



# RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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## FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

### Thursday, 5 June 2014

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## THURSDAY, 5 JUNE 2014

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The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

### TABLED PAPERS

#### MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Health (Mr Springborg)—

[5333](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Springborg) to an ePetition (2238-14) sponsored by Dr Douglas from 1,432 petitioners, requesting the House to delay the arbitrary deadline for the introduction of individual doctors' contracts and continue negotiations to reach an appropriate compromise with senior doctors

[5334](#) Response from the Minister for Health (Mr Springborg) to a paper petition (2255-14) presented by the Clerk of the Parliament in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 1,408 petitioners, requesting the House to urgently facilitate the permanent placement of an ambulance and paramedic at Rainbow Beach

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

#### Stafford By-Election

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.31 am): I rise today to notify the House that last night I spoke to Her Excellency the Governor, Penelope Wensley, to tender advice to her that the Stafford by-election should be held on Saturday, 19 July 2014. I will be officially seeking the Governor's approval on 19 June 2014.

The reason for choosing 19 July is that it is the first Saturday after the July school holidays. It also gives the people of Stafford time to hear from all parties about their plans, or in the case of the Australian Labor Party their lack of plans, for this state and its future.

In stark contrast, the LNP government has a strong plan for a brighter future in Queensland. We are making significant progress state-wide and locally, but we are determined to do more to keep building on our strong plan. Only if we stick to this plan will we have the schools our children deserve, the hospitals we need and the infrastructure we want. These things are simply not achievable without a sound financial foundation. As a result of the disciplined decisions that this government has made, we are now firmly on this path.

This is a government with a focus and ability to make this brighter future a reality and to ease the pressure on families. The alternative is the inexperience and chaos of the same failed Labor team and the minor parties. Labor has not learned from its past mistakes, with no real policies and no way to fund them. Only an LNP member who is part of a strong team will be able to deliver for the people of Stafford.

#### Budget, Pensioner Concessions

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.33 am): We are a government that listens to Queenslanders, and we are responsive. We are always looking for solutions when Queenslanders tell us that there is a problem. Passing on part of the Commonwealth's cut to pensioner concessions is clearly not an acceptable outcome for Queenslanders. This government made the decision to raise our pensioner and senior concessions by almost \$26 million in this coming year's budget to help compensate. But pensioners and older Queenslanders have told us that they simply cannot wear the cost of filling the gap between Queensland's increased contribution and the concession cuts and increased fees and taxes, like fuel excise increases, that were made by the Commonwealth in their budget.

That is why today I am announcing that we are not only listening to Queenslanders but we are acting, within the space of two days, to reinstate the full level of the pensioner and senior concessions. Queensland's seniors and pensioners will not be worse off because of the Commonwealth cuts.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members! I call the Premier.

**Mr NEWMAN:** This government is listening and because we are prepared to listen, I say today that Queensland's seniors and pensioners will not be worse off because of the Commonwealth government's cuts. We are making this announcement while still considering the impact of Commonwealth decisions on this state's budget.

It is the Commonwealth government that has caused the problem with pensioner cuts and increased charges. People only have to look at the statements of other first ministers and Premiers around the nation to see that. We will be looking for all opportunities to withhold and recoup funding from Commonwealth programs and initiatives that they ask states to contribute to from time to time, to make up for the shortfall that they have created. We will continue to send a clear message to Canberra that Queenslanders will not stand for these kinds of cuts. The Commonwealth should be bearing the burden of these cuts, not Queenslanders.

We are a government that listens. We are a government that has a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders. In contrast, those opposite will always be the architects of a higher cost of living for Queenslanders because they will not stand up and be counted. The member for Redcliffe was the parliamentary secretary for climate change and energy efficiency in the Gillard government that imposed the biggest cost-of-living burden on Queenslanders—that is, of course, the carbon tax.

Those opposite sat silently here last year as the Gillard government ripped \$103 million out of our Health budget. They took Queenslanders' eight-cent-a-litre fuel subsidy and they got us into the \$80 billion worth of Labor debt that means that we face huge challenges in affording all of the services, all of the infrastructure and all of the concessions that Queenslanders expect and deserve.

We listen, we respond and we also have a strong plan for Queensland. Labor stands condemned for their ineptitude and continued failure to stand up for Queenslanders.

### Ports Strategy

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (9.36 am): This government has a strong plan to grow the state economy to ensure a brighter future for all Queenslanders. When we came to government we recognised that economic growth would be critical to provide a pathway out of the economic mire left by Labor. We committed to growing the four pillars of the economy. We developed our overarching economic development strategy called Governing for Growth. I am sure all members are familiar with it. All departments were involved in developing it.

It is noteworthy that the opposition in this place have never asked one question about our economic growth strategy. So interested are they in economic growth that they have never asked one question about the government's overarching Governing for Growth economic strategy.

Building on the economic growth strategy that was Governing for Growth, we are developing a number of subordinate economic growth strategies. Today, I table the first of those—the Queensland Ports Strategy—for the consideration of the parliament.

*Tabled paper:* Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning: Queensland Ports Strategy, 2014 [\[5335\]](#).

Port infrastructure is essential for getting Queensland coal to market. It is essential for getting Queensland's primary production into international markets. It is a responsibility of the government to ensure the timely provision of that infrastructure to meet the needs of these growing industries.

Ports are essential to unlock the potential of the resource rich Galilee Basin, which could deliver 28,000 Queensland jobs in the future. This strategy that I have tabled today sets the direction for how our ports developments will occur in Queensland. Even in its draft form, the strategy has already been recognised by UNESCO's World Heritage Commission as being the right way to go to continue our high level of protection of the Great Barrier Reef.

This strategy will ensure Queensland will lead the way with an efficient port network that supports economic growth and protects the environment. It includes 18 actions, the most significant of which is our plan to declare five priority port development areas at the long-established major ports of Abbot Point, Brisbane, Gladstone, Hay Point, Mackay and Townsville.

At these ports the government will facilitate staged, incremental expansion of port and terminal capacity to meet emerging demands. Development at priority port development areas will be involved by leading practice master planning which takes into account operational, economic, environmental

and social issues. The Queensland Ports Strategy reinforces our government's commitment to protecting the environment, including the Great Barrier Reef, and growing the state economy. This sensible strategy will ensure that the pristine areas of the Great Barrier Reef are protected while concentrating port development in the long-established major port areas.

Our government's approach is consistent with UNESCO World Heritage committee's recommendations for the government to restrict port development to areas within or adjoining the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area to existing major ports. The government will seal our commitment to major port reform through the introduction of a ports bill to parliament. Unlike Labor's haphazard approach to port planning, our port strategy will not allow 38 million tonnes of material to be dredged at Abbot Point. We will allow just over three million tonnes to be dredged, in stark contrast. The Queensland Ports Strategy shows that we are the ones with a strong plan that will deliver a brighter future for the environment, a strong plan that will deliver a brighter future for all Queenslanders.

### Budget

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.40 am): The LNP government took a plan to the people of Queensland at the last election. It was a positive plan that included promises to restore the state's finances, to revitalise front-line services, to grow a four-pillar economy and to deliver cost-of-living relief to Queensland families. The 2014-15 state budget, which I delivered on Tuesday, continues the steady, considered work our government has carried out over the past two years, charting the course for a stronger, financially secure Queensland.

We have outlined our plan to reduce Labor's debt in a careful and methodical way by making the strongest and the smartest choice, and we have engaged the public in this process at every step. Contrast this positive, constructive plan with what we have seen from the Labor Party. In the more than two years since the March 2012 election those opposite have not outlined one substantive economic policy. The shadow Treasurer has refused every request to detail the Labor Party's economic and fiscal strategy. The shadow Treasurer acknowledges that debt is a problem and should be paid down—but he does not say what his plan is.

On Tuesday, immediately after the budget, he told radio 4BC listeners, 'We've consistently said that we should have a methodical approach to actually bringing down the debt level in Queensland.' That is music to my ears, Madam Speaker. He finally agrees that we need a methodical approach to pay down the debt and to fix up the state's finances—something we have been saying for over two years. There is only one thing the Labor party does methodically—and that is run up debt and deficits. Year in, year out wherever they are their method is more debt, more deficits. The shadow Treasurer went on to say—and he has made this claim a number of times—that the Labor Party had a plan to go back into surplus in 2015-16. We thought that was interesting. We thought we would like to see this plan. So we searched all the documents that the Labor Party ever put out. Not one economic document released by the former government ever showed a return to surplus in 2015-16—not one economic document.

Today's budget reply is the opposition's chance to say just how they would get the budget into surplus and how they would pay down \$80 billion worth of debt—the \$80 billion of debt that they helped to create. The shadow Treasurer has already, to some extent, let the cat out of the bag when he told the ABC's Chris O'Brien on Tuesday night, 'Of course we will be dealing with the issues this government doesn't want to deal with and that is, of course, revenue'—revenue, yet again.

**Mr Powell:** Taxes, taxes and more taxes.

**Mr NICHOLLS:** Taxes, taxes and more taxes, as the member says. Despite the opposition saying they will release their plan at some unspecified time in the future, it seems more tax is their answer to dealing with the debt they racked up.

The time has come for the opposition leader to outline Labor's plans for taking this state forward. It is simply not good enough for them to say less than a year out from an election that they have a plan without actually saying what that plan is. If the opposition choose not to outline their plan, you have to ask: what are they hiding? Why is the opposition so afraid of telling the people of Queensland what their policies are, what taxes they are going to slug Queenslanders with? What is their secret plan to raise taxes on Queenslanders? The choice is now clear. The opposition leader in her budget reply speech today must outline their plan to pay down that \$80 billion worth of debt.

This government has a positive plan for this state. We have made the smartest and strongest choice to reduce debt so we can invest in the infrastructure that this growing state needs. It is time for the opposition to stump up and outline their plan, if they have one.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Before calling the Minister for Health, members, there is too much noise in the chamber. I call the Minister for Health.

### Queensland Ambulance Service

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.45 am): The Queensland Ambulance Service is one of Australia's best-performing ambulance providers—supported in this coming financial year by a \$630 million investment by Queensland taxpayers. Under the strong plan developed for the QAS by the Newman government, ambulance officers across the state deliver a consistently high level of emergency pre-hospital care.

Late last year, it was my pleasure to welcome QAS to the Queensland Health portfolio. Under this government, closer cooperation between Queensland Health and the QAS yields excellent results. Already honourable members have heard of improved ambulance response times on the one hand and shorter waits for emergency treatment on the other.

Queensland has a growing and ageing population. To keep pace with demand and to deliver service improvements, the QAS must grow. The \$630 million budget announced this week will enable the QAS to deliver 100 new ambulance officers, 155 new vehicles, two new stations and a range of station upgrades across the state. The total budget allocation for ambulance services includes a \$590.2 million operating budget and \$41.4 million for capital works. The Newman government provided 60 extra staff in 2013-14. This allocation of an extra 100 personnel in 2014-15 will ensure that Queenslanders are looked after in their times of need.

In addition to the new and replacement ambulances, these funds will allow QAS to begin design work on the Sunshine Coast University Hospital ambulance station. It will support work on replacement stations at Miriam Vale and Thursday Island. In 2014-15 QAS will complete the construction of replacement, refurbished or redeveloped ambulance stations at Collinsville, Gladstone, Injune, Pittsworth and Russell Island. We will build residences at Injune and Russell Island and relief quarters at Pittsworth. The redeveloped Spring Hill ambulance complex will be completed, and work to complete the design for the new Bundaberg Ambulance Station will continue.

The Queensland government supports our paramedics, emergency medical dispatchers and patient transport officers through a commitment to improved models of care. It is a far cry from the policy paralysis of those days under Labor, when ambulance bypassing left patients stuck in the back of ambulances bouncing from hospital to hospital—in some cases with dire consequences for the patients. Ambulance officers know that when an emergency call is received every second can save a life. In Metro North, over the past two years we have seen ambulance response times reduced by more than a minute. After a successful trial in Metro North, this year a low acuity patient care initiative will be extended to Metro South, Townsville and the Gold Coast at a cost of \$4.1 million. Under this new model, advanced care paramedics respond to low acuity cases. This is a cost-effective initiative that delivers enhanced health care.

Queenslanders can trust this government and its strong plan for the QAS to provide patients with better ambulance services. This is a plan for a brighter future and better health outcomes for Queenslanders. I thank our QAS employees for their valuable service to the community of Queensland.

### Budget, Arts

 **Hon. IB WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (9.48 am): Queensland families in our largest cities and smallest towns will benefit from the 2014-15 budget with more than \$6.5 million to develop regional arts and culture. We will deliver Arts for all Queenslanders to make arts accessible whether you live in the bush or by the sea. Arts for all Queenslanders places all of us at the heart of our state's art and culture—as participants, audiences and supporters. We live in the most decentralised state in Australia where communities have a strong sense of who they are through their local arts and culture. It is critical for Queenslanders to experience the inspiring and indeed the supercharged power of the arts in their own community which also delivers jobs and income to people not just in the arts sector but in hotels, restaurants and the associated industries that gain from regional tourism.

Put the shows on that people want to see and they will travel to get there. To support our inspiring local artists, the Queensland government is putting \$2 million towards the Regional Arts Development Fund in 2014-15. This successful partnership with local councils across the state delivers more than 3,000 arts and cultural projects annually. Indigenous communities will see \$1.2 million for Indigenous arts centres and \$400,000 to build skills and opportunities for our Indigenous artists. The Indigenous Regional Arts Development Fund will provide \$200,000 in 12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, supporting one of the major opportunities for Indigenous people to harness the economic and cultural liberation that comes from high achievement.

We are also committing \$2.65 million to the Playing Queensland Fund. Thanks to this fund, our major state arts organisations will hit the road, with Queensland Ballet's *Coppelia*, Queensland Theatre Company's Australian drama *Kelly* and Queensland Symphony Orchestra reaching new audiences as far afield as Longreach and Mt Isa. We are taking ballet to the bush and beaches and opera to the outback. The Playing Queensland Fund will bring more productions to more Queenslanders, and we have already seen success with an increase in people attending regional tours from more than 29,000 in 2011—the last year of the Labor government—to more than 103,000 in 2013. That is more than three times the number of people in our rural and regional audiences. We have more than trebled the number of regional touring activities from 180 in 2011 to 617 in 2013. That is more than three times the number of performances.

The arts budget for 2014-2015 is \$223.6 million. We are maintaining funding to our major arts organisations: the Queensland Art Gallery, the State Library of Queensland, the Queensland Museum, the Queensland Performing Arts Centre, the Queensland Symphony Orchestra, the Queensland Theatre Co. and Screen Queensland. Small to medium arts organisations will get \$7.3 million to grow grassroots groups across the state. This means that Queensland communities will get the strong arts culture they deserve, increased engagement with the arts and more tourists, supporting an essential revenue source in every Queensland community.

The budget gives us the means to do what this government is doing across each portfolio. We are delivering more to Queenslanders without spending money we do not have. Wherever you live in Queensland, the arts are now for you. We will deliver more while increasing returns on arts and cultural investment and bolster the number of cultural tourists and entrepreneurial opportunities while we are at it.

### Budget, Roads

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (9.52 am): The Newman government is delivering a brighter future for roads right across Queensland. Through better planning and better design, regional roads—the lifblood of so many communities—are at last getting the attention they deserve. We are delivering on our election promise to bring the Bruce Highway up to a satisfactory standard, spending a record \$770 million in 2014-15. This is in stark contrast to Labor's approach, which was to ignore this 1,700-kilometre lifeline for so long.

Our \$4.8 billion QTRIP program in 2014-15 is a 37 per cent increase in the funding that was budgeted by our opponents. There is \$179 million as part of our record \$635 million for the Warrego Highway west of Toowoomba. This investment links with our \$1.6 billion Toowoomba second range crossing, fixing one of Queensland's great freight bottlenecks. The member for Warrego knows how important this highway will be to Queensland's freight future. Sadly, the member for Condamine should have stuck around instead of deserting the people who elected him.

It is the same story across the state, with projects for key highways including the Capricorn, Carnarvon, Cunningham, Dawson, Flinders, Peak Downs, Kennedy, Landsborough and New England. However, it is often the smaller works that mean the most to Queenslanders. I thank the member for Cook for his strong advocacy for the Endeavour Valley Road in Far North Queensland. Additional investment in this key connection between Cooktown and Hopevale will deliver significant benefits for both the community of Hopevale and local farmers.

This budget delivers \$10 million over four years for the community of Hopevale. When that road is fully sealed, the local residents will be able to get their bananas to market without damage. The member for Gregory will tell you that his electorate is more than the Capricorn Highway or the Peak Downs Highway, which is why it is important that we kick-start our \$24.5 million deal with the federal government and seven Western Queensland councils to upgrade their local roads including the Donohue Highway, which is at the Queensland end of the fabled Outback Way—Australia's longest short cut.

This is a genuine partnership between the state and federal government and outback councils to deliver much-needed outcomes for the region. Whether it is road signs to help tourism at Baffle Creek on the Central Queensland coast or working with the federal government to fix Gladstone's biggest bottleneck, the Kin Kora roundabout, the government is delivering for Queenslanders across the state.

This budget will also finalise our efforts to fast-track Queensland's disaster recovery for roads. The \$800 million funding will allow us to finish work from weather events in 2011, 2012, 2013 and \$130 million from Cyclone Ita earlier this year. Importantly, it will also employ regional Queenslanders for construction and maintenance projects across the state road network. This budget is a great result for Queenslanders and a great result for Queensland's regional roads.

### Budget, Disability Services

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (9.55 am): This week's budget has outlined a strong plan for a brighter future. It outlined a brighter future for Queenslanders with a disability, their families and their carers. As part of the budget announced by the Treasurer on Tuesday, funding for disability services has increased to almost \$1.5 billion. This funding will go towards boosting front-line services and giving greater support to Queenslanders with a disability as we prepare to transition to the NDIS. Importantly, this budget provides the 2014-15 instalment of the \$868 million over five years we have committed to ready Queenslanders for the transition to the scheme as well as delivering innovative accommodation solutions and support to assist people with a disability to live more independently in their communities. These are vital measures in our journey towards the NDIS and will mean that Queenslanders with a disability have more choice and control over their specialist disability supports which they did not have under the former Labor government.

As I have said in this House before, we are progressing well towards the introduction of the NDIS in Queensland, and this year's budget is another landmark on that journey. Getting NDIS ready is not only about money. We have been busy getting Queenslanders ready for greater choice and control ever since we came to office. Our government is getting on with the job and the Your Life Your Choice initiative is playing a key part. Members would be familiar with the Your Life Your Choice initiative, and I am excited to inform the House today that we have reached the 1,000 participant mark in the initiative. In fact, we now have 1,059 participants.

The Newman government made some strong decisions when we first came to office, and it is no coincidence that we are now seeing the revitalisation of front-line services. We have seen the wait list for disability assessments in the Far North Queensland office reduce from 115 in March 2013 to zero in April 2014. Four thousand people are now receiving disability aids and equipment because of the blitz we undertook on the waiting lists for the CAETI and VOSS schemes. The average processing time for disability assessments has also been dramatically reduced. We have been able to make all of these achievements because of the hard work that we have undertaken over the past two years. Our government has a strong plan for a bright future for Queenslanders with a disability and is giving them choice and control as we transition to the NDIS commencing in 2016.

## FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

### Reports

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (9.59 am): I lay upon the table of the House report No. 43 of the Finance and Administration Committee.

*Tabled paper:* Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 43—Portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 1 April 2014 and 6 May 2014 [[5336](#)].

This report covers the portfolio subordinate legislation tabled between 1 April 2014 and 6 May 2014 considered by the committee. The subordinate legislation has a disallowance date of 27 August 2014. The committee did not identify any issues regarding consistency with fundamental legislative principles or lawfulness of the subordinate legislation.

I also lay upon the table of the House report No. 44 of the Finance and Administration Committee titled *Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2013*.

*Tabled paper:* Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 44—Oversight of the Queensland Integrity Commissioner 2013 [[5337](#)].

This report represents the results of the committee's oversight responsibilities with respect to the Integrity Commissioner. On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank the Integrity Commissioner and his staff and wish him well in his retirement from the position at the end of June.

Finally—I have three reports; we have been busy this week—I also lay upon the table of the House report No. 45 of the Finance and Administration Committee titled *Consideration of Department of the Premier and Cabinet Annual Report 2012-13*.

*Tabled paper:* Finance and Administration Committee: Report No. 45—Consideration of Department of the Premier and Cabinet Annual Report 2012-13 [5338].

Part of the committee's responsibility is to assess the public accounts of each agency within its area of responsibility. It does this by examining government financial documents and considering the annual and other reports of the Auditor-General. The committee agreed to examine the annual reports of the entities for which it has portfolio responsibility. This report is a result of the committee's examination of the DPC's annual report. The committee wishes to thank the DPC officers who met with us and will provide additional information as requested. The committee very much appreciates the assistance they provided. Finally, I would like to thank the other members of the committee for their valuable contribution and continual support. I commend the reports to the House.

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### Budget

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (10.01 am): I note that the Premier has seen reports where pensioners raised concerns about the drop in concessions with me yesterday in Inala while he was at an LNP fundraising lunch.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. I have warned members before about interrupting during questions.

**Mr Seeney** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I warn the Deputy Premier under 253A.

**Mr LANGBROEK:** I rise to a point of order, Madam Speaker. We were simply asking to whom was the question being put.

**Madam SPEAKER:** With respect, Minister for Education, we will hear the question and it does not help to have interjections in the middle of a question. I am going to ask the Leader of the Opposition to start again. If members want to take a point of order, that is a matter not an interjection.

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Premier. I note that the Premier has seen reports where yesterday I was in Inala raising concerns about pensioner concessions whilst he was at an LNP fundraising lunch. I ask: will the Premier explain to the people of Queensland where in this budget document the \$50 million is now coming from?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I noted with amusement after I had made my ministerial statement today the flurry of activity—the member for Bundamba across to the member for Gaven, heads down, out of the chamber, the Leader of the Opposition out of the chamber as well. It is going to be fascinating to see if the actual budget reply speech is changed or if it goes down the same old lemming-like train—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! I warn members on my left. I call the Premier.

**Mr NEWMAN:** As I said it will be amusing to see—

**Ms Palaszczuk:** Where is the money coming from? Where?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I warn you. The Premier is on his feet and I call the Premier.

**Mr NEWMAN:** There are people in the gallery today and they will see that these opposition members ask questions but never listen to the answers. Today in particular is their day to demonstrate what their budget would be and what their strong plan is for Queensland to repair the mess that they created. I have made it very clear this morning that we have listened to people across Queensland. I have talked to my MPs. I have listened to the feedback about the calls we have been getting. I made it very—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr NEWMAN:** Madam Speaker, we have heard from Queenslanders and they say that they expect solutions from the government. Clearly, while these cuts have been handed down from the Abbott government and indeed we have had increased cost-of-living pressures, people are saying to us, 'You need to find solutions,' and that is what we are prepared to do. We are prepared to find solutions and work harder. Because we have created a strong budget and because we have made the necessary strong decisions over the past two years, we will be able to make sure that pensioners and seniors in Queensland are not worse off thanks to Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey.

But how will the opposition demonstrate that today? How will they do that? They will not be able to do that because they have said in the past that they are against any front-line service cuts and that they would not have downsized the Public Service. They say they do not want to deliver on asset sales. All we can assume is that they are going to increase taxes and charges, and what does that do? It increases the costs of living. Just remember that these are the people who got rid of the 8c a litre fuel subsidy—

**Mr PITT:** Point of order, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER:** What is your point of order?

**Mr PITT:** The ink on the budget is not dry yet and the Premier is not answering the question as it relates to where this money is coming from. I ask for a ruling on relevance.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Will you please take your seat? That is not a point of order.

**Mr NEWMAN:** They should listen when I make a ministerial statement. I made it very clear that we will be seeking to withhold payments to the Commonwealth to ensure that the costs that they put on to us are not passed on to Queenslanders but are passed back to the federal government. That is how we will do this. But these are the people who got rid of the 8c a litre fuel subsidy. The Leader of the Opposition is the person who cranked up public transport fares and put them through the roof. These are the people who took away the principal place of residence concessional tax treatment. These are the people who continued to back federal Labor, only yesterday, with the continued presence of the carbon tax.

## Budget

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's ministerial statement where, after just two days of pressure from the opposition on behalf of the pensioners of Queensland—

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** You don't like it!

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order!

