agencies. A number of Queensland Health services that were provided from the hospital have gone to Medicare Local, but there is still confusion about who is providing what and how and where. I think Medicare Local has a lot of work to do to get the message out to the community that things like diabetic education, diabetic health and podiatry services have moved from the hospital to Medicare Local. I still believe that Queensland Health have the responsibility to pick up where those services are not provided because in the case of diabetes, the lack of early intervention means very serious problems down the track for both patients and the health service.

There is funding to upskill nursing staff to support the early return of babies back to Gladstone Hospital. We recently had a very, very sad case where a young couple lost their baby. The mother was told that she could not be treated at Gladstone because of her BMI. I certainly do not believe that she is a person who could be regarded as obese. She was sent to Rockhampton, turned away from the Rockhampton Hospital and she subsequently lost the baby. There are ongoing investigations into the matter. But rather than moving babies and mothers up to Rockhampton, we should be improving the service that is available in Gladstone. This is the start of it. Two senior medical officers have been recruited, and the Gladstone Base Hospital is working with the Mater Hospital to jointly appoint two paediatricians to start in January.

One of the things that became apparent during the minister's visit was the willingness of the Mater Hospital to work with the Gladstone Base Hospital in these joint appointments. It is a win-win for everybody. Both hospitals get the necessary specialists. A specialist on their own is isolated and overworked. If you can get a couple of specialists—even three or four—and rostering is able to be done so that none of the specialists gets burnt out, and then share that between the Mater Hospital and the public hospital, it gives great coverage to the community and it gives great experience and opportunity to the specialists. I think it is an excellent result for everybody. There is also a joint agreement with the Mater to appoint an orthopaedic surgeon.


Mental health services are to be redesigned. There are a number of words around the redesign of the mental health service that do not mean a lot to me. I will be looking for some clarification on that. Our mental health services are mainly sourced out of Rockhampton. That is where the residential site is. Certainly I believe there is scope to improve the opportunities for families and individuals to get mental health care out of Gladstone to ensure continued family and friend support when people are very fragile.

There are also some maintenance improvements in relation to the duress nurse call system, the dental air compressor replacement at the dental clinic and emergency power supply for the Gladstone Hospital, and fall-arrest protection for all the roofing areas is being costed.

A quarter of a million dollars is to be invested to address the backlog in maintenance. After I was elected in 1996, one of the early decisions I had to make involved a leaky roof at Gladstone Hospital. The state media went berserk and talked about my making a significant decision based on a leaky roof at Gladstone Hospital, but it was an indicative thing. If people work in an environment that is unmaintained, they feel undervalued. Carrying out maintenance on these facilities says to the people who work so hard in the facilities: 'We value you. You are worthwhile. We value your contribution to the community and we will make sure you are working in a facility that is deserving of the effort that you put in.' So I welcome that.

There is a proposal to upgrade the high-dependency unit and the operating theatre. It is to go to tender in August. The funding is not directly from this budget; it is from savings in the hospitals and health network and also from LNG. That is welcome. If we could get an anaesthetist and another surgeon to work at that hospital, we would be able to perform a broader range of surgical procedures. That, in turn, would entice surgeons with a broader skill set to come to the hospital. The range of procedures available at Gladstone will improve greatly, community confidence in the hospital will improve and, as I said earlier, the staff will feel valued—as they should, because they do such an amazing job.

There are other issues in other portfolio areas. I will run out of time to talk about them. I say on behalf of the community: each one of us appreciates what we have received in this budget. I was asked by the media to score the budget. I think that must have been the question for this year's budget. My comment was that we always have more that we would like to receive. I do not think any member would not say that. I appreciate what we have received from this budget. I certainly look forward to working with the various ministers to bring the concerns of my constituency to their attention for their attention. It is a great community. The paid emergency staff and volunteers across the community work tirelessly to improve the community that is the Gladstone electorate. I thank each one and I thank the state government for its contribution.

 **Mr DOWLING** (Redlands—LNP) (10.24 pm): Tonight I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills 2013. I begin by congratulating the Treasurer on his second budget, and particularly on developing a budget which not only shows the restrained and responsible economic management needed in these challenging times but also builds on the foundation for growth, development and confidence that was delivered in the first LNP budget in 2012.

Sadly, nowhere in Queensland has been immune from the effects of the economic mismanagement of the previous Labor government or their federal counterparts. One would think that, in the interests of survival, at the very least Labor would look after their own. But that is not the case in my electorate of Redlands, neglected year after year. Labor have failed. Those opposite have failed. Those opposite and their counterparts have presided over the worst financial imposts in pursuit of Greens votes. They have bludgeoned those least able to defend themselves—those most vulnerable, those they pretend to represent.

Those opposite failed us on water; they have now failed us on electricity—both essentials of life. Those opposite dropped the ball on education, health, law and order and transport. There is only one area in which Labor can unequivocally claim to have achieved any real success, and I believe in giving credit where credit is due—that is, looking after Labor mates, cronyism. Hypocrisy has taken on a new meaning in Queensland. We all know how to spell hypocrisy. In Queensland we spell it A-L-P.

Since the turn of the 21st century the Redlands has experienced significant growth, as farming areas have made way for an influx of population and the associated growth of suburban areas. Unfortunately, growth without adequate planning and attention brings with it a special set of problems. This was certainly the case for Redlands during the years 2000 to 2009.

Redlands is blessed with great natural beauty and an idyllic tropical climate, spread as it is across the mortgage belt south-east of Brisbane, including the beautiful bay islands of Lamb, Karragarra, Russell, Macleay and Coochiemudlo. The region is a paradise for boaties and anglers and represents a desirable lifestyle for families and all those who seek the best of all possible worlds—an enviable lifestyle that is still within commuting distance of South-East Queensland's major population centres.

There is no doubt that the Redlands should be the jewel in the South-East Queensland tourism crown—a bustling centre of activity, development and industry with the community services and infrastructure needed to support its families, workers and business and to provide the safety and security that every Queensland community needs and deserves. But that did not happen. Instead, during that period of unprecedented growth the previous government allowed pressure on community and health services to mount to unsupportable levels. Infrastructure was not maintained and was allowed to simply crumble. The then government turned a blind eye to the social problems that were beginning to be felt due to the rapid growth. It ignored the growing need for integrated transport that would help people to find and undertake work within and beyond the region.

I am delighted to acknowledge the work of the Treasurer and the Newman government in tackling issues such as these in a fiscally responsible way, creating a vision for this state which matches my own vision for my electorate of Redlands. In Redlands in particular this government has a vision that supports two of our four pillars—construction and tourism. As major employers in Redlands, these industries deliver a range of social benefits well beyond those that come with providing jobs and building infrastructure. There are also positive spin-offs for other industries, including the retail and housing sectors. So this government's vision will support the development of a vibrant, energetic and educated community which is able to face a future that is sustainable and self-sufficient, with support rather than impediments from government.


I also congratulate the Treasurer and the government for tackling the tough issues in a responsible way. Many of these issues either have been inherited through the inefficiencies and lack of forethought and planning by the previous government or were imposed on us by the federal government, especially in the form of taxing strategies such as the carbon tax and the renewable energy target. We as a government need to reassess some of the poor decisions that were made in the past.

Faced with rising costs for consumers, the Newman government took responsible action by freezing tariff 11—the standard electricity tariff—for 12 months. However, we cannot let Queensland forget the costs associated with the delivery of electricity, including the significant costs incurred under the Solar Bonus Scheme. Not to criticise those residents who did what the government encouraged them to do and got solar panels on their roof, Energex estimates that 9.2 per cent of its bill from 2013-14 network tariffs relate to the costs imposed on it by the solar scheme, and those costs will continue to rise. Energy costs are a significant concern and, with ongoing uncertainty in the wholesale energy market as a result of things like the carbon tax and the RETs, the effect is increasing power bills.

I understand the pressures on families in these tough times, and that is why I welcome this budget and the responsible decisions that it brings. In Redlands I am particularly pleased to see a funding commitment to social infrastructure. This commitment includes funding for schools, transport and emergency services. School maintenance has long been ignored and overlooked, so it is pleasing to see that the Newman government is redressing this important issue through its commitment to maintaining a suitable environment for working and learning in our schools. Seven of the schools in Redlands are now scheduled to receive important maintenance work with a total expenditure commitment of over \$750,000 over this next financial year—part of this government's commitment to redressing the \$298 million maintenance black hole left by those opposite. Victoria Point State High School will receive \$2.5 million as part of a building program for the transition of year 7.

I am also pleased to see the extension of a pontoon for our Water Police at Redland Bay. On the surface it might seem like a comparatively small project with a value of some \$550,000, but I can assure members that it will provide a much needed improved working environment for the hardworking officers in the Redlands Water Police. They will be able to carry out their vital work much more efficiently, effectively and safely and, in turn, this work will therefore have a positive benefit for protecting the isolated communities in the southern Moreton Bay islands. Similarly, the commitment to start work on the new ambulance station for Russell Island is a great boost for residents of Russell Island and will be a step forward in treating medical emergencies on the island.