**Ms PALASZCZUK:** I will repeat the question. My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's ministerial statement where, after just two days of pressure from the opposition on behalf of the pensioners of Queensland, the government is reversing its detrimental decision on pensioner concessions, and I ask: will the Premier now listen to the clear message from the people of Queensland and reverse his decision to sell Queensland's assets?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I am delighted to answer this question because it puts the focus on the opposition leader in just over an hour's time. What is the opposition's plan? Let us just go through it. These are the people who ran multibillion dollar deficits year after year, who racked up \$80 billion worth of debt, Labor debt, which is costing \$450,000 in interest an hour, and today they need to present a plan. They have said that they are against all of the things we have done, so today they need to articulate how they would take this state forward to a brighter future. We have a Treasurer and we have a team with a very strong plan, but those opposite to date have shown no capacity whatsoever to come up with and deliver a plan. They have said that they are against the changes that we have made and the cuts to waste in bureaucracy. They have said that they do not want to sell assets. Well, what are they going to do? Increase taxes and charges. That is probably what they will do because they have form.

Last time they took away the 8c a litre fuel subsidy. They said that they would not sell assets but they did. They said that they would be fair and reasonable in terms of taxes and charges, but what did they do? They put up public transport fares by 15 per cent three years in a row, they built dams without pipelines and pipelines without dams, they squandered over \$8 billion, and water prices went through the roof and people are still paying for that. They also made sure that the gold plating of the electricity network proceeded unabated. Why? Because there was a hotline from the ETU to the Premier's office and the Treasurer's office. That is who controlled the distribution networks in Queensland, and what has happened? Well, as a consequence of Treasurer Andrew Fraser writing a letter asking for higher returns on that gold plated network, you can see what happened to power prices.

Where have they been? They come in here today with their confected outrage, when last year they remained silent about \$103 million worth of cuts to the health budget in Queensland. They brought in an unsustainable rebate policy for solar power which again hurt people. I could go on. Today is the day though. We have listened to Queenslanders and made this change today. We have announced that we will provide relief when the Commonwealth are the ones that have caused the problem. But what will Labor's plan be today? Today the Leader of the Opposition has the spotlight on her and her colleagues—I will not even call them a team—to actually answer the questions about how, only about 10 months out from an election, they would rebuild this state.

We have a strong plan for the future. We have a budget that delivers on that and we will take this state forward to a brighter future. Clearly, today Labor has a responsibility to tell voters what they would do.

### Townsville Electorate, Budget

**Mr HATHAWAY:** My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier please outline how the budget will contribute to a bright future for my electorate of Townsville and how the government's strong plan will help to take pressure of families in North Queensland?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I thank the honourable member for the question. Indeed, it allows me to continue on with our theme that we have a plan for Townsville, we have a plan for regional Queensland and it will deliver on a brighter future for Queensland. But what will the opposition say today? Will we hear what would happen for Townsville? Will we hear how they would fund the important infrastructure going forward? If they do not want to sell some assets or sell some long-term leases on some assets, how will they fund the regional roads and hospital and school infrastructure to benefit Townsville? I encourage all members to pick up a copy of the Regional Budget Statement for Townsville, and I will table it right now.

*Tabled paper.* State Budget 2014-15: Regional Budget Statement—Townsville [\[5339\]](#).

These statements highlight the local investments that we are able to make because we have a strong plan for Queensland and Townsville. We have a record investment of \$758 million in the Townsville area for Health so that local families can get the best possible health treatment when they need it. That is an increase of \$90.9 million per year compared to Labor's last budget. There is \$41.2 million for the Townsville Hospital expansion, \$10.4 million to complete the Townsville Medium Secure Rehabilitation Unit, \$14.3 million for the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine at JCU—something we are absolutely passionate about. If I turn to Education, our \$11.8 billion Education budget means better learning, more teachers and better schools for Townsville kids. Townsville will be getting a fair share of 761 additional teachers and teacher aides that are going across this state. There was \$8 million for the schools in the Townsville region for the year 7 transition into high school. There is \$850,000 to complete the air-conditioning of Kirwan State High School.

If I turn to Police—and I know the honourable member is very excited about what has been going on with law and order in Townsville—there has been a 27 per cent decrease in property crime because we are funding more police and we have changed the law to deal with juvenile justice issues. Those opposite opposed those law changes. However, we are seeing an extra 267 police across the state, and Townsville will get its fair share. There is \$1 million for the local Water Police catamaran, \$700,000 for cameras at the Townsville watch-house and \$120,000 for the new policing hub for the city.

There are many, many things in this budget for Townsville, but it only happens because we have a strong budget, a strong plan and the ticker to take it forward. Today what will the opposition do? With 22 staff at their disposal, it is the best resourced opposition the state has ever had. What is their plan? We look forward to their comprehensive response to our strong plan for a brighter future. Clearly, they do not have one and they do not have anybody to take it forward.

### Electricity Prices

**Mr MULHERIN:** My question is directed to the Premier. Does the Premier agree with the member for Coomera, who said yesterday that his own government's electricity changes will lead to consumer anarchy and they will 'stitch up those people who are least able to protect themselves', or can the Premier guarantee that his asset sales agenda will lead to lower electricity prices in Queensland households?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I would ask you to repeat the question and—

**Mr MULHERIN:** Rephrase it?

**Madam SPEAKER:**—to take care there are no imputations in there. I did not hear the first part clearly.

**Mr MULHERIN:** In relation to the comments that the member for Coomera made yesterday that his own government's electricity changes will lead to consumer anarchy and they will 'stitch up those people who are least able to protect themselves', can the Premier guarantee that his asset sales agenda will lead to lower electricity prices in Queensland households?

**Madam SPEAKER:** I will ask the Premier to answer the question. There is a part of that question that may refer to a bill before the House. I will ask the Premier to address the part of the question that does not. I call the Premier.

**Mr NEWMAN:** Madam Speaker, I do seek your guidance on this one. As I understand, the comments were made during a committee hearing. It was all about the consideration of the bill that is before the House. I am always happy to answer the opposition's questions, flawed though they may be, but I do seek your guidance.

### Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

**Madam SPEAKER:** I take your point of order. I am advised that the comments have some relation to a committee proceeding and a bill before the House. On that basis and on that advice, I rule the question out of order.

### Growth Strategy

**Mr MINNIKIN:** My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier please explain how this government's Governing for Growth strategy is helping to grow the Queensland economy?

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the member for Chatsworth for the question because it goes to the heart of our government's strategy to get this state back on track. In February this year I tabled in the House this document, our Governing for growth: economic strategy and action plan, the overarching economic strategy for our government. It is notable that the opposition has not asked one single question about that strategy. So interested are they in economic growth that they have not asked one single question. This document was the product of a body of work involving every government department. It sets out what we have done up to that point and what our economic strategy is going forward, provides direction for the development of a range of other economic strategies, one of which I tabled this morning, the ports strategy. We are also developing economic strategies that will reflect the outcome of the Queensland Plan—the Queensland Plan that was put together by Queenslanders from all over the state—an enormous amount of work that is being shared by a whole range of people to ensure that we can drive economic growth in Queensland, that economic growth will be shared right across Queensland's regions to provide, first of all, the jobs and the business opportunities for Queenslanders and, secondly, a solution to the debt crisis that Labor left us.

The opposition has shown absolutely no interest in economic growth. The opposition Treasury spokesman sits over there and interjects on the Treasurer from time to time about growing the economy. Not one statement have they made about how they will grow the economy. Not one question have they asked about the strategies that we have developed to grow the economy, the strategies that we have developed to overcome the inertia that they built into the economy with their strategies that were all about the Coordinator-General's office. Our strategies are about reforming the planning processes; our strategies are about providing catalytic infrastructure—all of those strategies that will reverse the decline that became entrenched under the Labor government of which the opposition Treasury spokesman was a part.

Today we will have an opportunity to find out. Today when the opposition leader stands up she will be able to tell us how they are going to grow the economy, what they are going to do to address the debt, how they are going to pay back the \$85 billion worth of debt that is their responsibility. It will take more than glib interjections from the member for Mulgrave to put some detail around that. The detail of our government's plan is on the table. The detail of our government's plan is in these documents. I would suggest that some of those 22 staff of the opposition could read them and write some questions for the opposition to ask. At least it would show a shallow interest in economic development. No interest has been shown by the opposition up to this point.

*(Time expired)*

### Dams

**Mr HOPPER:** My question is also to the Deputy Premier. Recently the government announced a plan to build eight new dams and publish maps of where they may be built. Have any of the property owners been consulted, or is this just another Traveston?

**Mr SEENEY:** I thank the member for Condamine for the question. I think he is referring to a proposition that was about flood proofing Brisbane. Can I confirm that that is what the member is speaking about, the proposition that is about flood proofing Brisbane? It is, I would suggest, a worthy vision and something with which everyone in Brisbane would agree. We need to look at every opportunity to ensure that the floods we have seen in Brisbane do not happen. To build that sort of infrastructure, the first thing we need to do is find the capital. The first thing we need to do is address the debt crisis that was left by the previous Labor government. The member for Condamine—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. I am sorry to interrupt you, Deputy Premier, but there are too many interjections from my left. I warn members on my left, and I will start warning you under the standing orders. I call the Deputy Premier.

**Mr SEENEY:** Those interjections are accompanied by a manic grin which would mean that no-one would take them seriously.

In his budget documents the Treasurer clearly set out the choice that is before Queenslanders, which will see a range of assets recycled to both pay down the Labor Party's debt and free up some capital for infrastructure projects like the one that has been envisaged to try and flood proof Brisbane. My department is doing a considerable amount of work on a whole range of infrastructure projects to determine the realistic outcomes that may be derived from that sort of infrastructure, how much it might cost in reality, and whether or not it will be one of the priorities that we put forward to the people of Queensland when we seek their mandate at the next election. This is in stark contrast to the way that the previous government operated.

There are a range of choices to be made in that space as well, because the \$8.6 billion, I think it was, that the Treasurer identified certainly will not be enough to catch up on the infrastructure backlog which is the legacy of almost 20 years of Labor government. The Labor Party did not understand the necessity of a plan for properly built infrastructure. They built white elephants: western corridor pipelines and wastewater plants that are contributing nothing; desalination plants that rusted before they began; and a \$9 billion water grid. How much water is that producing for the people of Brisbane? Nil. Zero. Zilch. Nothing. Money was wasted on a whole series of infrastructure projects which were not properly planned and delivered, which were delivered in a panic, and which will represent a burden on the ratepayers of South-East Queensland for generations to come.

*(Time expired)*

### Debt Reduction

**Ms MILLARD:** My question without notice is to the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. Can the Treasurer please outline to the House how the government is building on its strong plan for a brighter future by making the strongest and smartest choices to reduce debt, and are there any alternative views?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I thank the member for Sandgate for the question. The member for Sandgate has been involved in the manufacturing industry prior to coming here, so the member has wide experience in business and knows that for any organisation to succeed, for it to be able to invest in the future and for it to be able to grow, you must have a strong plan. The 2014-15 budget is a strong plan for a brighter future. It lays out very clearly what our priorities are.

We also laid out the strongest and the smartest choices for dealing with the accumulated \$80 billion worth of debt that we were left by the Labor Party, and that is the challenge today. As I said earlier, I am looking forward to hearing what the opposition are proposing to say and what their plan is for paying down the debt and securing the state's finances, because after two and a bit years there has been no economic plan put forward by them. There have been plenty of opportunities for the shadow Treasurer to outline his plan or to even put forward one idea. The only idea he has put forward in terms of dealing with anything of economic sense was to reintroduce the Solar Bonus Scheme, that marvel of social engineering introduced by the Labor Party government that has added—

**Mr Newman:** How did that work?

**Mr NICHOLLS:** I take the interjection from the Premier. How did that work? It worked by adding \$3 billion to the cost of power bills for Queenslanders to 2027-28. Disgracefully, it worked to penalise those people who could least afford to install solar power. So those people who were doing it toughest and who did not have the money to be able to put solar panels on were paying for the middle class welfare that Labor was putting out there—for the champagne sippers and the latte set—with whom they hang around all the time in terms of making themselves feel good, but making the rest of Queenslanders pay for it.

It will be interesting to see what plan they propose to put forward, because there are only three realistic options: to increase taxes; to reduce services; or to consider the sale, lease or private equity into assets. If they chose to increase, for example, the payroll tax—as is suggested by Mr Battams of the Queensland Council of Unions, their fellow traveller—we would see 10,000 jobs lost. We know the member for South Brisbane has said there will be no increases—they are not going to reemploy people—so if they are going to reduce services, it could mean the loss of 30,000 front-line public sector jobs.

The challenge for Labor and the challenge for the opposition leader today in just under an hour's time is to tell us what their plan is, because so far it seems to be only a secret plan for more taxes.

### Sale of Public Assets

**Mr PITT:** My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to testimony from Energex, Ergon and Powerlink CEOs at last year's estimates where they revealed job losses across these organisations of more than 1,200 since March 2012 and I ask: will the Premier now confirm that these sackings were part of the government's plan to prepare these assets for privatisation?

**Mr NEWMAN:** I thank the honourable member for the question. The question is an interesting one, because one minute those opposite are talking about the high cost of electricity, and the next minute they are saying that you should not do anything to reform the companies involved.

I will say that whatever has been going on in Ergon and Energex is a matter for their independent boards and management teams and is not part of any direction from this government; I can assure honourable members of that. But again I say that this is breathtaking hypocrisy from the Australian Labor Party, because in this state they put in place an industrial relations regime where the unions were on top and in charge. Yesterday and on prior occasions we have seen how they continually do not want to deal with the fact that if you have a direct line from the ETU to the Premier's office, then bad things happen to Queenslanders like: higher electricity costs, a health care system that does not deliver and a whole range of front-line services that are not efficient or cost-effective.

**Mr Pitt:** What about privatisation?

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! Pause the clock. I warn the Manager of Opposition Business.

**Mr NEWMAN:** It is quite amusing to watch the member for Mulgrave. It is like this 'yip, yip, yip' all the way through these days. I think that he is frustrated about being in opposition because he knows that, with the lack of leadership he sees from the member from Inala, and as the days go by with no strong plan for Queensland's future from the Labor Party, he will be sitting over there for some time. I clearly hear panic in these interjections, because he asks these questions and he does not listen to the answer. He is the shadow Treasurer, but he has failed to deliver a strong alternative plan to take this state forward.

Only the other day the member for Bundamba was making an issue about electricity prices, and yet the member for Mulgrave has come in here today and asked a question which reflects the important reforms that, as Minister McArdle has pointed out, are there to take the pressure off the

cost of electricity. You cannot have it both ways. Let me explain. I will just get out some crayons and a piece of paper. The higher the cost of running Ergon and Energex, guess what? The higher the cost of electricity! Higher operational costs lead to higher electricity costs. Let me say it again: if you have higher running costs for Ergon and Energex, that will result in higher power bills for pensioners, seniors and all Queenslanders. It is really quite simple; Economics 101.

But then again if you are a child of the union movement, if all you have ever done is work for the Labor Party, if all you have ever done is get daddy's seat handed down to you like you are Labor Party royalty—if that is all you have ever done, how would you know otherwise? This team has a strong plan for this state's future, and we look forward to hearing the Labor Party's alternative plan today. Clearly there isn't one, because we have seen no sign of it for the last two and a half years.

### **Agriculture Industry, Drought Assistance**

**Mrs FRECKLINGTON:** My question is directed towards the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry. Can the minister outline what our government is doing to continue supporting farmers doing it tough due to drought?

**Dr McVEIGH:** I thank the member for the very important regional seat of Nanango for that question. I take this opportunity to congratulate the member for Nanango on her recent appointment as Assistant Minister to the Premier—an appointment that is being celebrated throughout regional Queensland. Just recently she has found out, as has the House, that there is someone who wishes to challenge her in that seat at the coming election. Of course I refer to the leader of the Katter party. I refer to the fence hopper. I refer to the temporary member for Condamine, who of course on record has been recognised, as advised by the Minister for Local Government, as having been in more parties than Paris Hilton and, I suspect, seen jumping more fences than the member for Gregory and the member for Warrego have ever seen combined. But I come back to the important question that the member for Nanango has asked.

Undoubtedly the greatest challenge to agriculture at present is the prolonged drought—affecting now 75 per cent of our state, down from 79 per cent given the recent revocations of the gulf shires of Burke, Carpentaria and Doomadgee. The LNP budget for the coming year reaffirms our strong plan to build a brighter future for agriculture beyond this drought. As the Treasurer has announced, we are again committing to a drought assistance package which includes water and freight rebates, land rent relief, financial counselling and community resilience building strategies, together with mental health support for producers and communities. This is on top of the \$31 million the Newman government provided this current financial year to support those who are doing it tough. That of course was a record spend—\$5 million more than the previous record back in 2007-08.

We are topping that up now with the pest and weeds focus given drought damage. The Newman government has been waiting for support from the federal government, and of course this week I have welcomed Canberra's allocation of further support, including \$6 million for water infrastructure in drought-hit areas and \$5.6 million for pest management. Pest animals, especially wild dogs, are wreaking havoc right across Queensland during these tough times. Next week I will travel to Longreach to chair a meeting with the local mayors, QDOG, AgForce, NRM group representatives and local graziers to discuss that program and how it needs to be rolled out. We need to achieve the biggest bang for taxpayers' dollars, so the Newman government has a strong plan. We want a bright future for agriculture, and farmers and graziers in this state know that under us they are not going to be belted and demonised like they have in the past by those opposite.

### **Unemployment**

**Ms D'ATH:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the Premier's promise to Queensland that he would deliver four per cent unemployment, and I ask: will the Premier confirm that, despite an extra 140,000 people now living here in Queensland, ABS figures show that there are currently 11,000 fewer full-time jobs in Queensland today than when the LNP was elected in 2012?

**Mr NEWMAN:** Well, what an interesting question from a former federal member, a failed federal member, a person who inflicted the greatest act of economic suicide on this nation—someone who supported the carbon tax.

**Ms D'ATH:** You don't want to talk about your record over the last 2½ years.

**Mr NEWMAN:** I am happy to talk about the track record of the former federal member for Petrie in terms of the carbon tax. Why is it that manufacturing jobs are leaving Victoria? Why is it that the value-adding mineral processing industries in this nation are being forced overseas? What is it that

the Labor Party does not understand that if you make energy more expensive, industries that use energy to make things suddenly become less competitive than industries doing the same job overseas? Why would you process aluminium? Why would you make steel in Australia? Why would you do a whole range of things when you can do it in the United States or China and it is cheaper? Why would you do that?

So the first thing we need to make this state and other parts of the Commonwealth far more viable internationally, because it is an international competition, is to see the carbon tax go. Yesterday these frauds and hypocrites here failed to support a motion calling for two things—one, for Tony Abbott to give the money back that he cut out of pensioner concessions. The other thing they were given the opportunity to vote for was to tell federal Labor, members and senators particularly, to get on and repeal the carbon tax which would have made huge cost-of-living differences to Queenslanders and also helped Queensland jobs. I say this: our target is four per cent. It was a target of four per cent over six years, and we are absolutely committed to that target. Every single day this team of people with our strong plan for a brighter future is working to get investment and jobs going in Queensland. That is what we are about every single day of the week. Many of the things that we have done to make it easier for business to do business are like changes to workers compensation that protect workers but make the premiums the lowest in Australia—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr NEWMAN:** You hear it now. The other day the member for Mulgrave was taking credit saying that its changes had delivered savings for small business. Those opposite cannot have it both ways. They want it every way. They are upside down, north, south, east and west. That is the Labor Party way. We are the only ones with a strong plan for a brighter future, and we will shortly see that in this chamber when I know very confidently the Leader of the Opposition will fail to deliver.

*(Time expired)*

### **Newman Government, 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 outline how the budget will continue to deliver on this government's strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland's tourism sector?

**Mrs STUCKEY:** It is indeed a pleasure to receive a question from my colleague. We have such a strong advocate for the people of Mudgeeraba in the honourable member who asked the question. She knows, like all of us in government, that our \$23 billion tourism industry is one of the four pillars of our economy and is a key part of a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. In Queensland tourism is everyone's business. From the grocer to the butcher to the beauty salon, everyone throughout Queensland benefits by bringing visitors to our region. Today's budget shows the Newman government's ongoing support for the tourism industry with a total of \$98.7 million for Tourism and Events Queensland. This will be used to support our very successful marketing campaigns for our destinations. It will be used to promote and secure further events, particularly the major events, that bring visitors to our great state. It will also be spent to develop world-class products and investments so that we will have more to offer than anywhere else in Australia. We will work hard with this budget towards our goal to double overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by 2020.

It is interesting to note that to date the government has allocated an additional \$49.5 million for Tourism and Events Queensland across three years—none of which was in any forward estimates when our government came to office. While the Labor government cast aside our tourism industry, burying it deep as a management unit in a megadepartment, the Newman government has created a stand-alone department and adopted a whole-of-government approach. It is wonderful today to be able to congratulate Sea World for being named in a Newspan study as Australia's most popular attraction of all time. Not only that, the Gold Coast took out three of the four top spots for the most popular attractions in Australia. That is why this government supported an intensive marketing campaign with our theme parks so that the rest of Australia knows just how fantastic these experiences are. Our \$7 million funding for RTOs will continue to support our regions. Regions are critical for us here in Queensland. We saw throughout our regions not only 100 regional events; we saw a number of major events. These events have brought altogether \$290 million towards our economy and many millions more for our regions. Some \$12.3 million has been provided over three years to extend Queensland's V8 series in Townsville, Gold Coast and Ipswich. The talented team—

*(Time expired)*

### Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements

**Mr KNUTH:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. Will the minister review the joint state and federal NDRRA funding arrangements that allow interstate companies to tender and undercut locals, leading to poor budgeting for weather and terrain, forcing them to cut corners to recover losses?

**Mr EMERSON:** I thank the member for Dalrymple for the question. In terms of the NDRRA, we are very keen to ensure that we continue the arrangements that have been in place for many years and that is that 75-25 per cent split that we have seen over many disasters. We are determined to fight to ensure that we keep that. That has been vitally important. In terms of our state recovering from events such as Yasi and other major events like Oswald and even Ita earlier this year, we will continue to do that. In terms of those negotiations, as I said, we have been very clear. I have been very clear to my counterpart in Canberra, Warren Truss, about that. I know that my good friend and colleague the Minister for Community Recovery and Resilience has also been determined to ensure that we fight to keep those arrangements in place.

In terms of recovery, can I say that we have delivered—in vast contrast to the previous government in terms of the timetable for that recovery. We have continued to work very hard to get those projects underway. As the member knows, for instance, with Oswald, there was about \$900 million of damage to road networks alone. About 12 per cent of my network was affected by Oswald. We got our contracts out quickly. As I detailed yesterday, the budget, released by the Treasurer, continues that work from the events of 2011, 2012, 2013 and the \$130 million impact from Ita as well. We will continue to do that.

Obviously, we have to work with our federal colleagues. I am always happy to have discussions about how to make that program even better to deliver for Queenslanders in their time of need and uncertainty. But again, the most important thing for us—and I am sure that the minister will back me up on this—is in terms of maintaining that 75-25 per cent split. We have been very determined to fight with them to keep that arrangement in place, because it is vitally important.

As the member for Dalrymple would have seen, in this budget across Queensland we have committed to our road network \$18 billion for our QTRIP program and \$4.8 billion just for this year in terms of QTRIP—37 per cent more than what the previous government was planning to do in the same year. As a government, we are delivering for roads, we are delivering for the whole of Queensland and we have demonstrated since coming to office that, as a department and as a government, during times of natural disaster we deliver those projects, restore communities and connections and fight for those local communities. Every cabinet minister here, including the Minister for Community Recovery and Resilience and my good friend and colleague the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, continue to deliver for those communities. We will continue to deliver for those communities. We will continue to fight and stand up for Queensland wherever that may be.

### Sport, Infrastructure

**Miss BARTON:** My question is to the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing. Can the minister please inform the House how this budget's investment in stadium and community sports related infrastructure will help attract major events, assist in the development of elite sport, create jobs and stimulate the local economies around each venue as part of the Newman government's strong plan for a brighter future?

**Mr DICKSON:** As part of the Newman government's strong budget for a bright future, my department is contributing to the development of our four-pillar economy through the ongoing investment in sports infrastructure. I have spoken at great length in this House about our great policy called Get in the Game. It is delivering great outcomes for our young people right throughout Queensland. Our government is going to invest significant amounts of money to ensure that we are at the top of sport infrastructure for elite competition and hosting major events in this great state. This financial year, we will be investing \$13.4 million into major sporting infrastructure right throughout the state of Queensland. Just in the south-east corner in our major sporting precincts, that investment returns over \$300 million in kind right throughout this great region. That impacts on the restaurants, the hotels—all of the businesses right throughout our state—and delivers great economic benefits wherever these events may be held.

I can talk about a couple of events. These are not the run-of-the-mill events that happen every day, such as the ones that I just spoke about a moment ago. I refer to the Gabba Ashes test, the State of Origin match, the British and Irish Lions and the rock concerts—Coldplay, Keith Urban,

Taylor Swift and the upcoming One Direction tour. Each of these events generates an extra \$5 million when they are held in our great city and throughout our great state. These events are creating fantastic opportunities in our great state.

We go down the M1 to the Metricon Stadium, with the Aussie rules and so forth being played down there. Those matches generate 4,000 or 5,000 visitors who come up from Victoria to see such great events being staged. Those people bring money; they bring families. They just do not stay for one day; they stay for three or four days. These events impact on one of the four pillars that we promised to deliver: tourism. Earlier, the minister spoke about the great benefits that we are deriving from tourism. These benefits just keep flowing. That is what our government is about: delivering these good outcomes right throughout this great state.

I need to touch on one great centre, the Brisbane Entertainment Centre. It is acknowledged as one of the best in the world, delivering pound for punch. But the Brisbane Entertainment Centre delivers more than just entertainment; it delivers a facility for 240,000 young people who frequent it throughout the year to play basketball or netball. Such infrastructure are great multipurpose facilities. I know that the education minister is working hard to deliver great outcomes for our young people as well by utilising those sporting fields and those BER halls that the Labor Party put in place.

We on this side of the fence have a plan. Those on that side of the fence have a plan too. Their plan is to bring back Cameron Dick, Stirling Hinchliffe, Kerry Shine, Grace Grace, Di Farmer and we are just waiting to hear that special component, Andrew Fraser. Is he coming back? Let us know the truth. Tell us in your return speech—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Dr Robinson): Order! The minister's time has expired.

**Ms Trad** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Order! The member for South Brisbane will cease interjecting.

*(Time expired)*

### **Integrated Casino and Cruise Ship Terminal**

**Dr DOUGLAS**: My question is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. The successful integrated casino and cruise ship terminal proponent, ASF China, has been sanctioned globally by the World Bank after multiple corruption and fraud investigations. I ask: can the Deputy Premier guarantee to the parliament that this proponent is a suitable company to be selected for such a proposal?

**Mr SEENEY**: I thank the member for Gaven for the question. What I can guarantee the parliament and guarantee all Queenslanders, as I have done a number of times, is that the probity surrounding this process will be very significant and very rigorous. We have put in place a process that is about identifying operators who can contribute to making Queensland's tourism industry competitive on the world stage. We have identified the emerging product in the world tourism market and we have facilitated its development here in Queensland to complement the existing tourist attractions that have attracted tourists to Queensland for many years.

The process that will now be conducted will, as I said at the press conference when I announced it, leave no secrets untold. The proponents in that process will be subject to a probity process, to a scrutiny process, that will be conducted by not only my department but by the department overseen by the Attorney-General, the Department of Justice and Attorney-General—DJAG, which has the ultimate responsibility for deciding whether or not particular proponents are suitable holders of a gaming licence.

**Mr Newman**: What about some scrutiny of the Palmer party?

**Mr SEENEY**: I think the Premier raises a very good question. The leader of the Palmer party asked a question in here about probity, scrutiny and appropriate actions. He should direct some questions to his party leader about whether his behaviour is appropriate, whether his behaviour has been appropriate in relation to his partnership with Chinese trading partners. He should raise some questions about what his behaviour is doing to the relationship between our country and China, our state and China. He should raise some questions about his leader's actions in trying to influence our government in decision making that would have been entirely inappropriate.

The fact that our government was not prepared to engage in that entirely inappropriate decision making is the very reason why he is the leader of the parliamentary party for the Palmer United Party. The Palmer United Party exists simply because our government would not engage in the sort of

sleazy deals that Clive Palmer wanted us to do. We would not engage in that sort of process and that is why the member for Gaven now leads a party that will be responsive to Clive Palmer's money, that has sold itself to Clive Palmer money like we would not do.

**Madam SPEAKER:** The Deputy Premier's time has expired. I call the member for—

**Mr Mulherin** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Order! I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition under 253A. I was speaking and I was calling the member. I call the member for Hervey Bay.

### **Electricity Prices, Rural and Regional Queensland**

**Mr SORENSEN:** My question without notice is to the Minister for Energy and Water Supply. Can the minister advise the House how the government is supporting those in rural and regional Queensland by ensuring they pay the same price for electricity as those in the south-east corner?

**Mr McARDLE:** I do want to thank the member for Hervey Bay for the question, a member who is well regarded in the region and well known for fighting for the issues of people who reside in Hervey Bay and across that region as well—a strong member, more of which we need in this House at this point in time, as opposed to the Labor Party who stand by and will not support motions in relation to removal of the carbon tax and also requesting the federal government to put back into play \$54.2 million in concessions.

I make the point that the situation in relation to electricity prices in Queensland is laid squarely at the feet of the Beattie and Bligh governments: their failure to plan, their failure to put in place proposals and policies that assist Queenslanders get cheaper and better prices, the gold plating that took place, the carbon tax they supported, the RET and the Solar Bonus Scheme that has added hundreds of dollars to people's power bills right across the state for many years. That is what we have inherited and what we are taking apart piece by piece to stabilise power prices and get better outcomes. In addition to that, what we have done in the budget being debated in the House is put into the Ergon sector over \$650 million so people in that sector do not pay more for their power than people down here in the south-east corner.

Other members have raised the interview by the member for Mulgrave on Patrick Condren's show last Friday. Can I tell members that when I heard that he was going to be on, we gathered around the radio, we took out our pens and papers and we thought, 'This is it. This is it. We are now going to, in fact, get some gospel and some policy from the Labor Party as to what they were going to do.' You can imagine we were all poised, pen above paper, looking, waiting, contemplating, hoping, and what happened? He was given two minutes to outline his policy and his first announcement was that he was going to deal with solar power—put back solar power. Can I say to the people in this House and across the state that this mob is now costing people in this state \$3 billion in feed-in tariffs by 2028 and they want to increase it. They are going to put back in the 44c FIT. You can imagine the shock horror when we realised that this is the policy they have in regard to electricity: up the prices, up the FIT, make it dearer and dearer. In 2015-16 we will pay \$276 on our power bill per annum because of the 44c FIT. The Labor policy is this: bring it back in, bring the 44c back in, and raise it even more. How many more billions of dollars will this incur to Queenslanders in the years ahead? How many more billions of dollars will people in this state pay because this government is—

*(Time expired)*

### **Energex**

**Mrs MILLER:** My question is to the Premier. I refer to the 3,400 staff who work for Energex and I ask: will the Premier guarantee that the jobs of each and every one of these workers will be safe when this vital electricity asset is privatised?

**Mr NEWMAN:** Interesting question from the member for Bundamba, but first let us just look at the allegiances here. We know the member for Bundamba is a fully funded member of this parliament by virtue of the CFMEU which has a strong alliance with the ETU. We have seen the Leader of the Opposition fail to stand up against ETU and CFMEU thuggery—inappropriate behaviour. We had an ETU thug yesterday screaming obscenities at—

**Mrs Miller** interjected.

**Mr NEWMAN:** I have female members of staff who were there listening to the bad language outside the parliament. There were a number of witnesses. I am very happy for the media to follow this one down the rabbit hole. We know who the member for the ETU was, but we have heard no

condemnation from the Leader of the Opposition because she has no position, no plans and no ticker for leadership. She would not deal with the member for Bundamba after the outrageous comments about concentration camps.

But I digress. In relation to Ergon and Energex, an assertion was made in the question about privatisation. Let us be very clear about what we are doing. We are putting forward a proposal for Queenslanders to consider prior to an election where we are saying that the private sector would become the partners of the people of Queensland but the people of Queensland would continue to own 100 per cent of the equity of these companies.

I will contrast that to the member for Bundamba and the member for Mulgrave, the member for Mackay and the member for Inala, who all sat on this side of the chamber only a few short years ago, who went to an election saying, 'Trust us.' 'We won't sell any assets', is what they said. But no, no. After the election, just like the 8c a litre fuel subsidy, away went that sort of short-term political promise. Away it went.

This government is being upfront. We are putting out a document, which I encourage every Queenslanders to have a look at. It is the strongest and smartest choice. It is downloadable from the internet and it says very clearly what we are proposing to do in relation to Ergon and Energex and Powerlink. It says it there in black and white. Can you find a Labor Party equivalent document prior to the 2009 election? No. Because this was the attitude, and I quote from Mythbusters, after the 2009 election, when they chose to go and sell the assets. Get this, this is what Curtis Pitt, the member for Mulgrave, said: 'Labor has made a choice'. Get it? Labor. Labor has made a choice, not the people of Queensland. Well, the people of Queensland do get an opportunity to make a choice, I say to the member for Bundamba. They are getting to have a choice.

**Mrs Miller:** You'll be out; can't wait.

**Madam SPEAKER:** I warn the member.

**Mr NEWMAN:** What hubris is in that statement from the member for Bundamba about us being out. I will say this: I think the people of Queensland will be really taking a keen interest in a government with a strong plan for a brighter future, more importantly with the integrity and the opportunity to have a vote on the matter.

### Local Council Grants

**Mr RICKUSS:** My question is to the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience. The 2014-15 budget is a strong plan for a brighter future for regional communities. Can the minister outline what grants and subsidies are available to local councils as part of this strong plan to support regional communities?

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Thank you very much. The short answer to the member's question is in two areas: infrastructure and flood mitigation. How appropriate to get a question from the member for Lockyer because that region knows the benefit of delivering on both of those key areas.

The member asks about how we plan to deliver this. We plan to deliver it by working with councils. But when you talk about good planning, good planning is not just about making good decisions, it is about making timely decisions. In the two key areas of funding, one is the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program and the other is pulling together three different flood programs. I can tell you one of the most important things that need to be done and that is to actually deliver those programs so that councils have time to get on with the job and deliver it.

Let me contrast that to what we once saw from those opposite. In the 2011-12 budget, the successful Local Government Grants and Subsidies programs were announced in February-March of the end of that financial year. How on earth can you expect a council to deliver in the remaining three months of a financial year? That is absurd. It was kept back, held back as some sort of pork-barrelling mechanism. If I can make a commitment to this parliament it is this: those councils, when they start their financial year on 1 July, will know the contribution they will get from the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program and they will know the contribution they are going to get from flood mitigation and they will be given the strongest possible assistance to deliver in that financial year, because we owe that to our communities.

What have we done in recent times with things such as local government grants and subsidies? I will mention a few examples. One is the Avenue of Honour, and it is great to have here the honourable members for Barron River and Cairns. I acknowledge that they are not the geographical local members for that project, but they did a mighty job in lobbying for it. I commend the

partnership with council in delivering something very special. The Jericho Drive-In Theatre: how very special it was to save a little piece of regional Queensland. The CF White Memorial Oval in Stanthorpe: it is great to have the local member here. We watched an evening game of cricket under the lights, which was a wonderful opportunity to spend time in a great part of the state.

In terms of mitigation, this year a record \$50 million will be spent. I know that will not flood proof Queensland, but, boy oh boy, it will do so much better than what we have seen over the past decade, when all we heard were excuses about why we could not do those sorts of projects. Already in places such as Roma and St George the premiums have fallen. That is action. That is lowering the cost of living. It is what happens when a government is prepared to back a local council and gets on with delivering things that matter to regional communities. Into the future we will be hamstrung by the whopping \$80 billion debt and that is why we do have tough choices to make and we have to work together and deliver as a community. I assure the House that, every step of the way, we will be working with local councils because together there is a brighter future.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Question time has finished.

## SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### School Group Tours

**Madam SPEAKER:** Before calling the Clerk, I wish to acknowledge schools visiting today. We have Palm Beach State School from the electorate of Burleigh and St Rita's Catholic Primary School, Victoria Point, in the electorate of Redlands.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### APPROPRIATION BILL

### REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill resumed from 3 June (see p. 1949), Appropriation Bill resumed from 3 June (see p. 1958) and Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill resumed from 3 June (see p. 1959).

### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

**Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (11.01 am): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.01 am): Today I rise to respond to the 2014 state budget. I rise on behalf of those Queenslanders who have been betrayed by the Newman LNP government in yet another budget of broken promises, a budget of betrayal. I rise on behalf of the 20,000 workers who were sacked after being told their jobs were safe. I rise on behalf of the job seekers in this state who were told unemployment would drop to four per cent. I rise on behalf of every single Queenslanders who receives an electricity bill and was told it would get lower. I rise on behalf of the pensioners, the most vulnerable group in our community; the people who this government treated worst of all in its budget. I rise on behalf of all Queenslanders who potentially will see their precious state assets squandered, despite being told that the LNP had a plan to pay down debt. I rise on behalf of those who do not have a voice or whose voices are not heard under this government and who have been sadly let down by its string of broken promises.

This week families are sitting around their kitchen tables, wondering just how they will absorb the pain of this Newman government. How will they pay their skyrocketing electricity bills? What happens if they lose their jobs? Will there be another job? Will they lose the roof over their heads? What else could they or their kids do without, so that the electricity bill can be paid? New school shoes? Books? The school excursion? Even the simple treats like a trip to the movies or the yearly family holiday at the beach are now fast becoming out of reach. Those are choices that families will be forced to make, thanks to the Newman government.

This government simply does not understand the pressures families face. It does not understand the concerns and the problems of those whom they force to sit around kitchen tables and make those sorts of hard choices. It would be good for them to visit a few family homes and sit down

with families at their kitchen tables to hear their concerns, but they will not. The Newman government does not understand that, when things get tough for families, a decent government does not kick them when they are down. Under the Newman LNP government, big business comes first, families come last and anyone unfortunate enough to be looking for a job in this state does not stand a chance.

In this budget, our most vulnerable seniors were dealt the heaviest blow. Pensioners turning off lights, stoves and heaters in winter, sitting in the cold and the dark: that is the bright future the LNP had in mind for them. In Inala yesterday, Evie, Glenda and Pam told me how they would struggle to make ends meet. Some pensioners already turn off all power to save on their bills because of the broken promises of this government. Is that a bright future? Is that the way to treat people who have worked hard, paid taxes and, in many cases, put their lives on the line in wars when our country asked them to? I know all members are being told in no uncertain terms how pensioners feel about this government. One pensioner, Ralph from Marsden, called in to my office to say that he felt betrayed by the attacks on pensioner concessions, betrayed by this government and its budget of betrayal.

Today we see a government that was forced by the opposition and the backlash from the community to change a decision it should never have made in the first place. Yesterday, the cuts to concessions were an essential part of this Treasurer's financial strategy. Today, they are gone. What does that say about this Treasurer, this government and their competence to manage the state? This government has disappointed so many, including Queensland seniors. Pensioners will never forget how this government treated them. The cuts to the pensioner concession should never have been in this budget in the first place.

Young Queenslanders who are victims of this government's indifference to our state's youth unemployment crisis will also be disappointed at a budget that does nothing for them. I think the vision of a bright future that the LNP spin doctors are trying to peddle through their taxpayer funded propaganda campaigns might be somewhat blurred. Unfortunately, the third budget of the Newman LNP government is like its two predecessors: a budget of broken promises and twisted priorities. Let us recap some of the things we have seen from the previous two budgets: massive cuts to health and education funding; mass sackings of up to 20,000 people; nurses and teachers losing their jobs; cuts to front-line health services delivered by community groups; cuts to funding for 500 not-for-profit groups in the community services sector alone; more than 400 positions abolished in our TAFE system; cuts totalling \$3 billion over four years in the health system; 4,000 job cuts in hospitals and other parts of our health system; jobs gone across our state in RoadTek, QBuild, Goprint, QFleet and other government business units; attacks on our public housing tenants; the scrapping of tenant advisory services; and who can forget the elderly residents forced to move out of Eventide and the Moreton Bay Aged Care Unit? Labor will never let Queensland forget their legacy.

All of those cuts to services and massive job losses cut a swathe through our regional communities and regional economies. People shut their wallets, they stopped spending or they left town or even Queensland to look for work elsewhere. I have been travelling the length and breadth of Queensland, visiting numerous regional centres across our state: Cairns, Townsville, Charleville, Mount Isa, Bundaberg, Gympie. In all of them I have heard firsthand accounts of the impacts of the Newman government's cuts. This is a budget from a government that puts a higher priority on funding its self-serving propaganda campaigns than on softening the blow for pensioners hit by the loss of concessions. The Newman government should have ended its wasteful ad campaign and then used the funds to ease the burden on pensioners. Up to \$20 million from this advertising campaign could have been used in this budget to help restore concessions and the rest could have come from the \$44 million allocated for funding the government's alcohol fuelled violence initiative. If industry carried that cost, seniors would never have lost the concessions they deserve. There is a basic flaw in the allocation of those funds anyway, because that money does not tackle the central issue of trading hours for licensed venues. If the government was not so arrogant and actually did what the community wants, which is to cut trading hours, as Labor has proposed, alcohol fuelled violence would be reduced and such a large sum would not be needed.

This is a budget from an out-of-touch government, and from a Premier and a Treasurer with a do-nothing philosophy of government. This is a government of no vision. They see government services as chattels to sell off so that their mates can make a profit, not as sources of vital support for those who need them. In this budget we see a continuation of that destructive approach and the continuing fallback on that old chestnut, the blame game, even though this is the third LNP budget,

and this Premier, this Treasurer and this government are 100 per cent responsible for the state we find ourselves in. Remember, Premier, you pledged to take responsibility after two years. Your two years is well and truly up.

Labor rejects the government's approach. Labor first and foremost believes that budgets should help people, not hurt people. Above all, we believe in jobs—real jobs—because it is real and fairly rewarded jobs that help power our economy. Having a job helps families meet the cost of living. It is jobs that keep our state and our regional economies growing. A job gives every man and woman dignity. We believe in generating jobs for the future, not casting people adrift and aside. The LNP has proven that it can only destroy jobs. It has no capacity to create new jobs and no desire to protect existing jobs.

The LNP's slash-and-burn approach to jobs and their desire to drive down wages and conditions has been seen to fail in the past two years. This lazy, do-nothing government thinks of workers as merely numbers to be reduced. They see wages as burdens to be shrunk. They see workers' rights as impediments to profits to be wiped away, regardless of the human toll. Labor in the past, today and in the future stands for jobs and a fair go for those in work, those who want to work and those who will be trying to enter the workforce in the future. We believe in hope and opportunity.

Where this budget should deliver vision, it delivers arrogance. Where it should support those in need, this budget increases hardship. Where it should ask for collective effort, it increases the burden on the few. And where it should chart a course towards job creation, growth and prosperity, it rewards big business, is indifferent to small business and leaves individuals and families to flounder.

Under this budget, Queenslanders will get a surplus and a deficit: a surplus of arrogance and a deficit of fairness. They get higher taxes, a higher cost of living—especially higher power bills—but with fewer jobs, and asset sales they simply do not want. They have to tolerate an arrogant government breaking key promises made just a little more than two years ago. They must watch a self-indulgent government pile the pain, cast the burden onto those who cannot fight back while using every opportunity to raid the public purse to look after itself. This is in stark contrast to the way the people of Queensland would like to see their future. Labor stands with them every step of the way.

On the important measure of jobs, the government has failed. It inherited a jobless rate of 5.5 per cent, promised to head to four per cent over six years, but has most recently delivered a rate of 6.3 per cent. That is above even the levels seen in the global financial crisis. The 2014 budget shows unemployment predicted to be 5.25 per cent at the end of the six-year period—another fail; another broken promise.

As Queensland families know, the best way to deal with the Premier's broken promise on the cost of living is to have a job and to keep a job. The independent ABS data shows that there are 11,000 fewer full-time jobs in Queensland in April this year than there were when this Newman LNP government was elected. That is 11,000 fewer full-time jobs in this state after more than two years in office.

Under the Newman government, youth unemployment has risen from 11.9 per cent at the election to 13.4 per cent in April this year. These are the facts that the Premier and the Treasurer cannot run away from. Instead of accepting that youth unemployment is a problem, this government prefers to put its head in the sand.

Unlike the LNP, Labor stands for jobs. We will not stand by while workers are left on the scrap heap by the uncaring and arrogant Newman government. We will not stand by while the most vulnerable members of our community are abandoned by the LNP. We will not stand by while our state is run into the ground by the failures of those opposite. Labor has always been the champion of the worker and Labor always will be the champion of the worker. We will stand up for families. We will stand up for jobs. We will stand up for all Queenslanders. Labor believes in the dignity of work.

In fact, Labor believes that a government's role is to encourage and develop industries that provide meaningful and sustainable job opportunities for workers. In Queensland's case, this means creating an environment where collectively, as a community, we harness our strengths to make the most of our competitive advantages. In doing so, we provide Queenslanders with hope for a positive future.

Today, I announce that Queensland Labor will establish Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory authority providing advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning. This new industry led authority will have a strong, independent and commercially focused board with a mix of industry leaders, experts in market and regulatory economics, as well as accounting or financial management, and employee representatives. Jobs Queensland is all about getting government refocused on jobs and job creation.

Under a Labor government, the state would again take responsibility for supporting the long-term unemployed, young people and our Indigenous population to achieve the dignity and necessity of work. Unlike the LNP, we recognise that job creation is central to improving the state's financial position. Jobs Queensland will work directly with relevant industry bodies. Proper workforce planning will allow skills providers to offer courses to meet future employment opportunities and for regions to have local workers skilled and able to capitalise on job opportunities so that the use of drive-in drive-out and fly-in fly-out workers can be minimised.

In the past decade or so Queensland has experienced a major transition in its economy, broadening its base and shifting towards a knowledge based economy that supports highly skilled workers in well paid jobs. Labor wants to continue to harness these opportunities so that Queensland workers have access to the new, high-tech jobs of the future. It was a Labor vision that modernised Queensland's economy and it will be a Labor vision that fosters the potential of our economy into the future.

That is why Labor has announced its Advance Queensland—Jobs for the Future initiative, which will be a key part of our overall jobs plan. The LNP says we should only rely on our traditional strengths—the so-called four pillars—and has no vision apart from our continued role as a farm, a quarry and a beach. But the LNP's policy fails to recognise that these industries comprise less than half of Queensland's economic activity.

The Newman government has no answers for the rest of the economy. It also fails to recognise that we need to diversify our economy to provide sustainable employment prospects for working people. Furthermore, the LNP has only one goal—overcoming its disastrous performance of the past 26 months to try to win a second term in office. Its vision does not extend beyond March 2015.

Advance Queensland—Jobs for the Future is part of Labor's alternative vision for Queensland: a vision that includes providing the catalyst for nurturing the knowledge based jobs of the future. Labor is focused on creating long-term, sustainable jobs for our children and grandchildren. Advance Queensland looks beyond the three-year political cycle and aims to support research and innovation that will help improve our economy for many years to come. It is designed to attract and retain the best and brightest minds here in Queensland. Advance Queensland is unashamedly focused on creating jobs and shows that Labor stands for jobs. The LNP stands for job cuts.

Labor will put an end to the brain drain in this state caused by the cuts of the Newman and Abbott governments to research and innovation. We will work together with leaders in industry and our universities to identify and promote research and emerging industries in engineering, life sciences, agriculture and science. In addition, research fellowships will form a significant part of that effort.

Since flagging Advance Queensland last year, the opposition has held consultation with research leaders and industry, including a roundtable and other discussions. I have been out on the ground visiting several of our world-class research institutes, including QIMR Berghofer and the Queensland Brain Institute. I have seen firsthand the groundbreaking work being undertaken by both home-grown scientists and many from overseas who have come to take part in our outstanding Queensland research projects. Through this consultation, we received worthwhile and insightful feedback about future directions for research and innovation in our state. Labor will talk to Queenslanders about this exciting vision for Queensland's future and finalise this policy with their input.

Labor recognises the need for greater investment in research and innovation. So do others who appreciate the changing jobs market which young Queenslanders in particular will need to navigate. Nobel prize-winning Australian immunologist Professor Peter Doherty—a former Australian of the Year—has made his views clear on social media in recent weeks. In response to the disastrous 2014 federal budget, he said many areas on research will be 'even more underfunded'. The fear is this move will give the Abbott government an excuse not to fund medical research itself or other areas of research and innovation.

Respected Australian scientist Professor David Sinclair, a world-renowned geneticist at the Harvard Medical School, whom I met last week, made the following comment while he was visiting Australia—

What we lack ... is constant backing by the government. In the US, the funding is at a much higher level per GDP and the funding is more constant ... We know that we get back \$2 for every \$1 invested in science. And, if you end up having a daughter who has leukaemia, I think skipping a coffee or a beer occasionally would be a reasonable price to pay for a cure.

Last week I attended the Australian Medical Research Society Awards where the point was made that in our lifetime we will see more scientific breakthroughs than the world has seen to date. Over our lifetime we will see a revolution in our understanding of genetics. Labor believes we must be part of that future. We cannot be left behind. We need to be at the forefront. If the LNP will not listen to that feedback, perhaps they should listen to their own Chief Scientist, who in the 2013 *Health of Queensland Science* report said—

Queensland investment in R&D is low by national and international standards. We should consider investing a higher percentage of our Gross State Product ... in R&D by 2020.