The announcement of a bus station at Victoria Point is another key aspect of the government's commitment to providing an integrated transport system for Redlands, with an initial \$4 million allocated for this project in the 2013-14 financial year. The new station will be located on Cleveland-Redland Bay Road and will replace existing bus stops on Bunker Road. With the imminent introduction and rollout of TransLink facilities throughout Redlands and now extending to the bay islands, the bus station will be another initiative that supports transport within, into and beyond the region, enabling commuter travel and seamless transport between the mainland and the bay islands. That has got to be good for employment, good for business, good for the community, good for the Redlands and good for Queensland. Looking to the future, we can see that this is a forward-looking budget which builds on the sensible policies and initiatives that the Newman government introduced last year and which builds on that strong foundation to deliver benefits for business, for industry, for community and for families. I look forward to continuing to work with this Newman government and with the Treasurer. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (10.33 pm): I rise to make my contribution to the budget debate. I concluded my comments during this debate last year by saying that I looked forward to that disgraceful budget unravelling. Lo and behold, so it has! This is the government's second budget and all I can say is that we, the Labor opposition, told you so when it comes to what this budget reveals. This government in basically nine months has necklaced growth and doubled the estimated deficit. What an indictment! The reason for that is this: the government has no idea about economics. This government thinks that its limited mastery of QuickBooks makes it economists. This is the government's midterm effort where the facts of its efforts are unassailable. What are those facts? In broad terms, I repeat that the government has compromised growth and virtually doubled the deficit while increasing debt.

This government has presided over two further credit ratings downgrades since coming to power. The state avoided recession by the skin of its teeth, and what about unemployment? Four per cent in six years was never going to happen, as I have already pointed out in this House, and now that is confirmed via the budget papers. Would someone please remind me of what the core promises were, because nothing that was said by this LNP in the election campaign seems to have value today? Listening to the Treasurer on Tuesday made me think of a grade 8 schoolboy who said to the teacher, 'I did my homework last night, but when I awoke the dog had eaten it.' This is the same economic leadership that turned the Brisbane City Council into financial road kill and then hit the eject button before being part of a smoking hole in the ground. This government is reaping what it has sown—a government infected with delusional optimism, possessed by a grossly exaggerated sense of its own talent. This is referred to as hubris syndrome. It is difficult to determine which members are most possessed, though there is clearly a contagion evident. As I have said before, this government rolled out the traditional tory playbook—the same playbook used by Kennett and Howard; the same playbook that will be used by Abbott if he is successful in September. It has only been in recent times that this government has started even talking about encouraging growth, because that is what most people know is the only way to prosperity.

Let me make one observation: it is difficult to till the soil with a chainsaw in your hand. The truth is that the leadership team of this government has no financial credibility whatsoever. This government's verbiage has been entirely consistent and it has been entirely wrong. Most informed Queenslanders reject the very basis of the government's claims that underpin this budget—a four-pillar economy that covers only 42 per cent of the state's economy to the exclusion of the likes of manufacturing, education and financial services et cetera. If Queenslanders followed this government's logic, no-one would ever take out a mortgage. This is the implication of Costello's recommendation that government's recurrent and capital spending must be fully funded from the state's recurrent revenue. That is why Costello never spent any real money on national infrastructure during the entire time as Commonwealth Treasurer. The state of the Bruce Highway is absolute testament to that. By the way, how much of that billion dollars over the next nine years is in this budget as promised by the LNP? That is right: \$65 million, so I reckon you are \$35 million behind as we stand here tonight.

Where is the visionary capital project for the state within this budget? Let us reflect on Labor's infrastructure investment record. Labor governments invested more per person into infrastructure than any other state over the last decade. So where is the nation-building state projects in this budget? Nowhere! And most of the money is allocated in the south-east corner. Over the last 18 months I have sat in this chamber and listened to what I can only describe as neoliberal economic mantra. I have sat back and listened to this 'Chicken Little' approach to economics. As I have said

before, the LNP has been talking down the Queensland fiscal and economic position for years. This week's budget is a self-fulfilling prophecy—a prophecy made and perpetuated by this LNP. The only things that will grow in this state under this government are unemployment, small business closures, public housing queues, court delays, crime statistics, the prison population and—as of this budget—taxes, deficit, debt and broken promises. What has been most revealing has been that this entire tactical mantra, including the injection of the Costello influence, has been intended to convince Queenslanders that asset sales and privatisation were the only way forward. When the crunch finally arrives, we find a government deeply divided and lacking the courage of its convictions—the economic rationalists against the agrarian socialists, with those influenced only by the polls and their own prospects running around like headless chooks in the middle. This is what you get from a government divided and consumed by personal agendas, spin and polling.

Unnecessary draconian austerity measures introduced by this government have been a disaster for this state. For 16 months this government has not once talked about how it is going to stimulate growth in the Queensland economy. Magically today, it is now part of the bigger budget spin. However, this is all based on the single assumption associated with the gas industry—an industry built by Labor. In reality, this government will not return Queensland to Labor's growth levels until gas exports kick in—not within the term of this government, that is for sure. So much for the four pillars that are so often spruiked by ministers. All we have heard is sensationalist nonsense from this government—parallels with Spain, abysses, darkened canyons; pure rhetoric. Queenslanders have every right to question the purpose of this language. This government is really good at one thing: putting people out of work.

Just in case some members in the chamber may suspect me of prosecuting a partisan political position, may I mention recent business outlook assessments by Deloitte—clearly a reputable source often referred to by ministers in this House. What did Deloitte say? It suggested that the Queensland government's rabid austerity programs have overdone it. Austerity has crushed growth. Growth is the only path to prosperity. Deloitte confirmed exactly what the opposition has been saying for 12 months. This state is presently run by a bunch of economic helium heads. If they took off their shoes to keep counting they would, in fact, float away.

Let me reflect on the journey of this budget. The government hand-picked Peter Costello as its right wing doyen of economics. Good old Peter was to be paid handsomely to replicate his flawed fundamentalist economic agenda. Let us be clear: Peter Costello was and remains an economic dunce with no credentials. His ideas are suitable for consideration only in circumstances of fair-weather economics. He presided over a period of China expansion that presented the prospect of unprecedented wealth opportunities for Australia and that was attributable to nothing that he created. Peter Costello often reminded Australians that by 2006 he had paid off the Commonwealth's net debt. Of course, he never mentioned the ballooning private sector debt that he was so focused on before he became Treasurer. By the time he left government, that figure was over \$600 billion. During that period Australians at all levels borrowed money like there was no tomorrow through ridiculously easy lines of credit and they spent it. The knock-on to Costello was exponential growth in GST revenue—again, nothing to do with his mastery of the economy; just a product of circumstance.

Recently, I read with interest the extracts published in the media looking at the last five budgets of the Costello era. What an interesting comparison it is. Essentially, the net discretionary spending in that period was in excess of \$130 billion while paralleling discretionary tax cuts totalled approximately \$120 billion. The whole fiscal position was funded by windfall business tax revenue connected solely to the predictably limited duration China expansion. The fact is that the Costello and Howard budget settings were unsustainable and everybody knew it at the time.

So we find today this clueless Queensland government seeking the advice of an economic buffoon. You know what they say: buffoon in, buffoon out. If members do not believe what I say, I ask them to look at the groundbreaking report from the IMF, which has been released just recently. Essentially, it says that Australia's only—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Coomera, if you wish to interject, I would ask that you return to your seat.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, if you wish to interject, I would ask that you return to your seat.

Mr Rickuss: I don't want him sitting on my lap.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Lockyer, nobody needs that image.

Mr BYRNE: If members do not believe me, I refer to the groundbreaking report from the IMF that essentially says that Australia's only grossly irresponsible spending in modern times occurred under Costello—not under Whitlam, not under Rudd, not under Gillard; no, under the Howard-Costello buffoon show. There are only two particular periods of economic stupidity. They are 2003, on the upswing of China, and from 2005 onwards. Rudd's efforts during that period were appropriate in order to stabilise the economy.

This government is clearly incompetent, deceitful, or both. Costello made specific and entirely predictable recommendations that any fool could have written in a couple of days if one believes in the economic philosophy that created the global financial crisis. Then all that needs to be done is to sit down and synthesise a set of imaginative data to prove the point to the uninformed punters. All of this saga was scripted by the Treasurer and his cohorts in order to convince—or more correctly berate and frighten—Queenslanders into accepting the mass sale of assets. Unfortunately for the Treasurer, he was rolled by his own team. Really, the Treasurer has no idea what to do now. The Treasurer's credibility is degraded. He now attempts to pretend that he is philosophically half pregnant.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr BYRNE: Although I note that the Treasurer has not given up attempting to publicly undermine his own party room's opinions, this week in the *Australian Financial Review* he is still pushing the barrow of asset sales, because that is what Peter told him to do. Costello says, 'Get rid of \$25 billion to \$30 billion debt to get into the AAA rating zone.' The only real way to do that is to ditch the government owned corporations—the profitable state assets. If that is the deal, just give them away for a peppercorn. That alone will remove the amount of gross debt that Costello magically recommends.

What about the Treasurer's speech on Tuesday? What a use of language—hard yards up the middle, safe harbours, kicking the can. Say what? Then the Treasurer reflected on his past most important budget in a generation. Talk about self-delusion! There are no ego problems there. He then mentioned extraordinary events. These events are not extraordinary if you understand even the most modest risks associated with climate change. But that would be a problem if you do not believe in the science of climate change. Therefore, such events would be a surprise and extraordinary. There is no better example of a government full of fair-weather captains than that.

What about the smokescreen of the natural disaster levy. That is just another big-tax proposal that is run as a shiny bauble to distract Queenslanders. The entire rationale for this levy is to make the state nature proof by building better infrastructure in better locations. Anyone with the slightest knowledge or experience of major asset maintenance and capital programs understands that there are two different issues here. After an event, there is an overwhelming priority to return systems, lines of communications—whatever the product or service—as soon as possible to get the wheels moving again. Replacing an item with something more fit for purpose is an entirely different matter and one that does not overlap the immediate restoration priorities. This is despite the government's spin, repeated by the Minister for Local Government during this debate, that rolls the whole lot together under the idea of, 'Why rebuild something that has been destroyed?' The minister insisted that local government deliver within a 12-month period. Obviously, the minister has never run a major or medium scale capital project from the cradle to the grave. It is clear that this government lacks task appreciation or an understanding of the practical world, or it is being deliberately misleading on these matters. Of course, when it gets too hard, because the government does not know what it is doing, it blames the federal government, which we have heard over and over again this evening.

The Treasurer mentioned weak revenue. I wonder why. He said that confidence was everything. That is true—not that this government has demonstrated the slightest appreciation of the leadership skills that are necessary to engender confidence. The Treasurer suggested that the government was pro growth. Again, that was more verbiage. There is absolutely no evidence to support that prospect. It was truly refreshing to hear the Treasurer repeating Costello's nonsense!

Apparently, the government has to get out of the business of doing and get into enabling. Certainly, that must present some slogan problems now that 'can do' is out of favour. To me, 'can enable' sounds a little bit too much like Cain and Abel. Maybe that is more appropriate. We all know how that story ended.

What difference has this budget actually made? Queensland can look forward to at least six per cent unemployment in the next couple of years. My constituents can look forward to increased taxes and charges from this government. Let me inform the House that my constituents are really quite animated about that on the back of dramatic increases in the cost of electricity and increases in rates that flow from the local government deamalgamation in my area. I can assure members that they are just chuffed about this budget. This government just keeps giving it to us. Please stop!

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, your interjections are not being taken.

Mr BYRNE: How many families will be stressed tonight and in coming months because they do not know how they are going to pay their mortgages, meet their rents, feed their children or send them to school? I would love to stand in this House and discuss the positive impact of this budget on my electorate. That would be a vacuous statement. I have sat in the House and listened to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines talk about \$30 million worth of taxpayer dollars for mining exploration. Is this government kidding? This is a government that cannot find the money to fix the apocalyptic issues at the Mount Morgan mine site, but it can find taxpayer money to enable more mining exploration, a function that should be totally led by the private sector. I have watched minister after minister spruik pet projects that cannot be connected to priority core functions of their portfolios. This budget simply ramps up the cost of living on my community and it has been done without so much as a by-your-leave from this government or any honesty. This is on the back of a litany of broken promises from this government. If I pulled the trigger on every broken promise that this government has delivered to this point I would be up to my knees in cartridge cases.

I would like to briefly address some of the portfolio areas that I have a particular interest in, while acknowledging that at estimates we will reveal more of what I am about to mention now. We have seen the outcome of the devastation that has been wrought in the public works portfolio in this year's budget. Goprint, QBuild, Project Services and Sales and Distribution Services have all ceased to exist. There will also be significant budget cuts to the new Building and Asset Services agency which replaces QBuild and Project Services. The budget will be cut from \$943 million to \$692 million. Worst of all, 547 staff will lose their jobs in the transition to the agency.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, I have told you your interjections are not being taken.

Mr BYRNE: Queenslanders should be seriously concerned that BAS may not be able to respond with the same speed and professionalism it did in the last few years during the recovery from natural disasters. I listened to the transport minister's comments about the Bruce Highway in this debate. Let us talk about the additional billion dollars over 10 years promised by the LNP at the last election. Where is the spend? With the first \$65 million funding from this commitment, that only puts the government, as I said earlier, \$35 million behind at this moment. The money from the federal government is already allocated and is more than anything that the Howard-Costello mob ever put on the table, but never let a few facts get in the way of misinformation campaigns. The truth is that at the end of this parliamentary term this government will have spent virtually nothing additional on the Bruce Highway, as was always the intention.

Let us talk about insurance taxes. As a local member I have had constituents contacting me on a very regular basis about their outrage at their massively increased insurance premiums. Increasingly, there are rural people approaching me. Graziers are being smashed just like city folk.

Mr Crandon interjected.


Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, if you interject again I will warn you.

Mr BYRNE: Increasingly this will drive people out of holding policies, and that was before some fool in this government thought it would be a good idea to hit those people who are already at breaking point. The decision can only have been made by someone without the slightest idea of what is happening in our communities. I have a few other things that I would like to talk about, but I will leave it for another time.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, you are now warned under 253A. I told you not to interject.

Mr BYRNE: I will summarise this way: thanks for the insurance tax hikes, thanks for the fire and emergency tax hikes, thanks for the water price hikes, thanks for the electricity price explosion, thanks for the 'spin-onomics'. Stop smashing my community. I look forward to watching this disgraceful budget unravel.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (10.53 pm): I rise in the House tonight to support the appropriation bills handed down by the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, on Tuesday of this week. This budget focuses on growth, rebuilding and resilience. This is a budget for our time. It is sensible and has no frills. As Ernst & Young said this week—

The announced investments in Education, Health, Transport and Community Services are positive and a foundation for future growth.

The state budget may not have been exciting, but it was fiscally responsible given falls in GST incomes and royalties. Whilst we continue to deliver for the people of Queensland by reining in the waste and mismanagement of the previous government to reduce the overwhelming debt that we have been left with, this budget builds on our core services such as those the Deputy Premier talked about: health and education, public housing, community services, roads, agriculture, tourism and community safety. It is also a budget that puts a firm focus on regional Queensland, with 75 per cent of our capital expenditure out of the south-east corner. I must refer the previous member, the member for Rockhampton, to Budget Paper No. 3, page 5, where he can see the extensive amount of money that is being spent within his region. It is disappointing for the people of Rockhampton that he does not even bother to mention his electorate in his reply.

We are a government for the whole of Queensland, and I thank the cabinet and the leadership team for understanding the importance of the regions during such difficult times. Difficult decisions have had to be made. Our government has fully delivered on its \$1.4 billion worth of cost-of-living commitments. We continue to freeze car registration fees and we have reinstated the principal place of residence stamp duty concession, saving \$7,000 when buying a new home.

Our government is open and upfront about the debt left to us by those opposite. Whilst we communicate the challenges we now face, both now and in the future, this has been reiterated by the Costello Commission of Audit. Since our government was elected we have unashamedly been pro growth. We are doing everything we can to cut red tape, support businesses and help the economy grow to create more jobs and opportunities for Queenslanders, in small businesses like Blackbutt Smash Repairs and large scale resource companies, by stripping away red tape and fast-tracking approvals processes. Whilst we continue to grow the economy, we are continuing the task we began last year to rebuild our state's finances, a task made all the more difficult by the natural disasters of 2013. Just as we are working hard to rebuild damaged infrastructure—our roads, our water treatment plants, our bridges—we are also working hard to rebuild the state's finances and make the budget more resilient in terms of the financial challenges we face.

We are investing heavily in giving children a better education through Great Teachers = Great Results; injecting record amounts of funding into health care; increasing funding to assist people with disabilities and their carers; putting more police on the streets; and increasing support to our rural emergency services. In such tough times, and to help with the cost of living for those people who need it most, the value of the concessions in this budget is estimated at over \$5.2 billion. This is around 3.7 times the value of the concessions by those opposite in their last budget.

Mrs Miller interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Bundamba, your interjections are not being taken and I would ask that you stop.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: This means a typical pensioner can access up to \$1,511 per year in discounts on council rates, water, gas, electricity and other services. I would like to highlight just some of our concessions as they directly relate to and benefit the people of the Nanango electorate. For a start, there is \$615 million to Ergon Energy for the Uniform Tariff Policy so that those in regional Queensland can easily access electricity at the same price as those in South-East Queensland. This is often overlooked, but it plays an extremely important role in keeping the cost of living down and

making the cost of electricity fair for people who live in the regional areas. There will be \$409 million in assistance under the government managed housing rental rebate. There is \$97.7 million over four years to boost the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, which assists rural, remote and regional patients who need access to specialist medical services.

Importantly, we have doubled the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to \$10 million to ensure low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 on their energy bills. Over the past year, the Nanango electorate has received in excess of \$10 million in funds granted to our local community groups and schools. This has helped kindies, local sporting clubs, volunteer organisations, our wonderful race clubs and our local SES. It is important to note that all Queenslanders will benefit from the continued work of our emergency services.

This budget contains some wonderful announcements for the Nanango electorate. It is very pleasing to see the increases in health services. There are three health boards in my electorate. The West Moreton Hospital and Health Service takes in the majority of the Somerset region. It will receive a 12.1 per cent increase in funding. The Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service will receive an increase of 5.1 per cent, with a secured \$1.7 million for much needed upgrades at the Kingaroy Hospital. It is also very good to see funding being set aside for the construction of a new mental health community facility at the Toowoomba Hospital, as I know that it will benefit the members of my community. The electorate also takes in a small part of the Metro North Hospital and Health Service, which services the Kilcoy district. I am proud of the work carried out in the past year at the Kingaroy Hospital. It has seen an increase in services with the appointment of a permanent rural general surgeon and a concentration on improving the provision of health services now available at our backdoor that were not previously available.

The 36 schools in my electorate will continue to benefit from the extra \$100 million in Fixing our Schools funding to address the maintenance backlogs in our state schools. It has been wonderful to see the improvement in so many of my small and larger schools, which amongst other things now have nice fresh coats of paint. I must say that that has been much needed. The overpopulated Kingaroy State High School will receive \$2.791 million for a brand-new three-storey classroom block to prepare for the move of grade 7 to high school. Also in Kingaroy, it is fantastic to see work continue on the new ambulance station. This year a further \$2 million has been budgeted to complete that station. It is great to see local tradies such as Fiedler Brothers Plumbing working on the new building. It is also very pleasing to see that we are continuing to provide funding for the new Highfields high school.