Unfortunately, the arrogant LNP government has refused to listen to the experts' advice. Research and innovation has not been spared the slash-and-burn approach of the Newman LNP government. Funding for Innovation and Science Development Services within the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts was cut from \$126 million in 2012-13 to \$67 million in 2013-14.

The LNP has released a Science and Innovation Action Plan, but it consists mostly of existing activities within government departments and the continuation of projects initiated by Labor. It contained some new funding for fellowships and partnerships, but these total only \$8.75 million to be spent over three years—and do not make up for the massive cuts to research and innovation over the past two years. Labor does not agree with the LNP's approach. I know that Queensland has the potential to make things, not just extract things.

Labor will work to build a strong, productive and diverse Queensland economy with strong public finances where Queenslanders can reach their potential for greater prosperity. The Advance Queensland initiative will reinvigorate research and innovation in this state to help create the knowledge based jobs of the future. It will attract and retain the brightest minds to Queensland to be at the forefront of discovery. Queensland has a choice: a future of high-tech jobs and a rising standard of living, or a poorer future with less skilled jobs and lower wages. Our efforts must also ensure young Queenslanders are encouraged to be part of this exciting future through the promotion of science courses in our schools.

In 2012 the Newman government showed what little regard it holds for jobs when it scrapped the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program that funded a range of training schemes at a cost of just \$90 million a year. Skilling Queenslanders for Work was abolished just days before an independent analysis showed it returned almost \$8 to the community for every dollar it cost to run. That is because it put people in jobs where they did not need welfare support and were contributing through their taxes and their own spending to the health of the economy.

Under the former government, the program helped 57,000 people into a job. But once again a short-sighted and vindictive LNP decision to cut the program flies in the face of logic and the facts. One of my first commitments I made to the people of Queensland was that Labor would refresh and return the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program as soon as we are returned to government. This program means too much to too many people to be cut. Young people struggling to get a job firstly need hope; then they need skills. Labor's Skilling Queenslanders for Work has been shown to give them both, which is why it is so important to be reinstated.

As part of that, Labor has a Ready for Work policy to assist school leavers into work and build on the success of Skilling Queenslanders for Work. By working with local P&C groups and other organisations we will give young job seekers the practical tools they need to seek work—basics such as CV preparation, interview skills and where to look for jobs, plus practical assistance on how to apply for work. Assistance for these young people will also be provided to help them access literacy and numeracy programs for adults or other services already in place, if required.

Labor also has a policy to provide employers with an extra payroll tax rebate of 25 per cent on the wages of all apprentices and trainees. This is on top of the current situation where the wages of apprentices and trainees are not subject to payroll tax, so employers engaging apprentices and trainees will see savings on their current payroll tax assessments. Effectively, this policy provides employers with a 125 per cent rebate for apprentices and trainees. That is a plan to help business employ young people and skill up our workforce for the future.

The 2014 budget has been delivered against a background of more than two years of broken promises. Before the 2012 election the LNP said it had all the answers and all the plans to stimulate the economy, create jobs and cut the cost of living. The current Treasurer said before the election he

had a plan to cut the price of electricity. He said he had a plan for economic growth without the need for asset sales. The Premier said he had a plan for a four per cent jobless rate. What happened to them? We have never seen any of those plans.

The Premier said in his *Contract with Queensland* he would cut the cost of living. We have seen a broken promise for ongoing savings of \$80 a year on water bills for all Queensland households. After the election that became a one-off rebate just for the south-east corner. The Premier said he had a plan to freeze car rego, but after the election said it did not cover CTP, which every vehicle owner knows is part of their rego bill. Queenslanders know that when the LNP says it 'has a plan' it means it has a plan not to honour its promises. It means a plan to cut jobs and services, and make life tougher for those it promised to lend a hand.

After the 2012 state election and the 2013 federal poll, voters know only too well the LNP cannot be trusted. They know not to believe anything the LNP says. We saw that trust betrayed in the first Abbott budget. We again saw it betrayed in the third budget of the Newman government. The first Newman budget was all about sacking people, taking away their jobs and cutting front-line services. They sacked up to 20,000 government workers because they needed to find the money for their unfunded election promises that totalled \$4 billion—more than double the cost of promises made by Labor.

In the first Newman budget, front-line services were slashed and Queensland recorded its worst result for jobs growth in more than two decades. The second Newman government budget delivered only more broken promises on the cost of living and higher taxes. It increased taxes on a family of four by \$1,000 a year, including the emergency management levy and hikes to insurance duty. And those higher taxes on insurance came from a Treasurer who had previously described such imposts as 'a tax on misery' because of their impact on those who are at risk or those who have suffered from natural disasters. Now we have the third budget of broken promises—this time delivering more asset sales. They are asset sales Queenslanders said very clearly in 2012 they do not like, they do not want and they do not support.

Recently we have seen amateur dramatics by the Premier and Treasurer as they pretend to be surprised at the hatchet job Tony Abbott's budget did on jobs, services, low-income Queenslanders and state grants. Why would anyone in the Queensland LNP be surprised when Tony Abbott has simply been following the Campbell Newman blueprint? In fact, as far back as August last year the Premier was urging Tony Abbott to make the sorts of cuts he had already inflicted on Queensland.

The Premier's first two budgets increased unemployment and debt while putting the economy to sleep. This is another budget that fails to manage the economy in the interests of working people. It is important to reflect on what the Premier said in February of this year: 'It is going to be a great year because my firm view is that it is a year it all comes together for Queensland.' Queenslanders know that it is not 'coming together'; it is falling apart and Queenslanders know who is to blame.

After more than two years and three budgets, this Newman LNP government is still not listening to Queenslanders. After the Redcliffe by-election the Premier said that he would listen more, but just like other promises that one has been broken, too. Take, for instance, the message that has come through loud and clear in the LNP's wasteful and blatantly political Strong Choices self-promotion campaign. Even after squandering more than \$6 million in supposedly scarce taxpayers' funds, the Newman government simply ignores the feedback it has been given.

For the benefit of the Premier and the Treasurer, let me summarise that feedback: no asset sales. It is typical of this government that it will ignore the voices of voters and try to ram asset sales down their throats and will not hesitate to raid the public purse to help it do so. If this government were truly listening to Queenslanders, if they had not already made up their mind, then they would not be continuing with their plan for a mass asset sell-off in this third budget of broken promises.

Even a cursory look at the Treasurer's third budget shows an indisputable deterioration in Queensland's economic position since the LNP was elected. Despite the Treasurer saying there are no new taxes in the 2014 state budget, Queenslanders will be paying more. Like the first two budgets of the Newman government, the 2014 state budget lifts the overall tax burden on Queenslanders. Taxation per person has increased by \$73 from last year's budget or \$292 for the average family of four. Taxation per person is now \$330 per person higher than when Labor left office. This means that taxes for the average family of four have now gone up by \$1,320 under the Newman government from \$2,271 under Labor to \$2,601 in this budget. That is from a party that promised to save families money.

The Premier and the LNP told Queenslanders before the 2012 election that they had plans to boost the state's economy, generate growth and throw the state 'open for business'. The 2014 state budget proves there never were any such plans. It shows growth at three per cent compared with more than four per cent under Labor; business investment at minus-20 per cent in 2014-15; and private investment expected to contract by 11.25 per cent in 2014-15. A six per cent growth figure is projected for 2015-16, which is almost entirely from a 22.5 per cent lift in overseas exports reflecting the ramp-up of the LNG export industry. Let me remind the government and every member in this House that this is an industry initiated and fostered by former Labor governments. The only salvation in this Budget, the only vision for the future, is the one inherited from Labor—the one they opposed in opposition: the LNG industry.

Despite promising to seek a mandate for asset sales, this Newman government has already sold \$11 billion in assets without voter approval. We have seen schools, TAFEs, strategic hospital land, office buildings and Queensland Motorways to name but a few. This is the main reason the Treasurer can parade around with a lower projection for peak debt, because he has already broken his pre-election promise not to sell assets without a mandate. The Treasurer has already been caught out over the advertising spend on his political propaganda which has been revealed as close to \$12 million, not \$6 million. We are hearing rumours that it is closer to \$20 million.

Despite this desperate advertising spend and the misleading political spin saturating our televisions, radios, newspapers, and websites, Queenslanders still told the Treasurer that they do not want asset sales. The only option they were offered was 'private funding' of electricity and this was only because there was no mention on the website that this is a model for privatisation. Poll after poll show Queenslanders overwhelmingly oppose privatisation. It is clear that this arrogant Newman LNP government has made up its mind on asset sales and it is clear that they still are not listening to Queenslanders.

Unlike the Newman government, Labor in government would deliver a measured approach to paying down state debt. We listened to Queenslanders after the last election: they do not want their assets sold off. The Treasurer has already admitted that his proposed asset sales will not return Queensland to a AAA rating. His proposal is not a fix. It is nothing more than a short-term sugar hit to fund LNP election promises. It is not a long-term plan for structural reform. It is important to remember that the LNP said they had a plan to pay down debt while opposing assets before the last election. They never released that plan and now they have total state debt on track to reach \$82 billion after already selling \$11 billion in assets without a mandate. Asset sales are the only plan the Newman government has for debt. The 2014 budget shows a blow-out in the fiscal deficit of \$1.9 billion compared with the previous Labor government's projections in 2013-14 and another \$1 billion blow-out in 2014-15. After racking up two larger fiscal deficits, this Treasurer is now telling us that he must sell off Queensland's income-earning assets; that we must hand away a long-term revenue source for our state.

Government owned businesses in Queensland deliver a return of more than \$2 billion a year for the taxpayer after servicing the payments on the \$32 billion in debt they hold. The LNP's plan is to lower this self-supporting debt by selling government businesses that cover their debt costs through charges, such as the charges at the Port of Townsville or Gladstone. I have been to those cities and met the local residents. They do not want their port sold because they know the next steps will be cutbacks on conditions and cutbacks on jobs. Those types of cuts then have a ripple effect throughout the local economy and community as people go elsewhere and fewer people spend locally. This government does not understand regional Queensland.

Meanwhile, this government has allowed debt that is not self-supporting—called general government debt—to rise by \$12.8 billion. When Labor left office, Queensland had the lowest general government net debt in the country at negative \$3.2 billion. That is the debt position of assets that are not self-supporting while factoring in the assets we own. This debt measure is now approaching \$11 billion under the Newman government. It is the same debt measure referred to by the Treasurers of Victoria, Western Australia and New South Wales in their budget speeches. But you will not see reference to general government net debt in the Queensland Treasurer's budget speech because this Treasurer wants to talk about gross debt including government owned businesses to push the LNP's case for a mass asset sell-off.

The LNP's asset sales approach will only lead to a higher cost of living from higher charges in order to fund election promises. The revenues from the businesses sold will be lost for future generations. This is not a strategy for structural reform of the budget; it is a political strategy tailored to keep this arrogant Premier in power by providing him with a slush fund to buy his way back into

office. Labor's plan will involve keeping these assets in public hands and using the returns they deliver to lower general government debt and invest in new infrastructure across the state. We will be releasing a comprehensive plan ahead of the next state election to pay down the increase in general government debt under the Newman government.

As I outlined earlier, the LNP's Strong Choices propaganda campaign is all about moving the goalposts on their commitment to pay down debt. The LNP went to the election saying that they would pay down Labor's debt. They did not commit to having a lower debt projection than Labor—that was not the promise, as much as they try to spin it now. Under the Newman government, debt has not been paid down; in fact it has increased by \$13.8 billion. Despite all their hysteria, they never breathe a word about what the former government's budget strategy delivered. The government has quite intentionally attempted to mislead the people of Queensland with horror stories—not to mention a taxpayer funded Strong Choices advertising campaign—around Queensland's fiscal position. It has been fuelled by two years of over-the-top rhetoric, including the Premier's internationally embarrassing comments comparing Queensland to Spain.

If you listened only to the Premier, the Treasurer and other ministers, you would think that the former government borrowed money and just tore it up or set it on fire. They never mention the huge intergenerational infrastructure projects Labor built right across this state. During the Redcliffe by-election, the Premier was happy to tout the Moreton Bay Rail Link but I did not hear him objecting to the debt that funds that project. I have not heard him decry the debt that has seen the building of the world-class Queensland Children's Hospital and the Gold Coast University Hospital or the extensions to the Mackay Base Hospital, the Cairns Base Hospital and the Rockhampton Base Hospital. I have not heard the transport minister congratulate the former government for borrowing to build the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project. He is happy enough to ride on it, show it off and smile for the cameras but he cannot acknowledge who actually committed to the project. I definitely did not hear government ministers acknowledging the borrowings used to build the water grid when that infrastructure was used to produce clean drinking water during the recent floods. Without it, Australia's third largest city could have potentially run out of drinking water.

They also never mention the jobs these major projects created or saved in the global financial crisis. Yet LNP ministers are happy to attend the openings and cut the ribbons on these projects which they never would have built. In all the pictures of LNP ministers and backbenchers opening facilities or cutting ribbons on Labor projects across the state, I cannot remember once reading about them condemning the former government for borrowing funds to build those projects. The fact is that Labor borrowed to build and to create or save jobs in the global financial crisis. The alternative was to stand still and do nothing. And if Labor stopped, Queensland would have stopped. That would have led to skyrocketing unemployment, regional economies crashing and an infrastructure deficit that would be hurting us to this day. Queenslanders are reaping the benefits, and the arrogant and hypocritical LNP takes credit when it suits them. But what have they done? What have they built? After almost 2½ years, what is the Newman government's list of similar major projects? It is a blank piece of paper. Even its unnecessary and self-indulgent new executive building is not a government project.

Now, the same Treasurer wants to strike a similar 'good deal' on our state's electricity assets. Not only are the Newman LNP government committed to the mass privatisation of Queensland's electricity assets—which will lead to higher prices and lower reliability—they are also now deregulating prices in South-East Queensland. It was only last year that the Premier was saying, 'I believe the electricity assets that we own as a state of Queensland should be owned by the people. I don't support privatisation, nor do I support deregulation.' They are the Premier's own words. In his contract with Queensland, the Premier told every household in the state he would lower power prices by \$120 a year and that the LNP would control power price rises. 'Take your bills to the ballot box,' he said. Now the Premier has walked away and said he can only leave it to the private sector to control electricity prices—a private sector that will have more control after his mass sell-off of power assets and the electricity network. This represents yet another broken promise from a Premier who has overseen a record increase in power prices under his watch.

In the 2013-14 financial year, Queensland recorded the largest percentage increase in power bills on average in the state's history. Power bills went up by 22.6 per cent, or \$268, on average. If only a carbon price and environmental policies were a factor, this increase would have been just three per cent according to the Queensland Competition Authority. The responsibility for this record increase in electricity prices lies at the feet of the person who promised in a contract with every

Queenslander that he would lower them by \$120 a year—the Premier—and now power prices are set to rise by another \$192 in 2014-15 or by 13.6 per cent. Once again, if only the carbon price or environmental schemes were a factor, this increase would be just three per cent.

The Premier has turned his back on his contract with Queenslanders—his cost-of-living promises are null and void. Take your power bills to the ballot box? I urge Queenslanders to do just that at the next election. The government's promise to lower power bills has resulted in record increases to power bills. Instead of dropping \$120 a year, they have risen by \$560. That means this government has to cut power bills before the next election by \$680 to keep its promise.

Unlike the Newman government, Labor will not simply sit back and allow electricity prices to spiral out of control. As the shadow Treasurer said last year, we will establish an independent Queensland Productivity Commission and make electricity pricing its first task. This will provide an independent body to provide advice on pricing efficiency—rather than having the Queensland Competition Authority responsible for this role in addition to also being the pricing regulator. The shadow Treasurer will have more to say on this.

Labor will work to build a strong, productive and diverse Queensland economy with strong public finances where Queenslanders can reach their potential for greater prosperity. We will not tolerate the waste of taxpayers' money and the misdirection of public funds that has occurred under the Newman LNP government. We will put an end to an infrastructure decision-making process whereby this Newman government will waste \$2.6 billion of taxpayer funds on a new office tower for the Premier and his ministers—a project that was prioritised over upgrades to schools, hospitals, roads and public transport, a project that locked in the political execution of the Cross River Rail project, a public transport solution that was funded and could have been delivered without asset sales. The Premier's tower of power is the perfect example of the twisted priorities of this government.

The shadow Treasurer will soon be unveiling our 'Building Queensland' policy that will make sure that infrastructure projects undergo a proper cost-benefit analysis—a policy that will ensure that infrastructure is planned and prioritised properly in the interests of lifting productivity and not at the whim of an arrogant and out-of-touch Premier. 'Building Queensland' will provide investors in Queensland's bonds with a level of assurance that their money is being invested wisely—unlike the increase in debt to pay for the \$2.6 billion in dead money on the Premier's office tower, an office tower that taxpayers will not even own in the end. 'Building Queensland' will also put an end to the politicisation of infrastructure projects, such as the Newman government's decision to scrap the fully funded Cross River Rail project so they could pretend that they need to sell assets to build their alternative. Queenslanders will have a clear choice at the next state election. The LNP will sell your assets; Labor will not.

This is likely to be the last budget before the Premier calls a general election. If the Premier wants to talk about asset sales, we will join him in that conversation every single day. History tells us that Queenslanders have a very firm view when it comes to public ownership of our state's assets. No-one is more aware of that than me. Queensland Labor lives it and breathes it every day. However, when the message was sent so loudly at the last election campaign, it beggars belief that only one side of politics heard it. Either the LNP did not hear the message or they have arrogantly disregarded it.

I can assure the people of Queensland that Labor will stand with them arm in arm and fight against Campbell Newman's asset sales. The Premier's plan for asset sales is nothing more than a plan for higher power prices, more job cuts and the Americanisation of our economy. Do we want an Americanised economy of low-wage jobs, no job security and few rights or protections at work including on-the-job health and safety? Labor understands that the strength of our state is in our people, not abstract theories about pillars, and that providing people with jobs and a fair go underpins our economic and our financial strength.

This government talks a lot about strong choices. In the 2014 state budget we have seen the choices it has made. It wastes money on political ad campaigns while pensioners turn off their lights and stay at home, shut in because they cannot afford higher bus and train fares. Yesterday I met with pensioners in my Inala electorate. Their message was the same: they cannot cop the Premier's electricity hikes. Sitting in the dark, fearful of turning on their TV, radio, stove or heater, is not a bright future. This is not the Queensland that I want. Labor will not allow the skills, talents, ideas and potential of a generation of young Queenslanders to be lost. Similarly, Labor will not turn its back on

young people trying to get a job—older workers, Indigenous Queenslanders or those with a disability who want a job so they can secure their own future and that of their family. Labor will not walk away from those who also fight for a fair go and who protect the rights, wages and conditions of Queenslanders working to make ends meet and provide for themselves, their families and their futures.

Labor knows the value of jobs to individuals, families, communities, our state and our nation. That is why we have developed policies such as Jobs Queensland, Advance Queensland to ensure that we create and keep in Queensland the jobs of the future, Building Queensland to bring fairness and predictability to project planning and tendering, establishing an independent Queensland Productivity Commission, reinstating the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work programs, Ready for Work to help young Queenslanders, and payroll concessions to help employers take on apprentices and trainees.

We want our state to be the hardworking state of our federation. We can make this happen with the help and support of our fellow Queenslanders. But this is a government that is out of touch with reality and devoid of the ability to recognise, let alone tell, the truth. They pretend that unemployment has not increased since they were elected. They pretend that the cost of living has been cut when they are to blame because it has not. However, voters cannot pretend not to have noticed the LNP's failure to keep its promises.

Labor will govern for all Queenslanders with a vision for a strong economy, with opportunity for employment, higher living standards and a focus on all parts of our state, not just the south-east corner. The LNP will govern for those who can afford to pay; Labor will govern for growth for Queenslanders. Labor can achieve this with the support of Queenslanders. I say to my fellow Queenslanders: let us work together to make this happen.

 **Hon. GW ELMES** (Noosa—LNP) (Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier) (11.53 am): I cannot let the last 50 minutes pass without making a couple of comments. I feel like I have been living in a parallel universe since 2006 when I came into this place. Honourable members heard the opposition leader talk about the previous Labor government and the wonderful things that they did. The fact of the matter is that the member for Inala, the member for Mackay and the member for Mulgrave sat around the cabinet table for most of that time voting to ensure that every loopy, out-of-this-world, especially-designed-to-fail scheme that came before them was ticked off and the losses added to the debt levels of our state.

The other thing I would like to mention is that, during the course of that presentation, the opposition leader made much of jobs and what they are proposing to do. We heard terms like 'Labor standing for jobs', 'the champion of the worker', 'Jobs Queensland' in terms of the set-up. If honourable members are going to look at some future jobs plan for a government that is a long, long way from ever coming back into that particular position, they probably need to have a look at the last jobs plan that the former government had—the last jobs plan that it had with the Queensland Public Service that would have seen 41,753 workers sacked from the Queensland Public Service and, of those, 13,800 were to be front-line service providers. That is the previous jobs plan for Labor. That will give members some idea of what some future—way off into the future—jobs plan may deliver should they ever come back into government and should Queensland ever be that unfortunate.

I also am here today to speak in support of the 2014-15 state budget bills. I congratulate the Treasurer on not only the presentation of this budget but also what he has done over the last two years to try to sort out the sordid mess that was left to him to clean up. From the point of view of my portfolio, this budget will continue to support better life outcomes and lifestyle for Australia's oldest cultures and also our very newest. The best way to address historic Indigenous disadvantage is through economic development. The Queensland government is committed to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander economic participation through employment and business ownership. That is not just a desire; we are working actively and practically to make it happen. We are working hard to wean Indigenous communities off the welfare mentality, which was the cornerstone of the previous Labor government's policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. In contrast, we have a clear goal of greater economic independence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders, which is detailed in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Economic Participation Framework. This government's policies also provide funding for outcomes for migrants and refugees who now call Queensland home. Our focus is on improving the prospects of migrants for attaining jobs and also for participation in the economy. This reflects our dedication to provide equality of opportunity for all Queenslanders to participate fully in our strong economy and enjoy our vibrant society.

Specifically in this budget, the Newman government is continuing support for Cape York Welfare Reform efforts with a further \$8 million in the state budget to continue the program until December 2015. Welfare reform is directed at changing behaviours and building more positive remote Indigenous communities. The reform program commenced in 2008 in four Cape York communities as a trial, but the trial period has finished. It is now time to look at how we can spread the benefits of the program to other communities. I want all Indigenous communities to have the benefits of better services and greater social cohesion. I will be working with our welfare reform partners, the federal government and the Cape York Institute, to develop the next stages of the program.

An evaluation last year found that progress had been made in some areas but also concluded that more effort is required in the areas of economic development, home ownership and engagement of high school-aged children in ongoing education. These issues are not specific to the four welfare reform communities of Aurukun, Hope Vale, Coen and Mossman Gorge.

In another part of my portfolio, the budget includes funding of \$1 million to support community harmony, celebration of cultural diversity and building skills for migrants and refugees across the state. The funding is for Valuing Diversity grants, which fund multicultural events, and for Economic Participation grants for projects, which support employment and business creation prospects. The events that are funded through the Valuing Diversity grants strengthen the understanding and the appreciation of cultural diversity and its benefits in the wider community.

Our Economic Participation Grants further support our multicultural communities by backing projects that encourage economic participation and business development for Queenslanders from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Other portfolio initiatives funded in the budget include: the transfer of ownership of state land and national parks to Aboriginal people through the Cape York Peninsula Tenure Resolution Program, providing opportunities to carry out land management, grazing, tourism and other enterprises; \$1.25 million to upgrade the government owned and operated Kowanyama retail store to provide food quality, health, safety and operational efficiencies; and to deliver planning schemes, development approvals and early civil works and subdivisions ahead of major housing construction programs in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In the Noosa electorate the 2014-15 Queensland budget maintains services and does not impose any increased taxes and charges for taxpayers in what is a challenging financial environment. Residents in my electorate will benefit, along with all other Queenslanders, from the careful planning and responsible allocation of funding within the budget to achieve the maximum benefits for all Queenslanders. This is not a budget of benefits for specific community sectors; it is a budget for the whole state. All Queenslanders are being asked to share the burden of getting the state out of the huge hole left by Labor, and this budget will see that target largely achieved. The budget is responsible and stabilises the state's financial position to lay the foundation to return to balanced budgets from next year on.