Another key aspect of the budget for Nanango is the investment in our roads. Unfortunately, our road network was dealt some very hard blows by the natural disasters of 2011 and 2013. The list of roads needing repairs seems endless. However, key funding includes \$7.5 million for the New England Highway south of Crows Nest and \$4 million for the Esk-Hampton Road, which goes through the beautiful Ravensbourne National Park. The other day I travelled on that road and I am looking forward to money being spent on it. The budget allocates \$7.5 million for the Oakey-Cooyar Road. I am also looking forward to continuing my work with the Minister for Transport to deliver the much needed overtaking lanes in my electorate.

However, tonight I am so pleased to stand in the House and announce the most exciting budget allocation for the township of Nanango: on the corner of the D'Aguilar and Burnett highways will be built the town's first set of traffic lights. It is wonderful that a set of traffic lights will be installed there. Because he drives through that area regularly, the member for Callide would know that it is a very dangerous intersection and the traffic lights are very much needed. It will be very exciting for the locals to have their first set of traffic lights.

Mr Seoney: The former member couldn't get it fixed.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: I thank the member for Callide. Also dangerous is the intersection of Kingaroy Street and Markwell Street, and another set of traffic lights will be installed there. It will be a great year in the Nanango electorate for traffic lights.

I will touch on how my region and the rest of Queensland will greatly benefit from the expenditure planned through the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. It is very exciting to see more than \$400 million being allocated to primary industries right across Queensland. That expenditure includes \$16 million over the next two years to help implement Queensland's Agriculture Strategy. I congratulate the honourable Minister for Agriculture for delivering this major milestone in our government's plan to revitalise and expand that most important industry.


The people living in the southern part of my electorate will be pleased to hear that our government is providing additional funding to eradicate fire ants. In 2013-14, the federal government and all other states agreed to provide national funding of \$15 million. Queensland is going above and beyond our share of \$1.5 million by providing an additional \$3 million to boost the total national budget. Another exciting allocation is the investment over three years in a project with the Queensland University of Technology to research, develop and fast-track farm robotics. That technology will raise productivity and reduce input costs by automating the planting, maintaining and harvesting of crops. A sum of \$4.5 million has been allocated to continue upgrading the department's research operational facilities, such as the wonderful research facility based in Kingaroy.

We face the massive task of rebuilding our region following the floods. The council areas within my electorate receive assistance packages, which I know also greatly assist the electorate of Callide. An extra \$32 million will be provided to the South Burnett Regional Council and \$22.9 million will be provided for the Somerset Regional Council.

The two summers of disasters have had a longstanding effect on members of my region, particularly in the Somerset electorate. A \$61,000 flood risk study for the Esk township will help plan for future disasters, as will emergency communication technology for the Somerset region, such as variable-message signage, 'road closed' signs and cameras. It is also pleasing that the South Burnett will see a continued contribution to our local economic growth through a \$93 million injection in rehabilitation, dragline overhaul, equipment replacement and the Black Creek Diversion project at Meandu Mine and the Tarong Power Station. There will also be an injection of \$9 million for an overhaul of the Wivenhoe Power Station.

Tourism is extremely important to my region, and this budget commits more than \$127 million to support the tourism industry. Tourism is one of our state's largest employers, contributing approximately \$18 billion annually to the economy and supporting 220,000 direct and indirect jobs. The regional tourism organisation network, which includes incentives for local investment, will be supported through the provision of more than double the \$3 million the RTO network received under the previous government. It is good to see our departments working together, with the Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing working with the department of tourism to develop a new ecotourism plan to encourage private investment and open up new tourism opportunities to showcase our natural assets. I am pleased that the beautiful Peach Trees camping area in the Jimna State Forest will benefit from a \$128,000 upgrade, which will assist people to make the trek into the forest to enjoy the serenity that the site provides. I encourage all campers to try out that camping ground, as it will not disappoint. The budget will provide \$105,000 for a new amenities block at the Yallakool tourist park, which will also benefit the electorate of Callide.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Treasurer and his team for delivering this budget that has our gross debt stabilising at \$80.1 billion in 2014-15, compared to Labor's last projection of \$85.4 billion. Unlike the previous government, we have clearly demonstrated our ability to manage expenditure, resulting in expenses being almost \$2 billion lower than budgeted. Therefore, it is pleasing to see the business community praise the budget and ratings agencies such as Standard & Poor's praising the state government for its sound financial management. With this budget we focus on growth, rebuilding and resilience. We are a great state with great opportunity. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mrs FRANCE** (Pumicestone—LNP) (11.09 pm): I rise tonight to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill 2013. This state budget demonstrates our government's commitment to growing our economy, rebuilding our great state and making our communities more resilient for the future. Our government's strong economic management over the last financial year has meant that significant funding boosts in the areas of health and education were possible, as was the ability to deliver services for seniors, children, families, young people and women.

This is a great budget for the people of my electorate as it returns the focus to the priority areas that the state government is responsible for. I am pleased to be part of a government that is taking real action on the social housing needs of Queenslanders. In my electorate of Pumicestone we have made significant inroads in providing housing for those in need. Last week I had the honour of opening Coolamon on behalf of the housing minister, Hon. Tim Mander. This is a fantastic new residential community on Bribie Island managed by the caring Churches of Christ. This week I am thrilled to see a further \$3 million committed to my electorate and a further \$7.9 million to our region for public rentals, and Indigenous and community housing. I would also like to thank all the groups in my area that received state funding for providing emergency housing and the wonderful work that the staff and volunteers do helping those in need.

Education has been a big winner in this year's budget. An increase of 6.6 per cent in funding across the state has seen an \$11.4 billion commitment that will have great results for our students and teachers. Pumicestone has benefited enormously in this budget with the commitment of two new primary schools in Caboolture—\$910,000 for Caboolture East State School and \$210,000 for Bribie Island State School. Also in the lead-up to this year's budget I had the pleasure of delivering a further \$2.3 million for schools in my electorate and a further \$585,000 for kindergartens and early learning centres. Minister Langbroek and his team have visited my electorate many times over the past 15 months. I was very proud to have Minister Langbroek and the Premier come to Tullawong State School to launch the \$54 million prep teacher aide program, of which Tullawong was one of 107 Queensland schools to benefit.

This year has been a year of change for Banksia Beach State School as it embraces the opportunities associated with being an independent public school. I am currently working with two other schools that wish to apply to be IPSs in the next round. Our local schools have seen a significant increase in funding in this budget and will share in \$15.6 million worth of funding for our region to assist as year 7 joins high school in 2015.

The Great Teachers = Great Results program has seen \$537 million committed to recognising and encouraging outstanding teachers and will bring brilliant benefits to our children as they make their way through the education system. The significant funds provided for my local schools to address their backlog of maintenance has also resulted in an increase in business for local tradies.

This year's Health budget is the largest in Queensland's history at \$12.3 billion. This budget will see \$28.2 million worth of state and federal funding invested in mental health over the coming year, with the Caboolture-Redcliffe acute mental and medium secure unit to benefit from this. Mental health is a significant issue in our community. I was recently honoured to open the \$22.5 million Caboolture mental health facility on behalf of Minister Springborg. Caboolture Hospital has also been allocated \$207,000 for the education and skills centre built on the site.

The Metro North Hospital and Health Service has been allocated more than \$2 billion towards cochlear implants and our Mums and Bubs program that allows for the provision of maternal and child health services and home visits. Our community will certainly benefit from the significant increase in the state's Health budget and the ongoing additions and improvements to Caboolture Hospital. I look forward to seeing the new paediatric facility open in the next few months.

The concessions offered in this state budget are around 3.7 times the value of concessions offered by Labor in their last budget. The budget provides a comprehensive, itemised list of the taxpayer funded concessions across a wide variety of services.

Mr Rickuss: Did Bill miss that, did he?

Mrs FRANCE: I take that interjection. I do think that some Labor members missed that. The value of concessions offered in this year's budget is estimated at greater than \$5.1 billion. Some of these concessions are substantial. They include: \$615 million to Ergon Energy for the uniform tariff policy so those in regional Queensland can access electricity at the same price as those in South-East Queensland; over \$1.2 billion in general public transport subsidies; \$144 million towards the livestock and regional freight contract; and \$409 million in assistance under the government managed housing rental rebate. Some of the concession increases under the Newman government are: doubling the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme which assists patients access specialist medical services not available in our local area; and doubling the Home Energy Emergency Assistance Scheme to ensure low-income households can get an emergency payment of up to \$720 if needed.

In addition to the concessions contained in the Concessions Statement in the budget, the Newman government has fully delivered on its costs-of-living commitments which include: \$132.3 million over three years to freeze car registration fees for more than 2.5 million family vehicles; \$917 million over three years to reinstate the principal place of residence concessional rate for stamp duty, providing savings of up to \$7,175 when buying a home; \$92 million in 2012-13 to deliver a one-off water rebate of \$80 to households supplied by the South-East Queensland bulk water grid; \$158.2 million over four years to halve public transport fare increases due in 2013-14; \$39 million over four years to reward regular commuters by reintroducing free travel on the TransLink network after nine journeys in a week; and \$63 million in 2012-13 to freeze the standard electricity tariff, tariff

Other commitments in this year's budget that will benefit our area are a share in the \$1.6 million that has been provided for libraries in our area and the \$24.46 million that has been allocated to the Moreton Bay Regional Council for natural disaster relief and recovery. We have also been fortunate enough to recently be allocated \$88,000 for the arts in my electorate.