As far as budget allocations for the Noosa electorate, they include: \$1.47 million for child safety services; \$4.7 million for disability services; just over \$800,000 for state schools in the electorate as part of the Great Results Guarantee initiative to boost student literacy and numeracy; \$350,000 to replace visitor amenities at Fig Tree Point to stop erosion; \$50,000 to upgrade some change rooms to support disability services at sailing venues at Chaplin Park in Noosaville; \$638,000 for non-government organisations to deliver homeless services; \$400,000 to complete the bus stop on the Cooroy-Noosa Road; and \$534,000 for the upgrading of Kin Kin Road. Noosa has an active night-life and nightclub industry which will be eligible to share in the \$8 million of grants available state-wide for local projects under the Safe Night Out Strategy.

A budget is more than the dollar amounts, which usually occupies the media and opposition members; a budget is the way in which funds are raised and how they are apportioned to achieve the best outcomes for Queensland and for Queenslanders. Both elements require discipline and recognition of what the state as a whole needs. What is not needed is pandering to sectional interests and propping up pet projects, which was the hallmark of the previous government. Budgets must reflect the times in which they are cast, and they must be crafted with an eye to the future. That is what Queensland will get from this budget. It is a budget that is appropriate for the times and which is making the most of the mess left by Labor. Most Labor members opposite were part of a government which budgeted to try to buy popularity, which focused only on spending money, and which had no hope of funding the desperate promises made in its dying days. From this government Queenslanders are getting responsible budgeting from which there has been a positive future outlook, despite the current tight financial situation caused by Labor's mismanagement of the past.

This budget will continue to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland and Queenslanders. It carefully balances increases in education, health and community services spending, while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. The budget outlines our plan for secure finances by making the strongest and smartest choices to reduce debt so that we can sustainably invest in schools, hospitals and infrastructure for the future.

We are making significant progress in restoring our finances, growing a four-pillar economy, revitalising front-line services and funding infrastructure projects and jobs, with more than 60,000 jobs created in Queensland in the last year. To sustain this we must reduce debt so that we can keep building on top of our strong plan for a brighter future. I again congratulate the Treasurer on a fantastic budget.

 **Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (12.04 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2014 and the Appropriation Bill 2014 that are being debated today in the House. I would like to congratulate the Treasurer on all of his hard work on the 2014-15 budget, which is a budget that is in the best interests of Queenslanders. I know that, with the added pressure from the federal government's budget handed down recently, he has delivered a strong budget for sustained economic growth, debt reduction and a brighter future.

We are moving into a steady growth period, with economic growth forecast to be three per cent in 2014-15. This is due to the astute fiscal management of the Treasurer, who has managed the state's finances under the very difficult circumstances left to us by the former Labor government. Some of those opposite who were involved with that debt are still in this House today. Debt and deficit is their legacy, and we have to fix the mess in which the former Labor government left Queensland. This is a budget for all Queenslanders, because in the end we will all reap the rewards and benefits of the good economic management that we have seen from the Treasurer since we have come to office. Although this year we have a deficit of \$2.27 billion—due to the federal reduction in revenue to the states and a reduction in coal royalties—the budget will be returned to surplus in 2015-16.

The Treasurer's Strong Choices listening tour has been one of the best community consultation processes that I have ever seen carried out in Queensland. This is the first time that a Treasurer has made himself available so widely and directly to the Queensland community. The Treasurer has given Queenslanders a choice on how they want to fix the budget, and I certainly take my hat off to the very hard work that he has done over this period. The choices given to the Queensland community of selling assets, raising taxes or reducing services are distinct choices on which individually we all have a different opinion and which will impact on the state's bottom line in different ways. As with everything, there was a difference of opinion, but with over 50,000 people offering their opinions through the Strong Choices survey, it was a major consideration in tackling the \$80 billion of state debt. Some survey participants wanted higher taxes for the gaming and mining industry—probably because they were not involved—rather than selling off state assets; others did not want assets to be sold at all. The 15 May 2014 survey conducted amongst its members by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Queensland determined that 61 per cent of small business owners preferred selling assets over higher taxes. All of these opinions have been taken into consideration, and I applaud the Treasurer for the consultative process he has undertaken with the Queensland public.

Now the government's draft plan of action has been released, which is the Strongest and Smartest Choice plan. The Premier is in agreement with giving Queenslanders a voice and has explained that it is about exchanging and recycling old assets for new assets, but the issue of selling some of the assets will not happen until after the election next March. As we know, the Premier has a stronger plan for a brighter future for each and every Queenslanders and is personally determined to keep Queensland the leading state in this wonderful nation. The growing of the four-pillar economy is of the highest priority for the LNP government; lowering the cost of living for families to help their own family budgets; delivering better infrastructure and better planning; introducing the fabulous party house legislation—I am only referring to it, Mr Deputy Speaker—into the House this week; revitalising front-line services for families; and restoring accountability in government.

The four pillars of tourism, agriculture, resources and construction are the focus of the LNP government, and I know for a fact that tourism on the Gold Coast is having a resurgence beyond our wildest dreams thanks to this government's effective tourism policies and the positive change in business confidence. The Gold Coast is all about confidence, and we are seeing record tourism numbers. I congratulate the tourism minister on a wonderful job in terms of not only representing the Gold Coast and tourism but right across the state. Congratulations, Minister!

The spotlight on agriculture to help our hardworking farmers as they feed Queensland and provide a sustainable, long-term, high-quality food supply to our tables has been very much the focus of the government. The government will look after our farmers to the tune of \$62 million in drought relief. Our resources industry is steady and, managed properly, our important resources can be available well into the future and our construction industry means jobs, jobs, jobs for the future, and that is a great thing for our Queensland economy. Lowering the cost of living for families is a fundamental focus of the LNP government because, by doing this, Queensland families will have more money in their pockets to spend in our economy. We are delivering better infrastructure with roads, schools and hospitals and with exciting new developments such as Queen's Wharf—a six-star multibillion-dollar resort development—along with proposed casinos in Cairns and the Gold Coast. These are great examples that will secure Queensland as an international tourism destination. The announcement by the Treasurer of further funding for child protection shows that we are revitalising front-line services for families. Over \$400 million will go into child protection over a five-year plan to improve front-line child services, a move which we all applaud. I congratulate the Treasurer and the Minister for Child Safety on their commitment to protect the vulnerable in our community—our children.

It would be remiss of me if I did not mention the commitment this LNP government has to restoring accountability in government, and this is being driven and helped along with the Premier's open data priority. As Assistant Minister to the Premier on e-government, we have been working hard at making the Queensland government the most open and accountable government in the world. Our open data advisory group, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and departmental officers and myself have been working hard on having as much government data on our open data website as possible. This shows the world that the Queensland government is open, accountable and excited to have its data freely available to business, community organisations, non-government organisations, all levels of government, the academic community and the public. This is a great collaboration between state and local governments given the open data group has expanded and included a local government representative from the Brisbane City Council, Ms Cara Walsh, which gives us a great grassroots local government perspective. I want to congratulate the Premier on his visionary and enthusiastic approach to this project and giving it the highest of priorities so we are able to deliver on this very important project which is now a worldwide phenomenon.

We know that Queensland's economic management has changed for the better since we have come to office, but due to Labor's drunken sailor spending and budget mismanagement we are, of course, left with a massive debt. This means that Queensland's accumulated debt is at \$80 billion, resulting in interest payments of \$4 billion a year. This is why the Treasurer has focused on restoring our budget to surplus, which will be achieved in 2015-16.

On the local front, in Mermaid Beach as part of the budget the LNP has proposed a \$44.5 million funding injection for Australia's most comprehensive action plan to eradicate alcohol and drug related violence. This is particularly important to our Broadbeach precinct, which I share with the member for Surfers Paradise and which so many residents utilise.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr STEVENS:** Absolutely. The state budget includes \$29.1 million in new funding and \$15.4 million from existing departmental resources to support the Safe Night Out Strategy over the next four years. There will be additional liquor licensing inspectors, the establishment of safe night out precincts, support services, awareness campaigns and a trial of sober safe centres. Locally based safe night out precinct boards will be able to apply for grants from an \$8 million funding pool for projects that best meet their local needs, whether that be for improved lighting, more toilets, CCTV cameras or extra support services. By implementing the Safe Night Out Strategy, the LNP government will be changing the culture, changing the law and changing the environment. We will also be increasing police powers and licensing and penalties, including mandatory community service orders and compulsory alcohol and drug counselling. The Minister for Police has allocated 267 new police, and I take this opportunity to congratulate the minister on the great job he is doing on keeping our streets safe and I am sure a good number of those new police will be allocated to the Gold Coast region.

I absolutely want to take this opportunity to inform the House of how the criminal bkie gang laws have worked enormously well in Mermaid Beach and on the Gold Coast and how successful the laws the Attorney-General has introduced have been in eradicating these terrible groups within our areas. Mermaid Beach is totally changing as the criminal gangs have moved out and the suburb has become a great tourism destination with great little coffee shops, surf shops and art galleries. In

conclusion, I want to personally congratulate the Treasurer, the Premier and the cabinet for their collaborative hard work on the budget and in particular the Treasurer, who understands the current economic position of the state's finances and who understands the needs of the electorate and who has found the right balance to see a surplus in 2015-16. This is a great budget for a great state and is part of the LNP's strong plan for a brighter future.

 **Ms MILLARD** (Sandgate—LNP) (12.15 pm): Today I rise to contribute to the debate on the appropriation bills for 2014. I commend the Treasurer, Tim Nicholls, for the delivery of a budget that is measured and balances the need to support Queenslanders from everyday battlers to businesses against the need to reduce a crushing forecasted \$80 billion worth of Labor debt being carried on our shoulders. I acknowledge the diligence of the Premier, the ministers and their departments in presenting us with a budget that is not only about sound budgeting but solid leadership. This budget is about looking ahead and remembering future generations of Queenslanders and presenting them with a strong plan for a brighter future so that they will have choices when it is their turn to lead.

I am proud to represent a government that has entered into a dialogue with Queenslanders so that we can all be a part of the solution to our crippling debt issue, which will continue to spiral out of control without remedial action. We all need to be part of the choices we face to tackle this Labor debt, and in this context I commend the government's plan announced by our Treasurer to go to the next election for the people to decide with a proposed program of asset transactions involving a mix of long-term leases or sales and, in some cases, the government will be proposing a partnership with the private sector where we would actually retain full or part asset ownership. The draft plan would provide for debt reduction of \$25 billion down to \$55 billion and release \$8.6 billion into a strong choices investment program for essential projects such as schools, hospitals, roads and other vital and long overdue infrastructure to shore up a brighter future for our state.

This is phase 2 of the Strong Choices campaign and follows a consultation that saw 255,000 people visit the People's Budget website and 55,000 make submissions. The results showed a substantial 46 per cent of people favoured debt reduction through sale or lease of assets over increasing taxes or cutting services. I note here that this government has neither increased taxes nor cut services in this budget and that yet another mandate will be sought from voters at the next election before even a measured package of asset devolution progresses. Once again this government—

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Ms MILLARD:** Exactly. I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. Once again this government has demonstrated that it is true to its word, but let us be clear: the alternative to do nothing would be a sure path to economic failure for future generations of Queenslanders. This is the third budget to be delivered in over two years by the Newman LNP government, placing us in a position to be judged by our results, not just our words. This budget is not random; it builds on the momentum which has been achieved over the last two years—unlike the Labor government before us, which had no plan and which still seems to be the case now that they are in opposition, so clearly some things never change. I believe this government has shown exceptional leadership in knowing when and where to spend and when and where to save and in finding creative ways to open doors of opportunity in needy areas. The Newman government has brought it back to the basics. Every Queenslanders has the right to eat, the right to work, the right to have a roof over their head, the right to be safe and the right to have good access to health services and education. Tough decisions in the last two years have been with some heavy readjustments but, despite this, business confidence and economic prospects for Queenslanders are growing. In the last year over 60,000 jobs were created in Queensland, accounting for over half of all new jobs in Australia. Trend employment grew 11 months straight at 6.1 per cent during that period and in 2014-15 Queensland is expected to be the fastest growing Australian economy at an estimated three per cent, and the benefits of good economic management are beginning to trickle down.

While Labor debt remains a pressing issue and must be dealt with if we are to regain our AAA credit rating and shore up a brighter future, this government has proved that it possesses the economic credentials that are required to get the job done.

What about a roof over our heads? That is something that has long eluded and frustrated social entrepreneurs. One of greatest successes of the Newman government has been its results in the social and affordable housing sector. Queensland is now attracting renown for dramatically lowering rates of homelessness by up to 35 per cent, which is huge when you consider that over 30,000

people were on the social housing waitlist, many of them sleeping rough, when the LNP first took government. At the beginning of 2014, these numbers were down to below 20,000. We still have a long way to go, but it is better than the opposition's alternative, which is to have no plan.

The government has also partnered with other groups to invest in eradicating long-term homelessness and has invested in maintenance upgrades to existing social housing and the creation of more affordable housing. It is one thing to buy bandaids; it is another to stop the rot. Getting Queenslanders off the streets and into housing is not just a social imperative; it is an economic one. It costs dramatically less to place someone in social housing or affordable housing than for other interventions that can be a little too common for those caught in systematic homelessness. According to the statistics from Micah Projects, social housing for someone at \$63 per day should be compared to the cost of crisis accommodation at \$133 per day, emergency room visits at \$439 per day, mental health beds at \$702 per day or a hospital bed at \$1,100 per day.

In my own electorate of Sandgate, the government has announced \$3.3 million for the creation of new social housing opportunities for those in need. That funding is in addition to the \$16.6 million investment since 2012 to maintain and improve social and affordable housing in our communities. As a result, there has been a 38 per cent decrease in people on our social housing waitlist between March 2013 and January 2014—350 homeless people down to 216. And wow! What an outcry we heard from the opposition when, God forbid, the housing minister suggested that we actually make sure that people are in the right style of accommodation so that fewer people could sleep rough at night.

So I ask members: what kind of community do they want to live in? I know my answer. It is one where every person has access to a bed, a safe bed at night. Are we all safer? This state government has made a sizeable promise to make Queensland one of the safest places to live in Australia. Is it working? In 2014-15, an extra 276 front-line police will be placed on Queensland streets as part of the rollout of the four-year commitment to an extra 1,100 front-line officers since 2012.

This budget also commits to a further \$44.5 million over four years to implement the Safe Night Out Strategy to deal with alcohol and drug related violence in entertainment precincts. That is because, regardless of age or gender, we believe that everybody deserves a safe night out and to return home safely. The good news is that statistics are demonstrating that the Queensland government's tough stance on crime is working. Since this government took office, the overall crime rate is down by five per cent. Robberies have decreased by 23 per cent and break-ins are also down by 22 per cent.

On the issue of safety, I also commend the government's commitment to an extra \$406 million in 2014 for the overhaul of child and family services in response to the Carmody inquiry. This year, \$2.29 million is being poured into my electorate for foster care and child safety. But there is still some way to go in tackling the more hidden problems related to making our children safer. So the answer to my earlier question is an all-round yes. Yes, we are safer in our homes and on our streets.

So how about on our roads? For the people of the Sandgate electorate, under the former Labor government major road safety was an area of serious long-term neglect. On this front I could not be more pleased with the performance of the Newman government. In 2014-15, \$167.54 million will be committed to the Gateway upgrade north and Gateway Additional Lane projects—projects that will continue to ensure safer passage and wider roads for commuters between Nudgee Road and the Deagon Deviation up to Bracken Ridge as well as the widening of Depot Road from two to three lanes. This is in addition to the near completion of the \$82 million Telegraph Road rail overpass project, which was a healthy joint venture with the Brisbane City Council and which saw a commitment from this state government of \$40.2 million. This was a notorious black spot for decades, with horrendous congestion during peak traffic times. Under the Labor government, nothing happened on this stretch of road beyond the growing list of dangerous incidents and near misses. Before I was elected, I promised voters that a Newman government would commit its 50 per cent share to see the Telegraph Road rail overpass built and, two years later, excitedly, I was one of the first to cross over the new overpass before it was part-opened to vehicles. The LNP Newman government fulfils promises and continues to pour funds into infrastructure and safer roads in communities in Queensland and in my community—finally! In summary, yes, the people of the Sandgate electorate are safer, more likely to get a job and are more likely to have a roof over their heads.

I also note that the Queensland Health budget is the largest that this state has ever seen, with an increase of six per cent from 2013 to \$13.6 billion. This increase in funding will further reduce our hospital and dental waiting lists and progress the development of my local facility, the Brighton Health

Campus, into the unique and cutting-edge rehabilitation and transitional care facility that Queensland so desperately needs. Rehabilitation care itself reduces hospital waiting lists by moving people out of hospitals and into a dedicated place to heal and recover with specialist treatment before returning home. This is the same Brighton Health Campus, formerly known as Eventide, that our Labor counterparts would have us believe is being shut down, sold off, or something scary along those lines. Does a \$3.3 million spend sound like a facility being closed down to members? That is what the Newman government has already spent from its Health budget on the Brighton Health Campus for upgrades and the repair of buildings that Labor had left behind—buildings that were not even fit or safe for the elderly to live in—as well as the implementation of a million-dollar telecommunications network so that the whole centre can thrive into the 21st century. So, yes, I look forward to seeing more Health dollars being poured into the creation of what will be a world-class facility along the beautiful foreshore of Brighton. While I am standing here, may I just add: shame on the Labor Party for continuing its scare campaign on the elderly who reside there and who will continue to do so until the term of their natural lives! Shame on the Labor Party for scaring them continuously! It is disgraceful!

Ten schools in my electorate will share in \$965,000 in the 2014-15 budget under the Great Results program as part of the overall \$11.8 billion Education budget—an increase of seven per cent from last year. May I also add that the hundreds of thousands of dollars in maintenance funds over the last couple of years have also been well received by schools in my electorate and the community after the Labor Party had left the buildings and the grounds to basically rot and decay. So the schools in my electorate have been very grateful for that funding.

An amount of \$6.7 million will also go into the delivery of disability services in the Sandgate electorate and will assist the seven per cent of my local population who suffer from reduced capacity or who have special needs. In many cases, it is my local community groups that carry out these programs as well as a range of others to help victims of domestic violence, the elderly, or vulnerable segments of the population. For that reason I am very pleased that this budget supports key local community groups in the Sandgate electorate, with \$617,000 to assist with operating costs. I expect to see more funds being poured into programs and facilities for many other groups through grant programs rolled out over the course of the year. This allocation builds on the \$1.4 million worth of grants and program funding shared among 27 community groups in the Sandgate electorate since the 2013 election.

An amount of \$280,000 will be shared between three local clubs in my electorate for upgrades to lighting facilities under the Get in the Game program, which is currently being rolled out. I am pleased to learn that the grant programs for clubs will continue. Another three clubs in the Sandgate electorate benefited from the Get in the Game program in 2013-14, along with over 300 families who received vouchers so that they could afford to sign up their children to local sporting groups. The total benefits of Get in the Game to the Sandgate electorate in the last year has been approximately \$420,000.

In conclusion, as the member for Sandgate I am very pleased with the benefits that the 2014-15 budget will deliver to my community, building on the good that has been achieved over the last two years since the LNP government came into office.

As I always say, as members who represent our seats we would always like more, we always want more, we will always continue to campaign for more, but the 2014-15 budget delivers the people of the Sandgate electorate over \$190 million of spending commitments upfront, with more expected over the course of the year. Since 2012 and in just three budgets I have seen an impressive \$316 million of government money poured into my electorate. But the greatest strength of this budget and this government is what is less quantifiable to my electorate specifically, which is that all Queenslanders and our children will benefit for generations to come. Queensland's challenges come from various reasons: they come from a drought that we cannot control to a Labor debt that we inherited and must deal with. They are ever-looming and they remain priorities. The Newman government is navigating a path to prosperity, a path marked by increasing rates of employment and economic growth and we are at the doorstep of surpluses rather than deficits. We can actually start talking about escaping the financial mess that Labor left all of us in, that defined Queensland in 2012. The good news is that we have a new reputation to live up to, a bright positive reputation to live up to, and Queensland is well underway to being the state where everyone can enjoy basic rights such as the right to work, the right to live in safety, the right to live with a roof over your head and the right to live in a sustainable environment that future generations can enjoy.

I commend the Newman LNP government for the delivery of a strong budget, the delivery of a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders which, I may add, is in complete contrast to the opposition because all I hear and see is that Labor are big on motherhood statements but very, very small on actual plans. So, well done to the Premier, the Treasurer and the ministers and I commend the 2014 appropriation bills to the House.

 **Mr BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (12.31 pm): I rise to make my contribution to this budget debate. This is the third time that I have spoken in a debate of a Liberal National Party budget and hopefully the last LNP budget that Queensland will have to endure. The Treasurer has delivered another air-swing budget. Remember, three strikes and you're out! Out of ideas, out of spin, out of self-delusion, one would hope. It is amazing to mark the similarities associated with each of these failed budgets. This government has had three opportunities so far to demonstrate some level of economic competence. It has failed to do so, as clearly evidenced by the latest considerable deficit blow-out. To be honest, the Treasurer's speech just sounded like a summary of slogans and recycled press releases. Further, rather than accepting responsibility for its own ineptitude, the government refuses to embrace its supposed adult responsibilities and seeks to blame everyone else except itself for the present dilemma.

This journey started with the LNP's economic blueprint released shortly prior to the last election. That blueprint was just spin, where not one of the key commitments given at that point has been delivered. The LNP committed to paying down debt without selling assets—fail! They committed to growing jobs. There are fewer than 10,000 full-time jobs now than when they started. So that is fail. Restoring the AAA credit rating—fail! And who could forget that old chestnut 'no further privatisation of assets without a mandate'. That was an outright fib. What about the \$11 billion worth of assets: schools, hospitals, Aurizon shares, government buildings and, of course, Queensland Motorways? What a cracker that one is. We have not seen the last of that issue I can assure all members. The Premier is recently on record saying that this year was the year that it all came together. Where is the evidence of that? I recently surveyed a dozen or so medium and small business owners in Rockhampton. Only one expressed optimism. Words like 'quiet', 'slow', 'worrying trends', were indicative of the language used, or lines like 'thank goodness my business has diversified'. This reflects the real world, what is really going on in regional Queensland. One major hardware store that essentially services the trades reported to me a 30 per cent reduction in turnover over the last six months.

This is indeed a AAA budget. That is what my punters are telling me. They are the rating agency that counts. It is all about arrogance, aggravation and Abbott. Arrogance, as we have already seen from this government, towards any individual who dares to question its lack of competence or, in fact, any other matter. The aggravation is to the bottom line of this state and towards those who look to the government for leadership—leadership that embraces, dare I say, optimism and compassion and not creating aggravation to those who seek government assistance and support. Up until this morning the government's treatment of those in receipt of concessions was disgraceful while pumping \$44 million into support of the alcohol industry, a perfect demonstration of this government's warped priorities and an absolute disgrace and embarrassment. The budget is not even 48-hours old and it is now an embarrassment. How is the government going to fill this void? The government says it is going to withhold payments to the Commonwealth. How does anyone think that is going to turn out? The Commonwealth will simply withhold payments to the state if they want to play that game. It is just a nonsense.

Finally, we have the 'A' for Abbott, who is of the same political and economic beliefs as those sitting opposite occupying the Treasury benches. The lame efforts of the Premier to distance himself from this latest Abbott atrocity called a federal budget reveals nothing more than desperation as evidenced by goings on this morning in this House. Abbott lied through his teeth prior to the last election and every Australian knows it. Last year's budget debate was garnished by government members in this House remonstrating about the supposed ills of the federal Labor government. LNP member after LNP member expressed their desperate desire to have their tory mates in control in Canberra. How has that worked out for them? Not too well, one would expect, listening to the Premier this morning. I will just say this to the Treasurer: be careful what you wish for. Lo and behold, it is the same mantra today. It is all the feds' fault, with the Premier desperately trying to distance himself from his own mob and his own acknowledged good mate. It is a sad joke and everyone sees straight through it. Reap what you sow.

This is not a government that stands up for Queenslanders; it is a government that stands over them. It continues along the well-worn track of abuse of power and broken promises that litter the forlorn journey of this government. It proves that not one thing the Premier said at the last election was anything other than fantasy—exactly the same as Tony Abbott has done. The state debt is higher, the cost of living has skyrocketed and elements under the government's direct control, like car registration, are up, as is the cost of electricity.

I remind Queenslanders and everyone in this House that the government, this incompetent mob sitting across the chamber, promised things would be cheaper and that debt would go down. Most particularly, those opposite parroted not only those lines but also the fanciful notion of these four pillars that would underpin the economy. Remember this: the construction industry in this state is grinding to a halt as one by one ministers line up to rush out and cut ribbons for Labor projects.

This budget holds nothing for the people of Rockhampton. For the first time in two decades we see no new construction in Rockhampton. This is dreadful news for the workers who are currently finishing the Labor inspired and built new hospital extensions. For the last 20 years this site has been a constant hub of construction activity, but come October that will all end. What is to become of the hundreds of building workers who depended on capital works like these? 'Who cares?', says this government; 'Who cares?', says the Treasurer; and 'Who cares?', says the Premier.

What of the meat workers at Teys Bros, which reopened with the help of the previous Labor government providing hundreds of job opportunities? What is in this budget for them? Of course, the answer is simple. Nothing! Not one thing! Nothing except massive increases in the cost of living. Combined with the Premier's best mate Abbott and his efforts to make life harder, the meat worker will be paying more for fuel, more for water, more to register his car, more to go to the doctor, more to even have a hot bath, more for groceries when the fuel tax gets passed through the system and, of course, there is the very real prospect of having to pay to go to emergency departments in hospitals if they are ever injured.

Speaking of work related injuries, that same worker is already dramatically worse off if they get injured on their way to work or in the workplace thanks to the attack on workers' compensation from this government. My challenge to those opposite, and especially the member for Keppel, is to put on the record that this budget is better for their constituents than the previous Labor budgets. The member for Keppel talks about debt, but he is quite happy to have a pair of scissors and open projects built by good debt: Labor debt, debt that creates jobs, debt that builds infrastructure, debt that saves lives, debt that future generations will benefit from. That is right: good debt, manageable debt.

I can top this off by saying that the Premier has already been out there blowing the trumpet about the fact that the government spent \$95 million in Ashgrove. If only one-tenth of that came to Rockhampton I would be happy. I have not seen the member for Keppel up in arms about demanding the reinstatement of funds set aside by previous Labor governments for the rejuvenation of the old Yeppoon hospital site. In fact, in three budget cycles the member for Keppel has delivered virtually nothing for Rockhampton or the Capricornia Coast, because he is not taken seriously and Central Queensland is not on the LNP's radar.

On the issue of unemployment, we see the statistics are back to Borbidge government levels, which was a time when there was not even a pretence at attempting to arrest the slide of many into joblessness. Under Labor, companies such as Virgin and Qantas were drawn to Queensland's smart-state agenda. Labor created the right environment for a hitherto unheard of aviation industry in this state. Just last week we saw the first exit of Labor inspired jobs as Qantas took its business to Tasmania, of all places. This government's actions—or should I say inactions—have ruled a line through the aspirations of 13 per cent of under 25s who cannot get a job in this state and are now going to be flogged even further by the Treasurer's hero and the Premier's mate, Tony Abbott. In true tory tradition, this budget throws a growing number of unemployed a lead weight. This government simply does not get it. It is all about jobs. It is all about jobs. It is all about jobs. I say 6.3 per cent is a disgraceful legacy for this government. Four per cent was typical of the LNP's economic blueprint prior to the last election; an absolute nonsense.

This government does not care a fig about those it has sacked. In my own electorate, I know of public servants whom this government has sacked and they have had to leave the state. I know of cases where public servants aged over 50 cannot even get interviews and now they are being told by the Abbott and Newman governments that they are bludgers and that they should up stumps, and go and live someplace where they might get a job. I say that the Abbott and Newman governments do not give a hoot about regional Queensland. This is a federal and state coalition of government

ideology. It is a coalition of anti-worker, anti-unemployed, anti-equitable education and health outcomes. These presumptions and predispositions join the tory conservative leaders at the hip and everyone knows it. These tory leaders of the chaos of the economic rationalist free market believe that small government is good government. They believe flashing green lights to overseas investors to build casinos on environmentally sensitive sites, without even the suggestion of an IES, is in the interests of the development of this state.

I note that the CEO of Capricorn Enterprise, Ms Mary Carroll, who competently runs that organisation and should have been the LNP's recently appointed senator, has made the point that the Great Keppel Island proposal was the only applicant for the casino licences that had its environmental approvals. The point was well made by the Labor candidate for Keppel, Brittany Lauga, that the LNP government has an anti-Central Queensland bias. The ridiculous notions put forward in the media that the requirement for an international airport hub was decisive in the decision making of the government defies logic and, if it is true, why were the proponents not informed of this critical matter prior to the submission of expressions of interest? Why would a proponent bother to go to the considerable wasted expense and time of putting forward a proposal if this critical factor was known to them? Again it says to me that this government has not the slightest idea about how to act with probity in a commercial environment. How is it possible that such a shemuzzle could happen?

While on the issue of casino licences, which was raised this morning in question time, I note an article published in the *Australian* on 19 April this year. It appears to reveal the fact that the companies backing the ASF consortium's proposal for the Broadwater marine project on the Gold Coast, which of course depends on the casino licence being approved, have been investigated by the World Bank for suspected involvement in corruption and fraudulent practices. In 2011, the World Bank apparently debarred elements of this company or companies and all subsidiaries from participating in World Bank projects. So how does this mob even get the door opened in Queensland? What assurances have been sought and received that have informed the decision regarding the approvals of this casino licence?

This LNP government has had three budgets and what have we seen? Debt is dramatically higher, unemployment has spiralled upwards with 11,000 less full-time jobs than when they started, and growth has shrunk in an environment where the government has changed tune completely from when in opposition. Voters are not stupid. They have worked out this duplicity. They are not mugs. They know a rat when they see one and that is what this budget is: it is a dead rodent. Here is something to focus on: the public sector is always more efficient and more effective than the private sector when it is well led and given the opportunity to be so. That is always the case. For any private company, government or even household to sell profitable assets is financial lunacy. That is especially so in a decentralised state the size of Queensland, which lacks population density.

I have already spoken briefly this year in the House about Western Australia's loss of its AAA credit rating and how all that transpired under the watch of a conservative government in the absence of anything approaching the circumstances of the global financial crisis. It never ceases to amaze me that even today the LNP refuses to acknowledge that the GFC even happened. They are GFC deniers. GFC? What GFC? Leading into the last election, Labor defended its economic management and correctly pointed out Australia's vertical fiscal imbalance as being central to this state's, and all states', tax and debt issues. Further, Labor pointed out the uncomfortable fact that without long-term reform to the Commonwealth-state financial relations, the states and territories will be under ever-increasing fiscal pressure. This should be an uncontested fact accepted by all sensible political figures and commentators, but not once have I heard the Treasurer address that issue in nearly two years sitting in this House.

I reflect on some of the media leading into the last election. The then Queensland opposition Treasury spokesman, Tim Nicholls, said—

Every time Queenslanders turn on the tap, flick on the lights, fill up their car or pay their rego they are paying more ...

What has the Treasurer done to pull a rein on that commentary after three LNP budgets? Not one thing! In fact, the situation has got dramatically worse because of this government's actions, represented by austerity, tales of woe and the crushing of confidence, particularly consumer confidence. What did Labor say at the time? Labor said that Australia's vertical fiscal imbalance was a major issue influencing the state's tax and debt issues. That is true. Labor said that Queensland was the only state that today could still boast a negative net debt to our budget and a fully funded superannuation scheme. That is true. What did the now Treasurer say? He said an LNP government would cut the cost of living for Queensland families and in doing so improve the state's tax

competitiveness. That is false. It has proven to be false. Let us face some facts: this budget confirms that the Newman government has been the most profligate, ill-disciplined, inexperienced and incompetent administration that Queensland has ever seen and this budget cements that reality. I do not know why they bother coming to work.

Let us reflect on the situation in Queensland when Labor left. We left when debt was \$62 billion, not the \$80 billion as represented by the Treasurer. Of that, 48 per cent was carried by government and corporations such as Ergon, Stanwell and the Port of Gladstone. That proportion of debt was completely self-sustaining, but they do not want to accept those facts at all because the baseline ideology of this government has always been to sell assets—always—and the government is trying to frighten Queensland into accepting that notion. The point I am making is that this entire conversation has been deliberately distorted to prove an unsubstantiated ideological point. Therefore, it is dishonest in the extreme and that should be enough for Queenslanders to reject the entire proposition.

This is the next part of the equation: in early May it was widely reported that the premiers had signed off on what is bizarrely described as a revolution in infrastructure spending. This was all about the federal Tories looking after the states with infrastructure. In the *Australian*, Alan Kohler pointed out that this subsidy will be derived from additional tax revenue generated by those privatised assets. Kohler pointed out that while assets remain in public hands, the company tax is returned to the state and Hockey is simply returning state revenue to the states for a limited period. Any upfront cash the Commonwealth requires will be from the sale of Commonwealth assets. What a dreadful deal for the states, because over time the Commonwealth increases its revenue with no real downside to its budget, while the states walk away with reduced revenue and, of course, no serious debt reduction.

Kohler's article is worth reading as it points out that the states are doing more than their fair share of infrastructure investment over the last seven years. He refers to a Grattan Institute report that clearly states the facts as to how the present situation evolved. He explains how the Grattan report points to Health spending as the elephant in the room. He also points to the fact that no states are capable of meeting Peter Costello's theoretical economic Valhalla because none of them are capable of funding capital works from recurrent revenue. Admittedly, Kohler sees some merit in what is being offered. But, mostly importantly, he says that it is a temporary benefit because ultimately you run out of things to sell—boom, boom!

This budget again reveals the ineptitude of the government when it comes to managing the state's economy and the budget. The government has only ever had one shot in the locker, and the majority of Queenslanders absolutely reject that prospect. Frankly, I am surprised this government decided to deliver a third budget given what would be revealed in this budget. I have always said that an early election was a distinct possibility due to budget failures alone. Queenslanders will not tolerate asset sales and feel betrayed by this government.

I could talk about a few other portfolio matters, but I will leave it at that. I will say this to finish: the Attorney-General was on the radio this morning talking about the extra \$65 million allocated to his corrections portfolio. He failed to mention to the listeners that the figure is something like \$245 million. I think that says it all.

 **Mrs RICE** (Mount Coot-tha—LNP) (12.51 pm): I am very pleased to contribute to the debate on this government's third budget. In doing so, I think it is incredibly important to put this budget in context by remembering the legacy left by the previous Labor government. Labor delivered fiscal deficits totalling \$29 billion between 2006-07 and 2011-12, with a further \$13 billion in deficits locked into 2014-15. During the period of 2005-06 to 2012-13 Queensland's debt increased from \$18 billion to \$69 billion. Labor's inability to manage the state's finances led to the loss of our AAA credit rating in 2009, and, as a result, Queensland pays a higher rate of interest on its borrowings than states like New South Wales and Victoria. Labor's debt costs the state \$4 billion in annual interest repayments, or \$450,000 an hour.

These truly are shocking figures and Labor still has no plan to manage the economy or pay down debt. In contrast, this government has always had a plan that includes returning the budget to surplus by 2014-15, ensuring expenses growth does not exceed revenue growth and regaining the AAA credit rating to reduce the cost of borrowing. Over the last two years we have set about implementing our plan and a little less than two years ago the Treasurer delivered this government's first budget. It was the most important budget in a generation—a budget for Queensland's future. That budget made the hard decisions to get the state's finances under control. But it was also one that focussed on growing our economy for the benefit of all.

This time last year, the Treasurer delivered a no-frills, no-nonsense budget—delivering the front-line services Queenslanders expected while also fostering economic growth. It was the right budget for that stage in Queensland's recovery from the policies and neglect of the former government.

This budget continues to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future. There is a story to follow here and that is the careful and meticulous way that this Treasurer, that this government, has gone about doing what we said we would do. As the Treasurer has outlined, the 2014-15 budget carefully balances increases in education, health and community services spending, while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. Strong choices have to be made so that a brighter future can be ours. Queenslanders know we need to reduce the state's \$80 billion debt and \$4 billion interest bill—the legacy left by those opposite—and this budget outlines our plan to secure our finances by making the strongest and smartest choice to reduce debt, so we can sustainably invest in the schools, hospitals and infrastructure for the future.

We are making significant progress in restoring our finances, growing a four-pillar economy, revitalising front-line services and funding infrastructure projects to create jobs—with more than 60,000 jobs created in Queensland in the last year. But to sustain this growth we must reduce debt so we can truly keep building on our strong plan for a brighter future.

This budget delivers for residents in my electorate of Mount Coot-tha in a number of ways. Education funding has increased seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. Queensland families will have greater access to high-quality education and training opportunities, including \$131 million for the Great Results Guarantee, which is continuing to boost student literacy and numeracy outcomes by engaging them in learning that will benefit them now and in the future. Locally, this means \$86,000 for Bardon State School, \$145,000 for Ithaca Creek State School, \$167,000 for Milton State School, \$64,000 for Petrie Terrace State School, \$46,000 for the Queensland Academy for Science Mathematics and Technology, \$130,000 for Rainworth State School, \$22,000 for Red Hill Special School and \$97,000 for Toowong State School. Also included are 761 additional teachers and teacher aides across Queensland in response to enrolment growth and students with special needs.

In Health, the budget has increased six per cent to \$13.6 billion and includes \$224.5 million towards building the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital. For the Metro North Health and Hospital Service, funding is more than \$2 billion. This will enable even greater improvements to the levels of service recorded in March this year that included 75 per cent of people presenting to local hospital emergency departments being seen within four hours. At the time of the change of government only 57 per cent were attended to. That is an 18 per cent improvement since this government came to office.

In relation to tackling the issue of alcohol and drug fuelled violence, this budget includes a \$44.5 million funding injection for Australia's most comprehensive action plan—the Safe Night Out Strategy. This will include additional liquor licensing inspectors, the establishment of safe night out precincts—such as Caxton Street in my electorate—support services, awareness campaigns and a trial of sober safe centres. Locally based safe night out precinct boards will be able to apply for grants from an \$8 million funding pool for projects that best meet their local needs—whether that be for improved lighting, more toilets, CCTV cameras or extra support services.

This is Australia's most comprehensive action plan to address these issues which is focussed on changing the culture, changing the law and changing the environment. This is welcome news to local residents in the Caxton Street area and welcome news to all those people who are keen to see Queensland and precincts like Caxton Street amongst the safest places in Australia for people to go out and enjoy themselves.

In the largest ever commitment made by any Queensland government to support vulnerable families, this budget delivers an additional \$406 million over the next five years to implement the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry recommendations. The Queensland government wants to support parents and families to keep their children safely at home, and provide the right support services at the right time for families in need. Both providers and individuals across my electorate will also welcome operating grants of almost \$18 million for disability services and \$300,000 for social inclusion programs.

I am also pleased that there is more than \$1.4 million for non-government organisations in my electorate to deliver specialist homelessness services aimed at both reducing the number of homeless people and the number of people becoming homeless in Queensland by assisting people to obtain housing, maintain their housing and maximise their capacity to be independent, self-reliant and connected to appropriate social and community supports.

On the public transport front, I commend the Minister for Transport and Main Roads for bringing an end to Labor's ongoing public transport fare hikes, delivering on our election promise to lower the cost of living. As the Minister for Transport and Main Roads has said, Labor's crippling 15 per cent annual fare hikes, which began in 2009, will be a thing of the past, as the hard work to deliver a more efficient, frequent and reliable network has paid off. This budget outlines that any annual change to fares will not be above inflation for the next three years. Through hard work and strong economic management we have been able to return costs to normal, delivering real savings for millions of people.

In my role as Assistant Minister for Technical and Further Education, I am delighted that in this budget Queensland families will have greater access to high-quality education and training opportunities as we continue to implement significant reforms in the VET sector through the 'Great skills. Real opportunities' five-year action plan. As we grow a strong, four-pillar economy Queensland must look at ways of boosting productivity and increasing participation in the workforce. As I have said on many occasions in this House, to boost productivity we must minimise skills shortages. Therefore, training funds must be focused, not 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.

For the first time in the state's history, industry employers are having a direct influence on the government's VET investment through the ministerial industry commission that I chair. This means the almost \$1.1 billion taxpayers invest in training and tertiary education will be better targeted towards addressing skills shortages and leading to real job outcomes. We are continuing to offer fee-free apprenticeships and traineeships in high-priority skills areas to year 12 graduates and we are spending up to \$13 million over three years in the School to Trade Pathway and Group Training Organisation Additional Apprentice Bonus initiatives to support our commitment to create 10,000 additional apprenticeships over six years.

I cannot complete my comments without mentioning the issue of concessions to pensioners. I must reiterate that the Commonwealth government unilaterally and without warning cancelled \$50 million in funding for a range of concessions, which Queensland pensioners receive. Unlike those opposite, I join with the Premier and every member on this side of the House in condemning the federal government for these cuts to such a vulnerable group of Queenslanders.

The Queensland government initially increased its funding in this area by 9.9 per cent, but understood that it would not be enough to offset the impact of the federal government's decision. But having listened to Queensland pensioners, I congratulate the Premier on his decision that this government will fully offset the federal government cuts and give certainty and security to Queensland pensioners.

The Newman government has always been open and upfront about the problems and challenges we face now and in the future and, once again, this is a budget that is, quite simply, sensible and responsible. It is a sensible and responsible budget this year with a strong plan for the future. The Strong Choices website gave Queenslanders an insight into the complex challenges facing the state government as it aims to reduce the debt to a sustainable level for future prosperity, while funding front-line staff in essential services, and maintaining and upgrading vital infrastructure including hospitals, schools and roads. I note that Queenslanders have told the government, through the unprecedented consultation of the people's budget, that they are less likely to favour reduced services or paying more taxes.

As I mentioned, the now three budgets delivered by this government have all been about repairing the state's finances and charting a path to turn around the Queensland economy and return our AAA rating. But at this juncture in the state's economic history, there are limited opportunities for the government to implement further measures that will have a meaningful impact on the size of the state's debt.

We also know that the federal budget has increased federal taxes and reduced services so, in this new context, I support the position that the government must consider the sale or lease of government owned assets to reduce the state's debt and interest bill. This will enable investment in new infrastructure like roads, hospitals and schools, while keeping debt at a sustainable level to bolster Queensland's future prosperity. It is now the strongest and smartest choice, and I look forward to continuing this conversation with residents in my electorate.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Treasurer for his continued diligence and hard work in pursuing economically sound and financially prudent measures which confirms that this strong team is the only one with a strong plan for a brighter future.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 pm to 2.30 pm.

Debate, on motion of Mr Pitt, adjourned.

## MINERAL AND ENERGY RESOURCES (COMMON PROVISIONS) BILL

### Introduction

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.30 pm): I present a bill for an act to provide for the first step in creating a simplified common framework for managing resource authorities in order to optimise development and use of Queensland's mineral and energy resources and to manage overlapping coal and petroleum resource authorities for coal seam gas, and further to repeal the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers' Superannuation Act 1989, and to amend this act, the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Geothermal Energy Act 2010, the Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2009, the Land Court Act 2000, the Mineral Resources Act 1989, the Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement Act 1985, the Petroleum Act 1923, the Petroleum and Gas (Production and Safety) Act 2004, the Property Law Act 1974, the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971, the Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Act 2003 and the Mineral Resources Regulation 2013 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee to consider the bill.

*Tabled paper:* Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill 2014 [\[5340\]](#).

*Tabled paper:* Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5341\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill 2014 which delivers a strong plan for a brighter future for one of Queensland's four economic pillars—the resources sector. This bill contains a number of vital reforms that will assist economic development in Queensland by reducing the complexity, volume and duplication contained within existing legislation for the resources sector.

The bill will deliver on a range of government commitments and initiatives that take a significant step towards modernising and streamlining Queensland's resources legislation. In particular, this is the first stage in creating a single, common resources act under the landmark Modernising Queensland's Resources Acts Program for the mining, petroleum and gas, greenhouse gas storage and geothermal energy sectors.

It also makes a number of other key amendments to create a new framework to resolve overlapping tenure issues between coal and coal seam gas tenures, reform land access arrangements, reduce red tape for mining applicants—including the small-scale alluvial mining sector—and enable government and industry to address uncontrolled gas emissions from legacy bore holes. The Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill 2014 will also enable more efficient use of incidental coal seam gas produced during coalmining and, more broadly, will reduce the regulatory burden on Queensland's resources sector.

This bill starts the Modernising Queensland's Resources Acts Program reform process by creating the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Act into which harmonised provisions from the five resource acts can be migrated. The act will operate alongside the existing resources legislation and will be used as a transitional act until all remaining provisions can be transitioned into a final common mineral and energy resources act. As well as creating the new common provisions act, this bill migrates the first package of legislative content to the new act. The provisions being migrated from the five resource acts include dealings, caveats and associated agreements, and the land access framework. In some cases minor changes have been required to give consistency across resource types.

The amendments I am introducing establish a new framework to manage overlapping coal and coal seam gas tenures. This is one of the key commitments of the Newman government's current six-month action plan to support and grow Queensland's resources sector. The current overlapping tenure framework has not kept pace with developments in conventional coalmining or the relatively

new and rapidly expanding coal seam gas industry. The Newman government listened to and worked with industry and together we have developed a new, practical framework that overcomes the complexities and uncertainties of the current framework.

The new framework provides a direct path to grant for both coal and coal seam gas production tenures, a 'right of way' for coalmining tenure holders to develop coal deposits, and a less adversarial dispute resolution process. This new framework will encourage both industries to cooperate to optimise the development and use of the state's resources which will maximise the benefits of the industry for local communities, the regions and all Queenslanders.

This bill also delivers on the Newman government's six-point action plan to reform the land access framework, which addresses specific industry and landholder concerns. The bill will give effect to the Land Access Implementation Committee's recommendations that require legislative changes, which include: expanding the Land Court's jurisdiction to hear conduct matters when considering conduct and compensation agreements; requiring that conduct and compensation agreements be noted on the relevant property title; and allowing two willing parties to opt out of entering a formal conduct and compensation agreement.

The bill also implements a consistent restricted land framework across all resources types that will provide landholders and resource companies with greater certainty of their rights and obligations for gaining access to private land near residences and other infrastructure. Resource companies must have the consent of the landholder to undertake resource activities near infrastructure such as residences. The bill provides for increased restricted land for landholders engaging with coal and mineral companies and, for the first time, will provide landholders with the right to choose whether or not coal seam gas activities can occur near their home. Restricted land also extends beyond the boundary of the resource authority, offering the same protections to neighbouring landholders.

Further amendments are proposed to provide for greater flexibility when dealing with and administering restricted land within a mining lease. It is proposed that when a mining lease is issued over the entire area of the application, restricted land within the lease will not be able to be developed until consent from the landholder is obtained. The one exception to this proposal is where a mine is assessed as requiring access to the entire surface of the land, such as for an open-cut mine. In such situations it is proposed that landowner consent will no longer be required for activities within the restricted land; however, the resource authority holder must enter into a compensation agreement with the landowner. Further, the landholder retains the right to object to the removal of the consent rights for activities on restricted land in the Land Court.

Also, the bill further delivers on the government's commitment to reduce red tape for the small-scale alluvial mining sector and the broader mining industry. The amendments in the bill provide greater flexibility in tenure application processes, reduced costs and greater certainty about assessment time frames. While these amendments are specifically targeted at small-scale alluvial miners, these reforms will also benefit the broader mining sector. In particular, the bill amends the notification and objection process for mining lease applications, removing duplication and creating more streamlined and efficient processes between the Mineral Resources Act 1989 and the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The reform process takes into account the risk and the size and impact of the mining operation in determining the notification and objection process.

Additional amendments clarify the matters that the Land Court can consider when hearing objections to mining leases to remove duplication between resources and environmental protection legislation. The bill also establishes more flexible and less prescriptive options for identifying the boundaries of mining leases and claims while ensuring they are still clear and unambiguous and able to be located on the ground.

My department has also been working with the coalmining and coal seam gas industries to deliver safe, best practice solutions in the form of a protocol for managing uncontrolled gas emissions from legacy boreholes. The bill includes amendments that support the protocol to allow urgent remediation action where boreholes present a safety risk.

Other amendments in this bill include repealing the Coal and Oil Shale Mine Workers' Superannuation Act 1989 to give coal and oil shale mine workers freedom of choice with regard to their superannuation investment; reducing usage restrictions on incidental coal seam gas developed as a by-product of coal mining; and removing redundant requirements imposed on a holder of an authority to prospect, petroleum lease and mining tenement that are largely administrative and impose unnecessary regulatory burden on the holder's operations, such as the requirement for a petroleum tenure holder to lodge a notice about a petroleum discovery and its commercial viability.

The value of the raw, stand-alone information provided in these notices outside of a contextual setting is of little value to the government and places an extra level of red tape on petroleum tenure holders. The bill also removes obsolete environmental provisions in the Mount Isa Mines Limited Agreement Act 1985 to reflect the transition of the environmental regulation of the mine to the Environmental Protection Act 1994. The government has a strong plan to reduce red tape and drive investment certainty in the resources sector. These reforms will support a brighter future for a strong resources sector in Queensland. I commend the bill to the House.