Pumicestone Passage is currently the subject of studies and remediation works as a result of the \$2 million allocated in the budget under the Healthy Waterways Program. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Minister Powell for the excellent grants program, Everyone's Environment. This program provides grants for a wide range of people in our community who want to get involved in initiatives that conserve or manage our environment and I strongly encourage groups such as P&Cs, girl guides and Rotary to apply for these grants.

I am pleased to be able to deliver on my election commitment of a feasibility study on the duplication of the Bribie bridge. This study is designed to assess the need for a replacement bridge, the structural condition of our existing bridge and preserve the corridor needed for a future bridge. This study is currently underway and is to be completed by the end of 2013.

The upgrade of the Pumicestone Road-Bruce Highway interchange is well underway and received \$71.5 million in this budget. This upgrade will see a diversion of Old Toorbul Point Road and Rutters Road, an increase in height of the Bruce Highway crossing of Pumicestone Road and realignment of the on and off ramps to the highway, which will come as a big relief for commuters using the dangerous north-bound merging ramp. This coming financial year will also see improvements to the stretch of road around the intersection of the Bribie-Caboolture Road and Old Toorbul Point Road and the service station through a reduction of the speed limit from 100 to 80 kilometres per hour.

I am happy to say that the Bellara boat ramp pontoon will also be receiving modifications in the near future to prevent sand from mounding on the ramps and restricting access by boat trailers. I thank Trevor and the other locals who worked with me to campaign for these modifications and I look forward to seeing the boaties come back to this ramp.


The fantastic initiative run by Minister Dickson called Get in the Game has provided a huge injection of money into my local sporting clubs. Bribie Island and Districts Junior Rugby League Club has been granted \$81,000 to upgrade lighting on their fields while a large number of bowls, BMX, golf, netball, cricket, rugby league and AFL clubs have received more than their share of the \$175,000 under this program or the community gambling grants program.

Our region has also been allocated \$889,700 to employ local coordinators under the Local Sport and Recreation Jobs Plan which will be of great support to the mums and dads who run the majority of our local clubs. In order to help clubs rebuild after the floods our region experienced, our clubs have received almost \$75,000 worth of grants.

I am proud to say that in Pumicestone support services for people of any age with a disability and for people aged 60 years and over will continue thanks to the \$199,000 allocated to the Bribie Island Voluntary Community Help Association and the \$411,000 to the Centacare Caboolture Services for their Home Assist Secure services. Our local area will also benefit from the \$300,000 provided for modifications to the child safety centre in Caboolture, the \$3.825 million for regional child safety services, the \$10.13 million for disability services in our region and the \$2.2 million for social inclusion and support services.

I would also like to acknowledge Minister Davis, who came to Caboolture last week to meet with representatives from our local groups and announce \$2.5 million in funding for domestic violence services in Caboolture for which I and the member for Morayfield are extremely thankful. I would like to thank the staff and the volunteers who work with these groups for their commitment and service to our community as they make such a difference in people's lives.

I would like to make a special mention of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, and his team, along with the Premier, Deputy Premier and ministers, who have worked so hard to put this budget together. Our government recognises that Queensland is a great state with great opportunities and this budget is focused on growth, rebuilding and resilience. I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr GRIMWADE** (Morayfield—LNP) (11.20 pm): I rise to address the Treasurer's budget handed down in this place on Tuesday, a budget that follows on from last year's fiscal repair task and a budget that focuses on growing the economy, rebuilding Queensland and making our communities more resilient.

This budget is a workmanlike budget, a budget that gets back to the basics and focuses on delivering services that Queenslanders deserve. This budget includes funding for an additional 724 new teachers, 267 new police officers and 155 new and replacement ambulances in Queensland. This is a budget that has record health spending of \$12.3 billion, up 4.5 per cent on last year; record disability spending of \$1.4 billion; \$11.4 billion of funding for education, which is up 6.6 per cent on last year; a record spend of \$2 billion for police services; and \$5.2 billion allocated for cost-of-living relief concessions.

There is no doubt that this budget has been put together during very tough economic times. We have seen significant revenue write-downs to the tune of \$5.3 billion. We have also seen this great state of ours battered with natural disasters, disasters that have battered our finances and since 2011 have created a repair bill of \$11.7 billion.

I want to outline how this budget and the previous fiscal repair task will benefit my local community. I wish to start with health. This year's record Health budget of \$12.3 billion is the most ever invested in Queensland Health. The Caboolture Hospital has seen significant improvements in emergency department wait times. When the local hospital boards were put in place in July 2012, only 29 per cent of category 3 patients were seen within their clinically recommended time. The most recent data indicates that 47 per cent of patients are now being seen within the clinically recommended time frame.

Education has seen a significant increase of funding in this state. Some \$11.4 billion has been committed, which is an increase of 6.6 per cent on last year. It gives me great pleasure to stand in this place and announce that this budget provides for a brand-new high school at Burpengary which will be built by 2016, a school that I have fought hard to deliver. The budget also provides funding in the amount of \$7.9 million to build additional classrooms at Morayfield State High School and Narangba Valley State High School. Both of these schools are currently at capacity and these additional classrooms will be very welcomed by the local community.

Some \$1.2 million has been allocated for a new kindergarten at Narangba to be based at Jinibara State School. This new kindy will take the pressure off large waiting lists of people looking to access kindy facilities in Narangba. Some \$66,000 has been allocated for flashing lights in the school zone at Morayfield East State School. These flashing lights will increase the safety of our children travelling to and from this school.

This year's budget also includes an additional \$100 million for the Fixing Our Schools initiative. Every state school in my electorate will receive up to \$160,000 each to clear their maintenance backlog. This will enable schools in my electorate to repaint classrooms, fix guttering that is falling down and repair doors that are falling off their hinges to ensure that we have a safe environment for our kids to learn in. I am very passionate about education and providing our kids the best opportunity to gain an education.

This year's budget is fantastic news for our police force, with a record \$2 billion investment in the Queensland Police Service. It builds on the Newman government's election commitment to increase police numbers on the beat in Queensland by 1,100. This year we will see another 267 police officers employed, trained and put on the beat in our local communities. When I was elected to this place in March 2012, the Caboolture district, which covers my electorate, had 196 police officers. I am proud to say that we have delivered 36 more police officers to the district since being elected, and now the Caboolture district has 232 police officers. This is an 18 per cent increase in police on the beat in our local community making our neighbourhood a safe place to live.

One of the biggest achievements that this Newman government has delivered over the past 12 months is the increased funding for disabilities. A record \$1.4 billion will be invested in disabilities in Queensland. When I became the member for Morayfield in March 2012, Queensland had the lowest per capita funding for disabilities of every state in Australia. In only 12 months this Newman government has almost doubled funding for disabilities, increasing the funding by \$868 million in preparation for the NDIS. This budget also makes the commitment not to alter the existing eligibility

criteria associated with the taxi subsidy scheme for people with a disability, and the full scheme will remain in place unchanged. I am very proud to stand in this place and say that we have delivered substantial funding increases to the most vulnerable people in our community—those people with a disability.

Public housing is one more area in which this government has made a significant difference. When the Newman government was elected in March 2012, there were around 30,000 families on waiting lists to access public housing—people who were homeless; families who were living out of cars; people with high needs such as disabilities; and people, through no fault of their own, who had fallen on hard times. I am pleased to say that, through many different reforms and initiatives that this government has delivered, the number on waiting lists has now fallen to 23,000.

When I was elected to this place as the local member for Morayfield, we had a staggering 831 applicants waiting to access public housing. I can confirm that as of 30 April 2013, only 12 months after being elected, we have been able to reduce that waiting list by 506 applicants. The waiting list in the Morayfield electorate is now only 325, and we are continuing to work hard to further reduce this number to ensure that every local person who lives in my region can have a roof over their head.

This budget delivers on our commitment to build transport infrastructure and offer incentives to get people back onto the public transport network. This budget includes funding of \$5.2 million to complete stage 1 of the Morayfield Road upgrade. It includes \$500,000 to complete the \$26 million Narangba train station upgrade. There has been \$1 million allocated in the budget to begin planning works to upgrade the Morayfield bus station interchange at the Morayfield Shopping Centre. This project will include improvements and address issues associated with public safety, bus capacity and address taxi queuing issues. As you can see, Madam Deputy Speaker, this budget invests heavily in our local roads and public transport infrastructure. On top of this, we have also invested in making public transport more affordable.

This budget confirms the commitment that this government made last year to halve Labor's planned public transport fare increases of 15 per cent. To put it simply, the previous Labor government increased public transport fares year in and year out and made public transport unaffordable for people to use. Last year we halved the public transport fare increase and this year we commit to halve it again. Basically what this means for our local commuters is that over the last two budgets they are now paying 15 per cent less for their public transport fares than what they would have been paying if Labor had been re-elected. Regular go card users will continue to benefit from the free travel after nine trips commitment. To give you an example of how a regular commuter will benefit from this, I provide the following example.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Some of the conversations are getting a little too loud from down the back. If members could either take their conversations outside or perhaps just take it down a couple of notches, that would be appreciated. Member for Keppel, you do not need to point your finger at people. The member for Morayfield has the call.

Mr GRIMWADE: To give an example, someone travelling from any station in the Morayfield electorate to and from the CBD each day, Monday to Friday, will receive their Friday afternoon trip home free of charge plus any other travel they undertake on the weekend and any other trips they take during that week. In this example of a regular commuter travelling to and from work, Monday to Friday, the commuter would save between \$695 and \$747 a year on public transport. These announcements of major infrastructure building projects and a commitment to make transport more affordable are a real win for our local community.