### First Reading

**Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (2.41 pm): I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Question put—That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

### Referral to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mrs Cunningham): Order! In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

## APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

### APPROPRIATION BILL

### REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

#### Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 2113, on motion of Mr Nicholls—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (2.41 pm): This is the Newman government's third budget of broken promises. At the outset, I note that this budget already has a \$223 million black hole thanks to the backflip on pensioner concessions only necessary because of the Premier's black heart in the first place. This is not a budget in the interests of working Queenslanders. It is a budget for the boardroom, not a budget for the battlers or Queensland families. It is a budget for the biggest asset sell-off in our state's history, not a budget for jobs. It is a budget that confirms the dismal economic and fiscal management of the Newman LNP government.

Ahead of the budget, the Treasurer has spent \$6 million of taxpayers' money on a political propaganda campaign to try to hoodwink Queenslanders into thinking that asset sales are a good idea. This campaign pretended to consult with Queenslanders about so-called strong choices, but the outcome was always predetermined. After the first stage of this political propaganda campaign, the Treasurer released a document entitled *The Strongest and Smartest Choice* in order to claim that asset sales are the only way. This is the height of arrogance from this Treasurer and the Newman LNP government. To go out and say that we want to hear from Queenslanders about their strong choices and then say to people that their choices were not smart enough is an insult.

There is a good reason why the Treasurer did not include this asset sales manifesto with the other budget papers: it was to hide them. But most of all the Treasurer really did not want anyone to look at the broken promises confirmed in these budget papers. There was the broken promise to lower electricity bills by \$120 a year—bills that are now set to rise by \$560 since the Newman government came to power; the promise that formed the basis of the Treasurer's last budget reply speech in opposition; the broken promise to lower water bills, with the peak price path now tracking higher than under the previous government; the broken promise on jobs to lower unemployment to four per cent over six years. In April, unemployment was above GFC levels at 6.3 per cent. There was the broken promise to lower the cost of living by \$250 to \$330 with hikes in electricity prices, water prices and registration. There was the broken promise to get Queensland's economy back on track,

with the economy slowing and state final demand recording two consecutive quarters of contraction. And there was the broken promise that they had a plan to pay down debt without asset sales, with total gross debt now tracking towards \$82 billion.

Instead of admitting that they did not have all the answers before the election and that they have broken their promises, the Newman LNP government continues to bury their heads in the sand. They are in denial. The Newman government continues to pretend that unemployment has not increased and that the economy has not slowed under their watch. Such is the Treasurer's denial, he could not even mention the 6.3 per cent unemployment rate in his latest media statement on labour force figures. When this Newman LNP government was elected, Queensland's unemployment rate was 5.5 per cent. The budget papers now confirm that Treasury is not expecting unemployment to come back down to the level left by Labor until the 2016-17 financial year. This will leave the Premier short on his four per cent unemployment rate promise over six years. The budget projects unemployment in 2017-18 of 5¼ per cent—well above the Premier's promised four per cent unemployment rate. What does the difference between a four per cent and a 5.25 per cent unemployment figure mean? We are talking about thousands and thousands of Queenslanders who will be left on the unemployment heap under this government. It is not good enough for this government to wipe their hands of Queenslanders who want to work, nor is it acceptable for the government to pretend that it had nothing to do with Queensland recording its worst employment growth in more than two decades in 2012-13 as it went about sacking 20,000 workers.

After more than two years, the Newman government still has no plan for jobs or for supporting employment. Instead of this government accepting that unemployment is a problem, instead of accepting that a rise in youth unemployment from 11.9 per cent at the election to 13.4 per cent in April is unacceptable, they just ignore that it is happening. Unlike Labor, this Newman LNP government has no plan to assist the unemployed and no plan to address the rising unemployment rate under their watch.

In contrast to the Newman LNP government, Labor has a policy and a plan to get Queenslanders back into work. Last year we launched our ready for work policy to target young school leavers and assist them in getting a job. Labor has committed to reinstate the funding for Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which supported 57,000 Queenslanders into work. The only party in this state that has a plan to support Queenslanders into jobs is the Labor Party, because unlike those opposite we actually value the dignity of work.

After more than two years in office, this Newman LNP government still has no plan for jobs—just as this government still has no plan for the economy. Yesterday the latest ABS national accounts data were released. These figures detailed that Queensland recorded a contraction of 0.8 per cent in state final demand in the March quarter 2014, following a contraction of 0.4 per cent in the December quarter. The Treasurer in September last year referred to state final demand to claim that Queensland was 'the powerhouse state of Australia'. The Treasurer cannot deny the significance of the latest figures which show that without LNG-driven export growth the domestic economy would be on the verge of recession.

In 2014-15 the economy is expected to grow at three per cent following growth of three per cent this financial year. This is slower growth than the four per cent economic growth the Newman LNP government inherited from Labor more than two years ago. The budget papers set out a contraction in business investment of 20 per cent, a contraction in private investment of 11.25 per cent and a contraction in state final demand of 1.25 per cent next financial year. These figures combined with a forecast average annual unemployment rate of six per cent paint a picture of a very weak domestic economy over the next year.

The Newman government has failed to present any substantive economic strategy. All we get are slogans about pillars, just like we heard before the election. In April last year the Treasurer said, 'The export phase of the projects currently under construction in Queensland will come online and balance out any slowdown in resources sector investment.' These budget papers, including the stark outlook for the domestic economy over the next year, clearly show that the Treasurer's 'do nothing and hope nobody notices' approach is the wrong approach.

The Labor opposition will have a very different approach. As outlined by the Leader of the Opposition, the only party with a policy and plan for the whole economy and for the high-tech jobs of the future is the Labor Party. Despite the stark outlook for the economy of the next year, the Premier as recently as February said, 'It is going to be a great year because my firm view is that it is a year it all comes together for Queensland.' We cannot just pretend that an economy that has slowed with

higher unemployment is an economy that is 'back on track'. They are the same old slogans, but they do not reflect what is actually happening. You cannot claim that business investment in a 20 per cent freefall is somehow an improvement on the growth of 40.8 per cent in business investment inherited from Labor. You cannot just pretend that the latest NAB business survey does not rank Queensland last for business conditions. The Premier went on to say, 'We had to make a lot of difficult decisions, particularly in the first 12 months. But this year we are seeing the fruits of those difficult and tough decisions come together.' I am not sure what this arrogant and out-of-touch Premier is seeing, but it clearly is not what Queensland Treasury is seeing, what the ABS is seeing, what businesses are seeing or what working Queensland families are going through.

The damage done to the economy from the Newman government's mismanagement of the economy has not been without consequences for the state's financial position. The Treasurer in his first budget of broken promises cut too hard and too fast, hiking royalties at the worst possible time for the coal industry, slowing the economy and driving up unemployment in the process. This contributed to lower revenue, which then led the Treasurer to increase taxes in his second budget of broken promises including a hike to the insurance levy and the emergency management fire and rescue levy, both of which have a direct impact on the cost of living for Queensland families.

Taxes have increased by \$1,320 per family of four under the Newman government. This is after the Treasurer in opposition decried that taxes and charges under Labor were 'out of control'. Now in his third budget of broken promises the Treasurer is claiming that he has to engage in the largest asset sell-off in Queensland's history. The 2014 budget papers confirm a blow-out in the fiscal deficit of \$1.9 billion compared with the previous Labor government's projections in 2013-14, and another \$1 billion blow-out compared with Labor projections in 2014-15. While there was some improvement in 2012-13, combined fiscal deficits as set out in the 2014 state budget have worsened by \$2.7 billion compared with the projections under the previous government. It is important to note here that in 2016-17 the budget would not even be in a fiscal surplus without both the \$600 million plus in petroleum royalties and the returns from the Gladstone Port from the LNG industry initiated by the former Labor government.

I refer to the fiscal position only because it is the position being reported in Queensland—unlike any other state or territory in Australia. But even on the Treasurer's preferred measure—which counts the sale of assets into the bottom line and presents the budget position as worse than it is—combined deficits are larger than under Labor. So if the fiscal deficits are larger, how can the Treasurer claim to be paying down debt without asset sales? Well, the Treasurer has already been selling assets without a mandate. Already \$11 billion in assets have been sold without a mandate, including schools, TAFEs, the ElectraNet business, Aurizon shares and the Queensland Motorways business. The Treasurer claims that the previous government must be responsible for their projection for peak gross debt of \$85 billion, yet the Treasurer is taking no responsibility for his peak gross debt projection of \$82 billion after selling \$11 billion in assets with no election mandate.

The Treasurer said after his first budget that it marked a 'line in the sand' and that the LNP would take 'full responsibility for the decisions we've made in this budget'. Back then state debt was \$62.7 billion, not \$80 billion. Two years on this government are still all blame and no responsibility. Premier and Treasurer, being a grown-up involves more than just talking about being grown up. It also requires you to grow up and take responsibility for being in government—like taking responsibility for having increased state debt by \$13.8 billion from \$62.4 billion to more than \$76 billion.

Those opposite are happy to take all the credit and cut the ribbons at projects funded by this spending but take no responsibility. The best example from this budget is the credit taken for funding the Sunshine Coast University Hospital while blaming Labor for the debt. A mature government would take responsibility for a blow-out in the operating deficit for this financial year of more than \$1 billion compared with the previous government. The operating position is the budget position referred to by every other state and territory in Australia. The Queensland Treasurer refers to the fiscal position so that he can rewrite history, so that he can pretend that Labor did not record surpluses in seven of its last 11 years in government. The years of deficit under Labor coincided with 9/11, the GFC and the two years following natural disasters. There is a chart on this in the QTC investor booklet the Treasurer shows overseas investors—but you will not see him explain it to Queenslanders.

The Treasurer called Labor's return to surplus in 2014-15 'phony'. Labor's return to surplus involved a turnaround from a smaller operating deficit of \$1.3 billion in 2013-14 than under the LNP. But of course the Treasurer stands behind his return to an operating surplus in 2014-15 from a larger operating deficit of \$2.3 billion in 2013-14.

To respond to the Treasurer's comments this morning, the pre-election MYFER prepared by Treasury showed Labor were on track for surplus in 2014-15—a year ahead of 2015-16. Again, while every other state and territory refers to an operating surplus, this Treasurer continues to talk down the finances by referring to a fiscal position to justify his asset sales agenda. However, as I have outlined the LNP have recorded larger fiscal deficits from 2012-13 to 2014-15 than projected under Labor. This means the Treasurer's only plan for debt repayment all along has been asset sales.

Before the election, the LNP's economic blueprint failed to outline any plan for debt repayment beyond a statement that they would target 'the bad debt' and that they had a 'plan for a plan'—that and a 'non-independent politically motivated, made to order' Commission of Audit. For all the Premier and Treasurer's bluster demanding to see Labor's plan, that is all the LNP took to voters at the 2012 state election. I can assure Queenslanders that Labor will do better than that. We will be releasing a comprehensive fiscal and economic strategy ahead of the election. We will not hide our plan from voters like the Newman LNP government has done by outsourcing it to LNP life member Peter Costello, who was hosting LNP cash-for-access dinners before the election.

There are a few insights I can provide to the House about our fiscal policy here today. Labor's policy will not involve asset sales. We will not undermine the long-term structural position of the budget by flogging off our state's top income-earning assets. In total, our state's GOCs deliver a return of more than \$2 billion per year after servicing the \$32 billion in debt they hold. The Treasurer is spending more than \$11 million of taxpayers' money to convince Queenslanders that this is 'bad debt'. But debt that earns taxpayers a return or shares the cost of infrastructure over the life of an asset is not 'bad debt'. Of the dividends from government businesses, over two-thirds come from our state's electricity network. In total, Queensland's electricity assets are forecast to return more than \$1.5 billion this coming year to taxpayers. On today's figures, over the next decade that would mean a return of \$15 billion. To sell the long-term revenue streams of electricity network businesses to the private sector, along with the management as planned by the LNP, will only substantially weaken the state's structural position over the longer term—just like selling off the \$26 million return from the Townsville Port or the \$88 million return from the Port of Gladstone. These returns will only grow in future years, especially in Gladstone with LNG exports.

The LNP's electricity network privatisation will involve the sale of future revenue streams in order to deliver a one-off sugar hit. The Treasurer knows this, and we know this is not his preferred option. He knows that this is an attempt at a political solution which will only damage the state budget over the long term. It is not a fiscal solution. The financial impact on the state will also flow through to an impact on jobs and on electricity prices for consumers—consumers already struggling with electricity prices that are set to rise by more than 50 per cent under the Newman government. This is an attempt at a political solution that ultimately fails.

The Premier's words were clear in April 2013 when he said that 'we decided to not consider divestment of Energex, Ergon or Powerlink'. For the Premier's benefit, the Oxford English dictionary definition of 'divestment' is 'the action or process of selling off subsidiary business interests or investments'. Premier, selling the profits of a business, selling the management of a business and selling the debt of a business is divestment—just another word for privatisation. No matter what squirming or spinning this Premier does, he has broken his promise. The Treasurer has already admitted that his asset-sale, pork-barrelling approach will not return Queensland to a AAA credit rating. This was after the Treasurer said last week that lowering debt to \$55 billion would return Queensland to a AAA rating. So that has obviously changed within the space of a week.

The Treasurer has committed to lower overall gross debt to \$7 billion less than the \$62 billion left by the previous government. This is expected to occur through a program of mass sell-offs over six years and after more than two years in office. This approach puts a sword to the Treasurer's claims in 2012 of a 'debt crisis' and the Premier's hysteria over a 'power dive into the abyss'. Their so-called budget crisis—just like that of the LNP federally—has been shown to be a confected crisis to justify a political agenda of cutting, sacking and selling.

While the Treasurer wants you to focus on the total gross debt figure, his counterparts in New South Wales, Western Australia and Victoria all refer to the general government net debt position in their budget speeches. Of course there was no mention of general government net debt from the Treasurer. That is because general government net debt is going from the lowest in the nation at negative \$3.2 billion under Labor to a projected \$10.94 billion in 2014-15 under the Newman government. Unlike the debt of government owned businesses, this debt is not self-sustaining.

I can detail today that Labor's fiscal policy will be targeted at lowering general government net debt—just as the Treasurers of New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia target debt that is not self-sustaining. We will not take a short-term politically driven approach of targeting debt that is held by government owned businesses—debt that is both self-sustaining and delivers a return to taxpayers.

As flagged by the opposition Leader, Labor will commit to a new statutory authority called 'Building Queensland'. The best way Queensland can provide strong growth and a strong financial position is through growing the economy and well-targeted and efficiently delivered infrastructure. A mass sell-off of state assets for a short-term cash gain will only cause long-term financial pain. Queensland needs to be investing in the infrastructure that will improve our national and international competitiveness. Investors in Queensland's bonds want to see evidence that the projects being prioritised and funded will deliver a productivity and value return to the state. A Labor government will create a new independent statutory authority called 'Building Queensland'. This entity will be free from political interference and will be charged with formulating a priority list of infrastructure projects for the state in consultation with the community. While the Premier has been focused on his new office tower, the Deputy Governor of the RBA has been calling for investment in transport infrastructure to boost productivity. The LNP has made its infrastructure decisions based on politics instead of good planning and evidence.

If an independent Building Queensland had been permitted to do a cost-benefit analysis, the 1 William Street project would never have proceeded. It will end up costing taxpayers \$2.6 billion in dead money for a tower that Queenslanders will not even own. The policy guidelines for Building Queensland will require that a cost-benefit analysis and assessment of value for money take place prior to any project approval and that this assessment be released for public consultation. Building Queensland will be funded on a fee-for-service basis with departments and is expected to deliver whole-of-government savings by lowering external consultancies. A Labor government will make its decisions based on the independent recommendations from Building Queensland to ensure that projects that deliver the most benefits and that are the best value for money are funded first. If a project does not stack up under Labor, it will not proceed and the cost-benefit analysis will not be hidden from public scrutiny.

In the limited time I have remaining, I would like to very briefly outline what this budget means for Far North Queensland. In the Cairns region, infrastructure funding will be \$295 million less than the previous year. This will have a significant impact on the local economy, where youth unemployment has nearly doubled from 11 per cent in March 2012 to 21.8 per cent in April 2014. The budget also fails to reinstate the funding for the Cairns Special School that was removed or to secure the hospital land at Edmonton reserved for the next hospital in Cairns.

To conclude, Queenslanders will have a clear choice at the next election. The LNP will govern for asset sales and a higher cost of living. Labor will govern with a measured approach to strengthening the state's finances. The LNP think the way to manage the economy and the state's finances is to put an end to the concept of a fair go and to cut, slash and sell.

In the Labor movement we understand that the strength of our state is in our people, that providing people with a fair go underpins our economic and financial strength. Labor will be a government for all Queenslanders with a vision for a strong economy with full employment and higher living standards. The LNP will govern for those who can afford to pay. Labor will govern for growth and for all Queenslanders.

At the end of my contribution today I want to very quickly say that this government has had two years to get things back on track in this state. They have not done it. This is their third budget. When will they own their decisions? I leave that question to the House to answer because I doubt any of those opposite will be able to answer it.

 **Mr HOBBS** (Warrego—LNP) (3.01 pm): I am pleased to rise today to speak to the 2014 budget. Before I do that, it is no wonder the public has a poor opinion of politics when they hear members of the ALP pontificating about budget responsibilities and fiscal responsibility. The member who just spoke was also a minister in the former government that gave us a terrific debt, red tape that was binding and the worst results we have seen in recent history. How can he possibly sleep at night when he rises to speak of all that drivel? It is extraordinary. How can he do that? It is not credible. It is not credible at all.

**Mr Pitt:** Read the budget papers.

**Mr HOBBS:** Why does he not get a grip? He has absolutely lost it. He has no credibility at all. How can he come in here and try to lecture us on something that they entirely messed up?

This is a budget for the time because of the mess that those opposite left. It consolidates a plan to reduce the Labor debt and allow Queensland to grow and provide some necessary infrastructure. A minute ago we heard that drivel from the former minister and shadow Treasurer. There was nothing in there of any consequence at all that was even credible. There was not even a plan; there was nothing at all.

I now wish to talk about my electorate. Warrego is one of the five largest electorates in this state—

**Mr Johnson:** A very productive one.

**Mr HOBBS:**—and a very productive one as well, as the member for Gregory says. There are a number of areas I want to cover today. There has been enormous resource activity in the eastern part of the electorate, particularly from Roma going east through to Miles and Chinchilla and on to Dalby and Toowoomba as well. There is enormous development there. Further to the west people suffered through a drought last year and they are still facing a drought this year. It is quite a serious situation. In fact, this might even be one of the worst times we are going to strike for many, many years. It is pleasing to see that the government has recognised that by putting together a good drought package of \$62 million over two years to assist many landholders get through this period. I think we have to do more. There is an old prediction that all the sheep in Queensland will be able to stand under the shade of one tree.

**Mr Johnson:** That's if the bloody tree doesn't die. Without rain soon the tree will die.

**Mr HOBBS:** The tree will die, too. That is what would have happened if we had not put in so many water storage facilities. This is one of those years. I think it is shaping up that way.

There is assistance in the budget such as \$9 million for rental help, \$32.75 million for freight subsidies which is needed and there are emergency water infrastructure rebates as well as other provisions. Also there are people out there who have a lot of CSG wells on their properties and others who have some coming. So there is money put aside for compliance and engagement activities. There is also \$5.2 million for the department of environment's enforcement compliance. That is very important because of the high levels of stress, and a lot of people on the land do need assistance in that area.

Because of the enormous resource activity, the Royalties for the Regions has been a fantastic program. It has provided a lot of assistance over the years throughout Queensland. An amount of \$101.5 million has been allocated in the 2014-15 budget. Already there has been \$269 million across 93 projects. Leverage that with another \$200 million from industry and honourable members can see why it has been a fantastic package that has helped many of the towns. They have helped in such areas as water, sewerage and the roads that have been smashed to pieces due to constant use and so forth. So really good assistance has been provided.

Health is another very important aspect—and every electorate would find this so. Some of my small communities do have health issues. I want to congratulate the Minister for Health for his support in some of our far distant places that do need help. For instance, the town of Bollon looked like it was going to lose a service. However, the minister came in and supported that. There were also some issues at Morven. It looked like they were going to lose the permanent full-time DON. So now we have a package that will ensure that those smaller communities do have a good health service that the locals and the travelling public can use. There is also funding to improve the Roma based Flying Surgeon Service, which includes the Flying Obstetric and Gynaecology Service. That is a fantastic operation, and we are very pleased about that funding as well.

Of course roads is the biggest issue that we have faced. There is \$179 million for the Warrego Highway, which is a national highway. There is a lot more work to be done, particularly in relation to overtaking lanes, duplication, four-laning of some sections and other safety concerns related to heavy vehicle access. There is ongoing work with roads; it is never-ending. At the end of the day we have received good support. I certainly thank the Minister for Transport for that help as well. We are always looking for more, but we understand the system. Hopefully we can manage the best way we can.

One of the great things about this particular budget is that funding has been put aside for a Strong Choices Investment Program. I believe that is one of the key provisions in this budget that will help us in this state go forward and really put in place some plans for the future. This is infrastructure funding that is needed. We probably would not be able to fund this package without the leasing and

some sales. But at the end of the day, this package will certainly help my area with the Rural and Regional Roads Fund, Future Schools Fund, Rural and Regional Economic Development Fund, Local Government Co-Investment Fund, Future Fund, Entrepreneurial and Innovation Fund, Community Hospitals Fund and others. Those sorts of investments will help all of us across this great state, and that is very important.

Lastly, we need to consider very carefully the amount of money that we have put into rail over the years. There has been a lack of funding in rail. It has been forgotten in a lot of ways because we tend to only think about fixing the roads because we hear and see a lot of tragedies on the roads.

I suppose that we as politicians respond to requests to fix the roads, and so we should; but we also have to remember that if we addressed rail infrastructure, we could probably take a fair bit of transport off the roads. When you look at the overall structure, taxpayers fund the road network for everyone to use, but the taxpayer is very rarely involved in funding railways, so we are always looking for private infrastructure to do that. We do not do that with roads entirely, and I think we have to get that mix right. If we do not, our roads will certainly be congested in the very near future because we are going to see a doubling and tripling of freight coming through this state. Presently it has to go on the roads because there is no other way. If you look at the Port of Brisbane, for example, 84 per cent of the freight going out of there goes by road. In 2026 the Gateway Motorway will be gridlocked. We have to do more; doing nothing is not an option. We need to have a good look at where we are going, and in these other funds that we are putting together we may be able to find some assistance to help move our transport. If we want to become the food bowl of Asia, we have to be able to get our products out. In the next 10 to 15 years we are going to have a great deal of difficulty shifting our products unless we can do a lot more with our rail infrastructure.

I would say to the Treasurer that I think this is a good budget for the times. You have done a lot of work on this. The Strong Choices campaign was very thorough, and I do not think I have ever seen more consultation put into a process to enable the people out there to have a say. It is unlike what happened in previous governments, when they sneaked around and sold off everything after the event. I think this is a good process, and I commend the budget to the House.

 **Hon. DF CRISAFULLI** (Mundingburra—LNP) (Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience) (3.12 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2014 budget. With the indulgence of the House I intend to deal with it in two parts: the first is in my most important and valued role as the member for Mundingburra; and the second is the role I am very privileged to have, which is the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience. I will begin as the local member. What I am particularly pleased with about this budget is that it truly deals with the big four issues that we have in our city of Townsville, and that is roads, health, education and law and order. I will address some of those highlights and then I will talk about some of the challenges for the future.

In terms of roads, one of the great things that pleases me—and it is wonderful today to have not just the Treasurer in the House, but also the Minister for Transport and Main Roads—is the excellent announcement that the Woolcock and Pilkington Street roundabout will be done. It is yet another road project that we saw sit idle for far too long, and I intend to speak about that briefly in a moment. I will continue to fight hard for roads in my city. I am very passionate about roads; it is one of the reasons I chose to come to this place. Looking into the future I see the duplication of Stuart Drive as being very important. I also see the next intersection down, Woolcock and Duckworth, as being a major project, and I will continue to lobby hard for that.

I am very pleased with the \$768 million funding for the Bruce Highway. It shows that if you are prepared and you have the ticker to put forward a clear plan, you can get benefits. That is what we did. We said that we would contribute over and above our contribution despite the fact that it is a federal road. To the great credit of the federal government, they have answered the call with the infrastructure funding in this budget. Projects like stage 4 of the ring-road and the continuation of the duplication of Vantassel Street are great projects. They are great infrastructure, they are job creators and they are very good pieces of future mitigation for our great city.

I will now turn to health. Since we have come into government we have seen an increase in the order of about 13.5 per cent. But judge a government not on its ability to write cheques; judge it on its ability to get results. The local health and hospital boards have truly been a great success, and the turnaround in Queensland Health has been because of discipline, some tough decisions and local boards making local decisions. An additional \$41.2 million for the hospital expansion is fantastic; \$10.4 million to complete the Townsville Medium Secure Rehabilitation Unit; and extra money for the cancer centre.