I would like to finish tonight by detailing some of the concessions and cost-of-living initiatives that this government is offering to help struggling families. This budget includes \$5.2 billion in concessions that this government pays out to assist the community. This amount is 3.7 times higher than the value of concessions the Labor Party delivered in its final budget. I would like to list some of the cost-of-living initiatives that this government has delivered. So far we have: frozen tariff 11 electricity; paid an \$80 water rebate to households in the first quarter of this year; frozen motor vehicle registration for the family vehicle for a period of three years; and reintroduced the stamp duty concession on the purchase of a family home, saving over \$7,000 on the purchase. These cost-of-living initiatives save the average family in my electorate around \$330 a year.

We have removed the waste tax burden from small businesses. We have implemented the Great Start Grant to provide people building a home with a \$15,000 hand up and to stimulate local trades by getting the building industry going again. Finally, we have invested \$47.8 million into the

Get in the Game grassroots sports initiative whereby those most in need in our community can access grants of up to \$150 to enable their children to play a local sport. This opportunity may not have been forthcoming due to pressures on the family budget.

Every day I wake in the morning, I get up thinking, 'How can I make our area a better place to work, live and of course raise a family?' As outlined throughout this speech, together, our local community and I have delivered a huge number of improvements to our local area. We have seen critical transport and education infrastructure being built. We have seen services such as police and teacher numbers grow. We have seen public housing waiting list applications tumble in number. We have seen our emergency department wait times at our local hospital significantly improve. We have also seen cost-of-living relief delivered for our people.

I am proud of what we have achieved, but there is still a lot of work to be done. I will work hard every day to ensure that my time in this place is utilised to its full potential and that the people who elected me can trust that I will continue to deliver for them. I thank the House.

 **Mr SHORTEN** (Algeester—LNP) (11.32 pm): I rise tonight at this late hour to contribute to the budget debate. The budget was delivered by the Treasurer on 4 June. I begin by congratulating the Treasurer on this, the second budget that he has delivered and the second of the Newman LNP government. This budget was developed in difficult circumstances—circumstances created by the legacy inherited by us from the debt deniers sitting over there in the corner. The Labor Party went on a debt binge with no plan to pay it back, hoping on hope for unrealistic growth estimates, taxing hardworking Queenslanders to pay for their failed decisions and policies—decisions like the white elephant called the health payroll system. Because of a lack of ministerial oversight, Labor's failed health payroll will cost Queenslanders \$1.25 billion over future years. What could that money be better spent on? It could be spent on new hospitals or new schools but, no, it has to be spent to fix Labor's failure. Let us not forget the \$9 billion water grid, which again demonstrated Labor's failure to plan.

It is important to paint the picture which sits as the background to this budget. We all remember the images of floods and cyclones that impacted Queensland and Queenslanders. Who could forget the 2011 floods which impacted Brisbane and Toowoomba, Cyclone Yasi, Cyclone Oswald and the associated flooding, particularly through Bundaberg and Rockhampton? If we had to put a dollar cost on these natural disasters—and we must—we would find that since 2010 they have cost Queenslanders \$13.8 billion. Combine these natural disasters with the legacy of debt that the Labor government left us, add in write-downs to revenue and we have almost a perfect storm. However, we do not shy away from the challenge to turn the ship of state around. It will not be easy. We have had to make hard decisions, which we did last year. If they were not taken, we would be in an even worse financial position.

This year's 'no frills' budget builds on and locks in the gains from last year's. The 2013-14 budget is a workman-like budget. As I said, it is a budget that builds on those gains. The expectations of the opposition that we can fix their mess in two years are ludicrous. Again, I call on the Labor members in this place to be part of the solution, not continue to be part of the problem.

This budget sees significant investment in core government services. In the area of Health we see a \$532.7 million increase for the 2013-14 financial year, which will bring the Health budget up to a staggering \$12.326 billion, an increase of 4.5 per cent on last year's record spend. We see \$147 million over four years as part of the total \$327 million program to address the backlog of maintenance at health facilities across our state inherited from the former government. Significantly, we see \$28.3 million over four years for additional Hospital in the Home services to be provided across the state by the private sector.

Moving to our disability services and communities sector, we see \$868 million over the period to 2018-19 to fund Queensland's commitment under the National Disability Insurance Scheme. There is also \$51.5 million for new ambulance facilities and 155 ambulance vehicles. We also see \$46.4 million for fire and rescue facilities, urban and rural fire appliances, operational and communications equipment, and information systems.

In law and order, we see that \$63 million in 2013-14 will be spent on providing an additional 267 police officers. There is another \$38 million for new police vehicles and \$3 million to continue police helicopter services across the Gold Coast and South-East Queensland.

In Education we see \$100 million in the 2013-14 financial year to address the shocking maintenance backlogs that Labor left in Queensland state schools. We also see \$537 million over five years to implement the Great Teachers = Great Results initiative. I am very pleased that we have been able to find the money to fund 724 additional teachers and teacher aides in response to enrolment growth and students with special needs. There is also \$6 million towards boosting prep teacher aide hours in schools with the greatest need, delivering an extra 9,000 teacher aide hours per week by 2015-16.

We are getting on with the job of delivering for Queenslanders. We are investing in health, education and police. We also understand that balancing the family budget is tough. That is why within this budget there is an estimated \$5.2 billion in concessions for a wide range of services including transport, electricity and water.

Queensland is a great state with great opportunities. I commend the Treasurer for his budget. I commend the cabinet for their decisions. I commend our government for getting on with the job.

Debate, on motion of Mr Boothman, adjourned.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (11.39 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Friday, 7 June 2013.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.


Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (11.39 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Morayfield State School, Bike Challenge

 **Mr GRIMWADE** (Morayfield—LNP) (11.40 pm): I rise to make a contribution on a great event that I took part in last week. I again joined the Morayfield State School, as I did last year, in the Chaplain Spin Off Gym Bike Challenge. This is an annual event where schools around Queensland all go to the Chandler sports facility, jump on a stationary gym bike, and pedal as fast as you can for 30 minutes to see who can travel the longest distance. Schools come from all over Queensland to participate in this challenge. Although I rode for Morayfield State School, Morayfield East State School and Burpengary State School were also there representing our area.

When we arrived, we assessed what we were going to do. We joined together for team tactics. When I joined my team, I had a group of all grade 7 students bar one, who was in grade 6. Being a team, we came together to discuss our tactics. My team consisted of all girls, so that was great. We measured up those guys on the other teams and put a plan together. It was great to see the team spirit of those girls, who really came together for Morayfield State School. They had a steeling desire to take out the challenge and be crowned Kings of Spin for the second year in a row.


It was fantastic as we started off the event. There was a lot of atmosphere as the schools pedalled away, and we took an early lead in the event. We pedalled our guts out. We took turns. At 30-second and one-minute intervals the girls changed over. At the end of the day, we actually won the event and were crowned the Kings of Spin for the second year in a row.

I told those students with whom I rode that day that I would stand in this place and put their names on the record. I am committed to participating next year so that I can ride for Morayfield State School and try to take out the trifecta. The event raised \$54,000 for school chaplains in South-East Queensland—money that is really needed to help our local schools and school chaplains do the great job that they do.

The team that I rode with was: teacher, Helen Parkin; year 6 student Amy Hicks; Joanna Eklic; Ashleigh Crook; Amber Dunn; Lara Auckland; Kate Obether; Alyce Knot; and Jordan Warwick. They were the guys that formed the team. We had a great team. I look forward to participating next year in the event and trying to take it for the third year in a row.

I say to those kids at Morayfield State School that your spirit and determination proves what we are about in our local area. My hat goes off to you guys. You are a great bunch of people. I look forward to catching up very shortly.

Multiculturalism

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—UAP) (11.42 pm): It is with pride that I rise tonight to formally announce my membership with the now officially registered United Australia Party. It is now recorded with the Electoral Commission Queensland.

On another very important point, I wish to speak on behalf of the local African-Australian community. I seek to put on the record that I support the importance of creating harmony in our communities, especially in places like Moorooka, which is within my electorate of Yeerongpilly. I would also like to emphasise the role of the Queensland government in terms of what it has to do to ensure acceptance of diverse cultures and peoples. Fundamentally, acceptance, mutual respect, tolerance, harmony, and an opportunity in an environment free from discrimination are all critical factors to the success of each and every Australian, regardless of their heritage.


In Yeerongpilly, for example, many African-Australian people are gainfully employed in the hospitality, food processing and taxi industries. I have witnessed them working tirelessly to support their families in the many local businesses as well as nongovernment organisations, where they are committed to assisting others in need. In the business centre of Moorooka, many people from challenging backgrounds have, to their credit, established successful small businesses and now create employment opportunities for others.

Businesses in Moorooka, however, are not just about commerce; they are about people realising their potential and achieving their aspirations, as well as providing places for personal interaction and friendships to be formed. These businesses are places where people from a variety of backgrounds meet and establish rapport, learn from one another and establish mutual respect and trust. It is important to highlight that many local African-Australian business owners have started and established their businesses after being forced to desperately flee their homelands, arriving in Australia with a relentless determination to rebuild their lives and make a better future for themselves and their families—and especially their children.

The state's most multicultural schools, Millaperra and Moorooka State High, last year taught 398 immigrant refugee students from 41 countries. These children are now able to participate in one of the most important aspects of creating equalities, that is, education. Many adults from the African-Australian community also make significant contributions to our universities as well as local and state government departments, including the Queensland Police Service, for example, now positively helping to protect our communities.

From this perspective, I call on the Minister for Multicultural Affairs to do more to break down the barriers. I also encourage the media to play a more positive role in helping to build stronger community relations, especially for the sake of all children.

Queensland Plan

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (11.45 pm): I rise tonight to speak about some of the great activities that are underway in my electorate in respect of the Queensland Plan and the enthusiasm of the people of Southport for this great initiative by the Newman government.

Just last month we kicked off forums and community consultation in respect of the Queensland Plan with 70 business leaders at a special forum at Griffith University which was hosted by VC Professor Ian O'Connor. Last week we had 38 community leaders at a special Future Families forum in the boardroom at the Audi Centre in Southport hosted by Rebecca Frizelle, a member of the family who own the Audi dealership on the Gold Coast. We had some really outstanding people who come along to that forum to discuss issues of child safety and what sort of future we want for our families in Southport and on the Gold Coast. We also talked about issues around disability and domestic


violence, and there was a lot of discussion about the need for foster care, better arrangements to be put in place for children transitioning out of care, and just the need as a community to start thinking about some innovative and creative ways to address some of these issues.

Then on Saturday morning business coach and futurist Wes Hone hosted a Young Leaders forum with 26 of the brightest minds and young leaders from my electorate. There were some young entrepreneurs there, a number of young people from Griffith University, and some of the high school leaders from within my electorate. We just had a fantastic time for two or three hours discussing those six questions that came out of the Mackay forum.

On Sunday it was just great to be out at the Titans v Cowboys game with the members for Burleigh and Broadwater. We followed the lead of the member for Mermaid Beach, who had hosted an information stand at the Gold Coast Suns game previously. We were there at the Titans game last weekend. What a great opportunity it was to meet and talk with many people about the Queensland Plan. It was a great win for the Titans too.

Last week we also had the Committee for Southport, and a group of business leaders came out to be part of another forum. Next Saturday I am pleased to advise the House that we are having a community forum in the park just off Dandar Drive. We have written to some 500 residents, inviting them to come along and join in. It is a great initiative, and I am proud to be part of a government that is committed to thinking about the future and coming up with innovative ideas to better address the many challenges facing us and to create a better future for our children and for families.

Redcliffe

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.48 pm): I have already today in some detail touched on how the second budget of the Newman LNP government delivers only broken promises. Further to that I want to talk about Redcliffe and what the Premier and Treasurer have provided for this thriving and rapidly-growing area. It adds up to very little.

It is also important that someone in this House helps the people of Redcliffe to gain an understanding of what this budget delivers for them, considering that they have no representative to address the budget in their region. That is perhaps the biggest broken promise for the people of Redcliffe—that this government has abandoned them.

So what has this budget delivered for Redcliffe? Firstly, it has—not unsurprisingly—delivered a cut to critical health services for more than 55,000 people who call the peninsula area home. The budget allocates \$36 million less than it did last year for the Metro North Health Board, and that will have a direct and detrimental effect on health services in Redcliffe. How does that address health issues for this growing area?

We have also heard that the health minister has ordered the Redcliffe Hospital's pain clinic to lock its doors so that hundreds of people cannot access vital care. But now there is more to come.

Surely there must be something in this LNP budget that delivers for Redcliffe, in the area of public transport perhaps. All Redcliffe residents understand that it was Labor at both the state and the federal level which funded and began work on the important Moreton Bay rail link. It gives me no pleasure, however, to inform the good people of Redcliffe that this LNP budget slashes funding committed in the last budget of \$249.6 million to \$170.6 million in 2013-14.

Mr Bleijie interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! Members, these speaking opportunities are quite short. I would ask members to cease their interjections because they are not being taken.


Ms PALASZCZUK: I suppose that Redcliffe, already very low on this government's priority list, will just have to wait.

When I was in Redcliffe two weeks ago to address a town hall meeting I gave the community an undertaking that I would address the parliament in relation to the budget on their behalf. I make special mention of their concerns in relation to the closure of the very important Regional Community Association Moreton Bay on the Thursday prior to Easter and, more to the point, the debacle that is this government's treatment of that sad closure. The communities minister has done nothing more than turn her back on the people of this association and, to the best of my knowledge, has refused to

even go and meet with staff there. When she was asked this week what she was doing to address the issue of unpaid wages for these people, the minister said very, very little. She said that it was a matter for the board—the same board that has had serious allegations levelled against it.

The people of Redcliffe would have no issue with me describing them as battlers. It is how they describe themselves. They understand that this government has nothing for them and is happy to ignore them. This government can rest assured: those battlers will be returning the favour come the next election.

Maryborough Hospital

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (11.51 pm): For many years now the Maryborough community has been mourning the loss of services in their hospital. They well remember when then Premier Peter Beattie stood at the front of the hospital and announced that Maryborough Hospital would not lose its maternity unit. They also remember the broken promise, with the closure of that maternity unit shortly afterwards and the stealthy draining of all services away from the hospital.


I am very pleased to advise the House that circumstances have changed, particularly over the past year and a half. The Maryborough Hospital is now taking its rightful place, working in conjunction with the Hervey Bay Hospital, to provide a range of services for all of the Fraser Coast. At the front line is a fully functioning 24-hour emergency department with access to specialist advice through telemedicine links. Patients can be assessed and treatment options advised using the telemedicine links. Pathology services are provided to patients at the Maryborough Hospital.

In February, the 12-bed rehabilitation unit was commissioned. This rehab unit was constructed within an existing building and contains state-of-the-art technology. This facility will be utilised by all patients on the Fraser Coast requiring rehabilitation. A program called MATES has been implemented by key staff. This program looks at and maximises the utilisation of the available beds in both the Maryborough and Hervey Bay hospitals as a whole unit. Part of this process is the transferring of Hervey Bay patients to the Maryborough Hospital for their subacute care—about 24 patients a week. Acute care for Maryborough residents is provided at Hervey Bay. My advice is that this program is working very effectively, increasing bed utilisation significantly, and there are now plans to implement this program into other hospitals. To assist the patient transfer process, the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service is looking to buy a designated transporter vehicle.

Future plans for the Maryborough Hospital include the establishment of an endoscopy centre of excellence, starting with the blitz to eradicate waiting lists in the second half of 2013. There are a total of over 4½ thousand patients in Wide Bay on the waiting list for these procedures, and about half of these are on the Fraser Coast. The establishment of this centre will involve utilising the currently unused third operating theatre at the Maryborough Hospital. The other two theatres are utilised for day surgery.

The board of the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service, the CEO and senior staff have worked very hard over the past months to bring the budget into balance and to reposition and utilise the Maryborough Hospital in a way which provides the best possible medical services to residents of both Maryborough and the Fraser Coast. I thank them for this work. I know that this is only the beginning of better services for our residents.

Thuringowa Electorate

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (11.54 pm): I take this opportunity to speak about the funding that has come to my electorate of Thuringowa in the past year and how it has benefited the community. Schools have been a major focus of my electorate work since I took office last year. I have eight schools in my electorate. Three of these have been able to clear their maintenance backlogs, thanks to this government's funding. One school—Rasmussen—took part in a group funding initiative whereby it combined with three other schools in Townsville to attract a project management company and a large scale contractor. All four schools got maximum benefit and got the most bang for their buck.

Kirwan State High School is the largest school in my region. For too long their infrastructure needs have been ignored. No more. Funding in this budget of \$5 million will make headway in providing new classrooms just in time for the first intake of year 7 students to the high school. Thuringowa State High School will also receive an additional \$261,000 for refurbishment works. This

is on top of the annual school maintenance funding. Younger kids have not missed out, either, with local kindergartens scoring over \$280,000 from the essential upgrades program and the community benefit funds.

Local sports clubs have shared in nearly \$325,000 from the disaster recovery program, Get in the Game, Caring for our Community and the gambling and casino grants programs. The Rangewood rural fire brigade and the RSPCA shelter have been grant recipients, and the Thuringowa RSL subbranch have bought a new mower and will fit out a new kitchen, thanks to funding from the community benefit fund grants scheme.

One group with which I have worked closely is the Upper Ross Community Centre, which provides a broad range of services to the residents of Condon, Rasmussen and Kelso. With many families classified as being in a low socioeconomic bracket, often in public housing and facing distinct challenges, the centre provides a lifeline to local residents. Health clinics, mothers groups, legal services, training courses, fitness classes, craft groups and linking seniors with the community: it all takes place at the Upper Ross Community Centre. But there was a bit of a problem. The current location and facilities of the centre are no longer viable. A decision was made three years ago that they would have to move, but the proposed site for the new centre presented a host of problems. I stepped in and struck upon a solution that I felt could benefit everyone in the community. The Upper Ross PCYC, which shares some of the land with the Men's Shed, had vacant land that was not being utilised. Upon agreement with the Townsville City Council and the relevant parties we developed a plan for a new community hub. The allocation of \$900,000 in this budget will enable the Upper Ross Community Centre to break new ground on a building, fully equipped to its specifications.

In my election campaign last year I made a commitment to fight for this community centre for the Upper Ross. I am pleased and proud to say that the government has backed me in honouring my commitment. The funding issued last year and scheduled in the 2013 budget has helped to strengthen my community. I am very grateful.

Boyne Valley, Flood Events




Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (11.56 pm): Last week I met with residents of the Boyne Valley. They are concerned about the increase in the amount of time they are cut off during flooding events involving the Gladstone Area Water Board's Awoonga Dam. Residents of the area have to manage a number of creek crossings during flood events. Pine Creek goes up and down quite quickly. Degalgil Creek stays up for four to five days. The Boyne River used to stay up for six to 12 hours but now stays up for one to two days. The Six Mile used to stay up for about two days but now stays up for 4½. The second most affected creek, Marble Creek, stays up for about four days and Nellie Simpson—it is the back-up water—can stay up for two to three weeks.

These residents are used to having their creeks flood with rain events. However, with the raising of the Awoonga Dam and the increase in the storage of water, some of these creeks stay up. And it is not running water that keeps the residents cut off; it is actually still water.

Residents have said to me that if a private landowner could not divert water off a public road they would be required to ensure the water was redirected. The water that is cutting the road is harvested water that is sold by the Gladstone Area Water Board for domestic and, to a greater extent, industrial use. So the community is asking why, if GAWB storage is holding them up longer, GAWB should not be responsible for relocating their road to ensure residents of the Boyne Valley have at least reasonable access in a reasonable amount of time.

Nellie Simpson Road, the road closest to where the water cuts the road, was supposed to be only temporary, until the dam was raised to 45 metres. It is at 41 metres, and the 45-metre raise has been delayed because of the Fitzroy pipeline. These residents are saying that they are held up in the Boyne Valley for a significantly extra period of time—we are talking four to five extra days, if not up to two weeks—because of the harvested water that is held by the Gladstone Area Water Board. They rightly believe that the Gladstone Area Water Board should be responsible for remedying their situation. Whilst the water board at this point in time has said that it is not responsible—that it is a Main Roads problem—I agree with the residents. I believe GAWB has a responsibility to these residents. Main Roads does a good job in maintaining that road, but GAWB really holds responsibility.


Fatality Free Friday

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (11.59 pm): In the lead-up to Fatality Free Friday last week, we saw a tragic reminder of the need for increased road safety measures in the Pine Rivers police district. Just before midnight on Wednesday, 29 May, a car travelling on the Anzac Avenue off-ramp from the Bruce Highway at Murrumba Downs collided with a guardrail and crashed into an embankment, resulting in a 15-year-old boy dying at the scene. In the lead-up to Fatality Free Friday, this was indeed a shocking reminder of the need for motorists to be vigilant in observing the Fatal Five on our roads—speeding, drink and drug driving, failing to wear a seatbelt, driving while fatigued, and distraction and inattention.

The member for Kallangur and I, along with the Pine Rivers police district, ran a series of road safety campaign events in the lead-up to Fatality Free Friday to remind residents in our electorates of the need for us all to take responsibility when on our roads. I want to express my thanks to Superintendent Mick O'Dowd, Inspector Lee Jeffries, Petrie station officer in charge Senior Sergeant Lukia Serafim, Pine Rivers traffic branch officer in charge Senior Sergeant Bryan Eaton and all district officers and staff for their assistance in communicating the road safety message last week throughout the Pine Rivers and Kallangur electorates and in helping to organise our various activities. As part of our campaign we held a number of activities, the most impacting of which was an empty shoes display at Pine Rivers State High School on Fatality Free Friday. Students were captivated and shocked by the sight of the 279 pairs of shoes that were spread across the school's basketball court, each pair of shoes representing a life that was lost on Queensland roads in 2012.

Also in the lead-up to Fatality Free Friday, the Minister for Police and Community Safety and I launched the Pine Rivers Hoon Watch program. Hoon Watch is all about asking our local community to assist our police by reporting hooning behaviour on our roads. I urge all Pine Rivers residents to report hooning when it happens so that our local police know the streets and the days and the times so they can target this dangerous driving behaviour. It was also a pleasure to be joined at the Hoon Watch launch by Mrs Sharyn Littler, President of the Australian Confederation of Motor Clubs, who added the support of car enthusiasts to the message that hooning behaviour will not be tolerated on our streets. To further reinforce the road safety message, there were also variable messaging signs carrying Fatal Five messaging throughout the region for the week, road safety shopping centre displays and a Fatality Free Friday lunch, where we were joined by the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Road safety is everyone's responsibility and I hope that the activities of the past weeks have reinforced that message for the Pine Rivers community.

Local Government, Referendum

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (12.02 am): I rise to speak about the important referendum question which is scheduled to be put to a vote to all Australians on 14 September—the same day as the next federal election. In substance, the referendum question will ask Australians if they support changing our Commonwealth Constitution to have the role of local government recognised in our Constitution. I will be supporting the referendum question which proposes the recognition of local government in our Constitution. If the referendum is supported overwhelmingly by Queenslanders, it will give the federal government the ability to make payments of money direct to local councils without those payments needing to be filtered or handled or managed by the state government. The payment would be able to bypass the state governments. If the federal government wants to give money direct to local councils, the federal government should be able to without any fetter or interference from the state government.

The state government should not be able to flex its muscle and interfere simply because it does not support the proposed project. I understand Premier Newman has threatened withdrawing his government's support for a yes vote unless the wording of the referendum question is changed. I see this as another example of the extreme politics of the Newman-led government. It is an extreme and divisive position. If the Premier wants to maintain this position, he should not spend one cent of Queenslanders' money on promoting or pursuing his view. I say to the LNP: use your developer mates' money. The advice I have received is that this matter has not yet been debated in the Senate and once it has been debated and after it has passed the process is for the Australian Electoral Commission to then prepare the wording of the referendum question and the wording of the yes and no case. I am further informed that the wording of the referendum question is usually based on the


long title of the bill. For the benefit of all members, I table a copy of Constitution Alteration (Local Government) 2013 and the explanatory memorandum circulated by the authority of the federal Attorney-General, the Hon. Mark Dreyfus QC.

Tabled paper: Constitution Alteration (Local Government) Bill 2013 [\[2863\]](#).

Tabled paper: Constitution Alteration (Local Government) Bill 2013, explanatory memorandum [\[2864\]](#).

For a referendum question to succeed, the referendum must be supported not only by a majority of Australians but also by a majority of the states. I urge all members of the Newman Liberal National government to read the material and take it up with Premier Newman, because I hope Premier Newman finds a more moderate position on this important referendum question.

Nudgee Electorate

 **Mr WOODFORTH** (Nudgee—LNP) (12.05 am): I start by acknowledging the passing of Father Norris. Recently St Kevin's at Geebung mourned the loss of its parish priest and dear friend, Father Timothy Norris OAM. Father Norris occupies a rare place in Australian church history, as he built the parish from nothing in 1959 and was still serving 54 years later until his recent passing. A requiem mass was led by His Grace, Archbishop Mark Coleridge, with over 40 priests in attendance, including His Eminence Cardinal George Pell. The school said that Father Norris would live on in their hearts for an eternity.

Moving on, it was a pleasure to attend Wavell High's play, *Bye Bye Birdie*. What an amazing performance—a performance so great you would have thought you were sitting in QPAC, not a high school hall. My partner, who was in attendance and an ex-performer herself, could not believe the quality of the performance. Whilst I congratulate all involved in the play, I want to make special note of the following stars of the show—'Albert Peterson' played by Tom Holsworth, 'Rosie Alvarez' played by Tegan Krannenburg, 'Kim MacAfee' played by Sarah Kinmont, 'Ursula Merkle' played by Caitlyn Schumacher and extra special mention to 'Conrad Birdie' played by Toa Peteru. 'Conrad Birdie' had these moves that would make the girls scream and go wild and flock to him, so I tried them and all I did was put my hip out! At 42 years of age, I should leave it to the young ones!

Mr Ruthenberg: Oh, you're a fine specimen.

Mr WOODFORTH: I am; thank you. I will take that interjection!

Mr Costigan: Give yourself a rap.

Mr WOODFORTH: I will take that interjection as well. In a quick whip around the electorate, I have had the pleasure of attending fetes at St Oswald's, Boondall State School, St Kevin's and St Flannan's Flarana Fair. There was the Multicultural Festival at Zillmere State School just last weekend, Speed Careering with 60 year 10 students from Earnshaw College and the Burnie Brae volunteers breakfast—always a popular event. My hat goes off to all volunteers around the country. Then there was the Million Paws Walk at Seventh Brigade Park with my two little attack dogs, although Maltese mops is probably a more accurate description.

As an ex-triathlete—and I use that term loosely—I represented Minister Dickson at Triathlon Queensland's end-of-season awards day in Roma Street Parkland. There was the Walk Safely to School Day with Geebung State School and the chappies breakfast with chappies Sarah Erskine from Wavell High and Kym Austin and Gideon Blazey from Earnshaw College. But I did miss the Wayne Swan barbecue/rally/his going-away party at Earnshaw College. Sorry, Wayne! Earlier I spoke about Australia's strongest great-grandma, Marion—72 years young—from Zillmere. She is now up to a 65-kilo dead lift three times. Imagine two 30-kilo cement bags; she has lifted them up three times. That is quite impressive at 72 years of age. Go, Marion! In closing, congratulations as they grow in numbers. Council No. 15, I thank you!

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 12.08 am (Friday).

ATTENDANCE

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, Davies, C. Davis, T. Davis, Dempsey, Dickson, Dillaway, Douglas, Dowling, Elmes, Emerson, Flegg, France, Frecklington, Gibson, Grant, Grimwade, Gulley, Hart, Hathaway, Hobbs, Holswich, Hopper, Johnson, Judge, Katter, Kaye, Kempton, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Latter, Maddern, Malone, Mander, McArdle, McVeigh, Menkens, Millard, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Mulherin, Newman, Nicholls, Ostapovitch, Palaszczuk, Pitt, Powell, Pucci, Rice, Rickuss, Robinson, Ruthenberg, Scott, Seeney, Shorten, Shuttleworth, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Symes, Trad, Trout, Walker, Watts, Wellington, Woodforth, Young