It is a great shame that the Manager of Opposition Business has left the House, but I just want to talk about the \$14.3 million which is going towards the establishment of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine at James Cook University. Today we have heard the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Mulgrave talk about the future being in innovation. To my mind this is the future and it is innovation, and I am very, very proud to live in a city that has a university which wants to take itself to the next level when it comes to tropical research. I pay tribute to the James Cook University for doing a remarkable job.

**Mr Johnson:** What outstanding results that university has!

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** I must take that interjection from the member for Gregory, who is a great friend of regional Queensland. Indeed it has been a great university which has produced great results, and in recent years it has taken a great focus on tropical medicine.

To hear the nonsense that came out of Canberra today from Senator Kim Carr is an absolute disgrace. I say to those opposite: you have an opportunity to do what you did not do when it came to the carbon tax and to do what you did not do when your Labor mates took \$102 million out of our Health budget, and that is to stand up and call it for what it is. The comments today from Kim Carr are an absolute disgrace. Please let me paint the picture for members. Senator Carr is referring to the federal government's decision during the estimates process to match our \$42 million funding to create that wonderful tropical research hub at James Cook University. I am going to quote from their higher education spokesman, Kim Carr, who said—

I suppose you're going to tell me that because it's in the tropics ... therefore it must be good at tropical (research)?

Then he followed by saying—

I would have thought we'd be looking for the best location for our research ... based on excellence.

The mocking continued.

**Mr Hathaway** interjected.

**Mr CRISAFULLI:** Indeed it is, member for Townsville. It is a world-class university. My city will not be mocked by some southern based senator. My city will not be knocked by some guy who wants to make political mileage out of picking on a small regional university, because it is very good at what it does and it is damn proud of where it is located. This tropical research centre is something that we are very proud to have backed. He refers to it as being some sort of pork-barrelling. It is not pork-barrelling; it is what good governments do. They look for opportunities to find niche markets. They do not look for opportunities to build infrastructure that does not work. They do not look for opportunities to create payroll systems that do not pay. They look for opportunities to deliver jobs, outcomes and future niche markets, and that is what this is. I am very, very proud of it, and I am proud that this budget makes a contribution towards it.

I will briefly touch on education. It is wonderful to see the increase in Great teachers = Great results. It is wonderful to have over 700 additional teachers and teacher aids state-wide. We will be fighting for our fair share. Between the member for Townsville, the member for Thuringowa, the member for Hinchinbrook and the member for Burdekin, we will continue to hunt as a pack for our fair share. Extra money for the maintenance fund is tremendous.

Finally, the fourth point is law and order. The extra police which will come to our city through the police hub are a wonderful initiative and something of which I am particularly proud. We have now seen 60 additional police come into the Townsville police area in the two years since we have come to government.

I am going to very briefly touch on this contribution now, because I am moving into the next phase of the campaign and that is 'into the future'. In recent days quite rightly there have been some good comments and some bad comments about the budget, and quite rightly people have been pointing out what they see as strengths and weaknesses. That is what should always happen because we live in a democracy where people can put forward their points of view. But I would say to my local newspaper that I look forward to them assisting us when it comes to delivering through the Smart Choices infrastructure program. I do not see this as an 'us and them' situation; quite the contrary. In fact, at the invitation of the newspaper I addressed a business breakfast about a month ago, and I issued a challenge to the city: put forward what you see as the opportunity for this infrastructure fund and then put us to work.

What is refreshing is that, unlike what we have seen in the past, there are no underhand deals. The community knows what it is going to get. It is going to get a government that is going to pay down debt—and we have to pay down debt and I support the ratio of 75 per cent in terms of paying down debt—but we also have an opportunity to create a golden era for infrastructure delivery in this state and people are going to know what they are voting for. They are going to know what is going to be delivered. I say to the newspaper: rather than take this opportunity to say, ‘What sort of guarantee will there be?’, the joy for our community is that it will be able to look and it will be able to judge. I look forward to that, because we are here as servants of the people and we should be judged on our results—as we should when we said to the community two years ago that we would not take the issue of juvenile crime lying down, and we fought very hard in this place to make changes to the Youth Justice Act which were opposed by a number of different sectors. We said that we would fight hard for extra police, and we got them. We said that we would finally build some roads in our city, and I look at Blakeys Crossing that has started that they said would never happen. I look at the Dalrymple-Banfield intersection that they said would never happen and the Woolcock-Mather intersection that they said would never happen. They are all either done or in the process of being done and, given the Minister for Transport is here, we have another one on the boil and maybe a couple more into the future. So I look forward to being judged on my results because that is what I get paid to come into this place to do.

In the very short period of time left I turn to my portfolio. I am very pleased to see the Treasurer’s allocated funding between councils and Main Roads to continue the flood recovery. Yes, Tropical Cyclone Ita could have been far worse for us, but judge us not on what the damage bill will be but on how we respond, and the way that we have seen the turnaround in disaster recovery in this state is something that we should all be very proud of. It is now a partnership and having the Department of Transport and Main Roads delivering as it is and having councils delivering with us in my mind has been a huge step forward. In closing, for the first time we will also work with local governments to pay a greater portion of their grants upfront. We do trust them. We have seen slowly but surely a turnaround in the way that they deliver their funding. We will continue to support things like graffiti initiatives and show grants, because we believe at the heart of every good community is a good local government. In conclusion, the budget does deliver across our big four areas for my home city of Townsville and my electorate of Mundingburra. But more importantly what it does is it sets up a challenge—a challenge for the future, a challenge for infrastructure delivery for the part of the state that I am so passionate about, and a challenge that I look forward to accepting with my colleagues in the north.

 **Hon. SA EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (3.22 pm): I rise to speak to the budget handed down by the Treasurer on Tuesday to deliver a strong plan for a bright future for Queenslanders. In my portfolio of Transport and Main Roads we are continuing to deliver on our election promises. We are responsibly balancing increases in spending for vital roads and transport projects and front-line services while avoiding the need to raise or introduce new taxes. We are sustainably and strategically investing in the infrastructure Queensland needs as our state grows. Over the next year the Queensland government will deliver almost \$770 million of improvements to the Bruce Highway. This is a record spend and is almost double what previous Labor governments had proposed. While my colleagues agree that this is a sound investment, the Labor Party has a different view. The opposition has no plan, no policies and believes any money spent on the Bruce Highway is misspending. Even when the members opposite were in government, they were satisfied to neglect this 1,700-kilometre lifeline. Unlike those opposite, we have a strong plan for a stronger Bruce Highway.

We have secured a \$10 billion, 10-year deal with the Commonwealth government to fund safety, flood mitigation and capacity works right across the Bruce Highway and the Gateway Motorway. These projects provide real value to everyday Queenslanders. What do capacity works like the Mackay ring-road and the upgrade between Vantassel and Cluden in Townsville actually mean for motorists? They mean improving travel times for mothers who need to drop their kids off to school and get to work and who do not want to be stuck in traffic for 45 minutes. Safety works like the two new interchanges on the Sunshine Motorway and Caloundra Road mean getting home safely to your family. Flood mitigation works like those from Cooroy to Curra or the Yeppen flood plains south mean keeping communities connected during flood events and ensuring families still have access to food and supplies.

As well as the record spend on the Bruce Highway, we are delivering better infrastructure and better planning through our four-year Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program. Over the next four years we have a strong \$18.1 billion program. In 2014-15 we have allocated \$4.8 billion, a 37 per cent increase compared to Labor's allocation of \$3.5 billion for the same year. This program means funding is confirmed for some of our key promises, including the Gateway upgrade north, the Toowoomba second range crossing and the Warrego Highway between Toowoomba and Miles. I was pleased to note AgForce Chief Executive Charles Burke welcomed the investment in the Toowoomba second range crossing, acknowledging it as a project of critical importance to the industry. Our program is also delivering a much needed funding boost to key regional highways, including \$179 million for the Warrego, \$12 million for the Capricorn, \$24 million for the Cunningham, \$19 million for the Dawson, \$15 million for the Kennedy, \$41 million for the Flinders and \$21 million for the Peak Downs. We are a government with a strong plan and have kept our promise to deliver better infrastructure and better planning for Queenslanders. But do not just take my word for it: the major advocate for Queensland motorists, the RACQ, has also welcomed our roads and infrastructure spend. RACQ Executive Manager Public Policy, Michael Roth, said—

It was pleasing to see the State Government maintain its commitment to road safety and infrastructure in this year's budget.

Daniel Gschwind, the Chief Executive Officer of the Tourism Industry Council, also said in an ABC interview that he supports the infrastructure investment in the Bruce Highway and the second range crossing.

Queenslanders are no strangers to natural disasters and every cyclone or flood event takes its toll on our road network. This budget will finalise our efforts to fast-track Queensland's disaster recovery for roads. The \$860 million funding will allow us to finish work from weather events in 2011, 2012 and 2013 which includes \$130 million from Cyclone Ita earlier this year. We have a strong record in fast-tracking flood recovery works and getting regional communities back up and running. This year we will deliver almost \$2 billion in disaster recovery work. We will also continue our investment in rail infrastructure. In 2014-15 we are investing \$28.7 million towards construction of the third and fourth tracks between Lawnton and Petrie and \$25.4 million for the new generation rolling stock project that will deliver 75 new six-car trains. Let us not forget our new trains will be delivered at a saving of more than \$11 million per train compared to prices achieved by the previous government. The budget also delivers a second year of our \$350 million Road Safety Action Plan that contains 60 items aimed at driving down our road toll. We strive for a bright future with no fatalities on our roads. Through the work of police and our \$350 million, two-year Road Safety Action Plan, our road toll currently stands at 88, which is the lowest on record. This is 47 below the same time last year and nine less than the record road toll in 2010. While any death on our roads is a tragedy, it is pleasing to see our plan is making a difference and delivering a brighter future for Queenslanders.

When we came to office we promised to improve reliability, frequency and affordability of the public transport network. We have already taken train reliability from a three-year low to an all-time high and added more than 1,000 additional weekly train and 2,000 additional weekly bus services. We have put an end to Labor's legacy of 15 per cent fare hikes and kept to our election promise to lower the cost of living by halving Labor's 15 per cent fare hikes in 2013 and 2014, and I am pleased that we have found the savings to do even more by capping fares at 2.5 per cent for the next three years. Under our policies, a regular weekday two-zone passenger will be paying \$1.20 less per journey, saving \$750 per year compared to go card prices under Labor. A passenger from the Gold Coast or Sunshine Coast will also be better off by \$4.30 per journey, saving \$2,500 per year.

This promise follows on from our successful free travel after nine weekly go card journeys, benefiting 70,000 regular weekday passengers. In contrast to our efforts to improve affordability and despite the current opposition leader supporting the initiative, the member for South Brisbane wants it scrapped. This deceitful Labor Party does not have any clear policies except to put up fares by 15 per cent, driving patronage down, and getting the old gang back like Cameron Dick, Stirling Hinchliffe and Kerry Shine, who got us into such a financial mess in the first place. Unlike Labor, our strong plan for getting more people back onto public transport is working. The budget shows that public transport patronage was ahead of its target, with 176.7 million trips taken in 2013, more than one million additional trips than there were in the previous year. As part of our promise to lower the cost of living, this budget fulfils our commitment to freeze registration for the family car for our first term.

In addition to the bright future that this budget will be delivering in Transport and Main Roads, my electorate of Indooroopilly is also benefiting from this government's strong plan. In 2014-15, \$10 million has been committed to disability services funding in the Indooroopilly electorate. This funding is committed to assisting people with a disability and their families to access the support and

services that they need as they move through the different stages of their lives. As I announced last year, cyclists will benefit from \$5.8 million allocated in this budget to construct a \$10 million cycleway bridge over Moggill Road at the Centenary Motorway interchange. This will mean a safer journey for cyclists travelling between the western suburbs and Brisbane city.

The University of Queensland at St Lucia continues to go from strength to strength. I know that many people in my electorate and other people across Queensland will benefit from the research that can be conducted as a result of the \$2.5 million in funding provided to UQ to establish the Clem Jones Centre for Ageing Dementia and over half a million dollars committed to design research of solar thermal power plants.

I know that the Minister for Education is very proud of the Great Results Guarantee. It is very encouraging that schools across the Indooroopilly electorate will be benefiting from it. These schools include Fig Tree Pocket State School, Graceville State School, Indooroopilly State School and Indooroopilly State High School, Ironside State School, Milpera State School, Sherwood State School and Tennyson Special School. In a further boost to education for the western suburbs, Indooroopilly State High School will be receiving \$1.5 million and Ironside State School will receive \$500,000 for the construction of additional accommodation on their campuses. This budget continues our \$10 million four-year election promise to roll out flashing lights at over 300 schools. St Peter's Lutheran College, Graceville State School, Indooroopilly State School, Ironside State School, Sherwood State School and Indooroopilly State High School are already benefiting from this investment.

Our strong plan, outlined in the budget, builds on the work that this government has already been doing in my electorate. Planning work is underway to increase accessibility at the Graceville train station. The Graceville train station is one of four stations, along with stations at Dinmore, Alderley and Newmarket, that are receiving about \$40 million worth of accessibility upgrades. Work is now underway on the Western Freeway to widen it from two to three lanes in each direction between Indooroopilly and Toowong. About 70,000 vehicles use this road and, when Legacy Way is opened, more and more people will be using the Western Freeway. This upgrade will ensure that we have the capacity to support the growth that is occurring along this corridor.

Works are also underway to deliver a new noise barrier along Myla Terrace in my electorate. I am proud to be delivering an upgrade that will reduce the noise from the Tennyson rail corridor as part of the LNP government's election commitment to provide better infrastructure and planning for the community. The memorial at Myla Terrace to honour local lives lost in World War II will also undergo a restoration as part of these works. This budget is a strong plan for a brighter future for my electorate of Indooroopilly and all of Queensland.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (3.32 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2014 state budget handed down by the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, on Tuesday of this week. Like I do so often, I stand here to say that I am very proud to be part of a strong government with a strong plan for a brighter future. This budget is a clear demonstration of how we are restoring and repairing the state's finances, which were left in absolute tatters when those opposite left government. It has been a difficult task, but we have made some strong choices and we have listened to Queenslanders about how they would like us to reduce Labor's legacy of \$80 billion worth of debt, which costs all Queenslanders up to \$4 billion annually in interest.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Treasurer for visiting Kingaroy through part of the Strong Choices campaign. He also went to Toowoomba, on the outer reaches, of my electorate. Everyone in Queensland had a chance to have their say in relation to the choices that face Queensland. This carefully balanced budget outlines our plan to secure our finances by making these strong and smart choices. It will help us make the smartest choice to reduce our debt so that we can invest sustainably in infrastructure such as schools and hospitals. Our government is the only government that can deliver for a brighter future.

Following the announcement of the budget this week, I received an email to my office from one of my constituents. It read—

I just wanted to add my support to today's budget announcement—if this is what it takes, then let's do it—there will be plenty of do-gooders—but the biggest problem is people's lack of understanding of the big picture as we need to get out of this mess that we are in.

The opposition, both State and Federally have a very short memory of why we are at this crossroads—I know this is impossible but I would love to see their plan ... One word of advice—Please keep reminding the public of who got us in this mess ...—you and the team need to keep this phrase going until you go blue in the face ... keep up the good work.

Congratulations to the Treasurer. This really sums up the feelings of Queenslanders who understand that, without strong choices, our government is faced with limited opportunities to implement further measures to help the future of all Queenslanders.

I would like to highlight a few of the budget announcements that will be of great benefit to the Nanango electorate. Firstly, one of the big announcements is the additional \$406 million over the next five years to implement the recommendations of the Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry. The provision of extra child safety officers will address the huge workload of our current staff, which in time will benefit all children who find themselves, through no fault of their own, unable to remain with their families. We have many of these children in my electorate.

It is wonderful to see a focus back on the important pillar of agriculture. Already, we have seen some major changes to legislation and regulation that makes life easier for our farmers, not the least of which is the vegetation management reforms and the recent land tenure reforms. I would really like to congratulate the Treasurer and the Minister for Agriculture for the \$62 million for ongoing drought assistance.

One area of the budget that I am extremely proud to have had involvement in is the future of succession planning in the regions. The lineal stamp duty concession that the Treasurer announced in his budget this week means that the future of some family farms that it is wished will be passed on, not from mum and dad to daughter or son but from an aunt and uncle down to a niece or a nephew, can be secured. I am very proud of the work that I did as assistant minister to the Treasurer around this policy decision.

Irrespective of what those opposite keep carrying on about—and it has been embarrassing to have to sit here to listen to what they have said—I am pleased to see an increase in spending by six per cent in the health sector. I congratulate the Minister for Health for all of the hard work that he is doing in my area, particularly around the South Burnett, in increasing the services provided by the South Burnett regional hospital. In Education, spending is up seven per cent. On top of that, we have a massive capital spend that is going into Kingaroy State High School to secure the future for the year 7s who are going into that school. I also want to touch quickly on a commitment for the Geham State School to upgrade the passenger set-down facilities and for a bus shelter. This is a small school located on the southern boundary of my electorate that has been lobbying very hard for an upgrade of their car park facilities. I am really pleased to have been able to support this commitment in the budget.

It is also important that I touch briefly on how successful we have been in the last 12 months with the betterment fund and continuing with that, whether it is for bridges for the Somerset region or the Royalties for the Regions project. I am hoping to work with the Deputy Premier and relevant ministers to ensure that this Royalties for the Regions money continues to flow, for example, for more overtaking lanes. I have just been able to announce further overtaking lanes to the two that we were already along the way of delivering—another overtaking lane just north of Kingaroy, which is extremely exciting.

A big win for the Nanango electorate in this budget is a brand new police station for the Kingaroy and South Burnett police. I am extremely proud, after many years of lobbying—even before I was a member of this House—to have achieved this goal. These hardworking men and women are working in the most diabolical conditions. Local lawyers have to sit in the car park while they are interviewing clients, which is completely unacceptable in this day and age. I am extremely proud that we have been able to announce the new police station. The Nanango police do not miss out; they are receiving an upgrade to their police station. At this stage I wish to thank the Treasurer for that wonderful announcement. It is something that I have been discussing with the officer in charge, Senior Sergeant Duane Frank. We have had inspections by the police minister and also our local assistant commissioner. The local South Burnett legal fraternity have for many years put complaints in. My understanding is that there will be a secure way for the police to take prisoners backwards and forwards from the police station to the courthouse. This delivers on our promise to revitalise front-line services and shows that our government is listening and that we are committed to the best possible facilities for our hardworking local police who are on the ground doing their best to work in that very old building for so many, many years.

There is also a significant amount of funding for the state and local road networks, a major win for our primary producers who need a sturdy road network to transport their produce. To list just a couple in my area, there is some work being done on the bridge over Stuart River on the Kumbia-Brooklands Road, roadworks on the Esk-Kilcoy Road and also the Dalby-Cooyar Road. These are important roads to enable this produce to get in and out.

The Nanango electorate is on its way to promoting itself as a great area for tourism. I am extremely pleased to see continued funding going towards the Peach Trees camping area north of Kilcoy up in Jimna. The funding will go to revitalise toilets and showers, fix the swimming hole platform and generally enhance this area. I know many campers who will be happy with this outcome. I encourage everyone in this great state to come and visit the Nanango electorate any time and anywhere. They are always welcome. In conclusion, I congratulate the Treasurer and his hardworking team for what they have done for this great state of Queensland. It is only our government that has a strong plan for a brighter future.

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (3.42 pm): ‘You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today’, so said Abraham Lincoln all those years ago. Indeed, the Newman government is not shirking its responsibility and I rise in this chamber to make my contribution to the 2014-15 budget that was handed down by the Treasurer on Tuesday. Restoring the state’s finances was never going to be an easy job, however with our plan to grow a four-pillar economy, revitalise front-line services, significantly invest in health, education and infrastructure, significant progress is being made. Due to Labor’s reckless drunken-sailor spending on the Queensland credit card, there is no other option except to reduce the \$80 billion debt and its subsequent exorbitant interest bill. Presently, as we all know, Queensland taxpayers pay \$4 billion a year in interest alone, which is essentially dead money. When an individual like myself is in this privileged position of being an MP, it is crucial to treat every taxpayer dollar like it is your own hard earned money. It is not our money, we are simply the custodians of it on behalf of all our shareholders—Queenslanders. This government is conscious that money does not grow on trees, nor that there is an endless supply to fritter away. Therefore, it has been essential that we use it wisely and strategically in a long-term way.

If you were to apply the ALP’s financial logic in the private sector, they would very quickly find themselves unemployed due to their lack of direction and wasteful attitude. If the private sector does not find financial irresponsibility acceptable then why should the taxpayers of Chatsworth? Without the burden of this astronomical interest bill, Chatsworth residents may have been able to benefit from much needed investment in a new high school or the widening of Old Cleveland Road to ensure that buses and cars are able to move faster and more efficiently. By continuing to spiral into more debt under Labor, Queensland and, from my perspective, the residents of Chatsworth would not have had a glimmer of hope of receiving the infrastructure and services they deserve that will enable my local community to prosper.

When I am conducting my regular listening posts throughout my Chatsworth electorate or attending local community events, the main priorities that I hear day in, day out from constituents are health and education, along with law and order. Therefore, I am proud to place on record that my constituents will benefit from a six per cent increase in health funding. Whilst I do not have a hospital within my actual electorate boundaries, residents will surely benefit from the increased investment in services to the metro south area. Already in just over two years this government’s initiatives have ensured that Queensland has the lowest median wait for elective surgery in Australia. More importantly, it has decreased ambulance response times by 66 seconds in 90 per cent of code 1 cases. Some of the health improvements that my constituents are now experiencing are phenomenal, such as the number of long-wait dental patients being reduced by 98.5 per cent in the last 14 months—simply outstanding.

What about other choices to reduce debt by at least \$25 billion? If we chose to reduce services instead of making the strong choice to sell or recycle assets, Chatsworth residents would run the risk of being caught up in the 10,000 fewer hospital admissions that would occur, have public transport fares again go up through the roof and potentially lose up to 30,000 public sector jobs, including teachers, doctors and nurses. Another alternative to reduce debt by at least \$25 billion would be to increase taxes, which would require a doubling of state taxation which would simply paralyse the economy.

As I mentioned before, alongside health, education is a major priority of the community that I am proud to represent. In this budget local schools in the Chatsworth electorate are big winners, with significant funding to further support teachers in educating the future generation within Chatsworth. I have been only too happy to fight for the additional \$1.2 million funding for local schools to participate in the Great Results Guarantee initiative. Belmont State School will receive \$258,000; Mayfield Primary School will receive \$107,000; Tingalpa State School will receive \$117,000; Whites Hill State College will receive \$144,000; Gumdale State School will receive \$258,000; whilst Camp Hill Infants and Primary School will receive \$217,000 to implement strategies to improve the formative years of education for children. I am very pleased to say my old primary school, Carina State School, has

received \$100,000 to nurture the bright young minds of prep to year 3 students. In this day and age there is no excuse for our children being unable to reach acceptable numeracy and literacy levels. It is essential that teachers are not only funded adequately but also have the skills and resources to implement strategies to capture children at that all-important formative stage. Knowledge is power and we should be empowering even the youngest of minds to embrace learning, as they will be the powerhouses of Queensland's future. As a local member of parliament and, more importantly, member of the local community, I am determined to ensure that Gumdale State School's much needed master plan is continued. Therefore, I am delighted that \$1 million has been allocated for the completion of the school master plan and stage 1 which will focus on the new oval. The Gumdale-Wakerley area has young families flocking to it, therefore it is essential that the government responds to this demand and continues to ensure that the facilities meet the local community's expectations.

Within my electorate I am very honoured to have the Belmont Rifle Range which has received in this year's budget \$800,000 to progress the development and construction of the complex, especially in the lead-up to the all-important Commonwealth Games in 2018. This funding will improve the facilities not only for the games; it will be a long-term investment for the sport within my electorate. However, I was even more delighted to lobby hard so that the rifle club will benefit from \$50,000 to implement electronic target systems to support full bore rifle shooting. As vice patron of this wonderful organisation, I have lobbied for this funding under the Get in the Game initiative as it has been something that is much needed for the progress of the complex. I know for certain that news of this money will be extremely welcomed the next time I visit the club to watch a round of shooting with the rifle club members.

Even though it was an honour to be elected as the member for Chatsworth in March 2012, I was also given the additional honour of being the Assistant Minister for Public Transport. Therefore, I would like to touch on a few achievements that I have been a part of, together with my colleague the Hon. Scott Emerson, Minister for Transport and Main Roads.

Together we have been working to improve the public transport system to make it more efficient and affordable for commuters. The former government's plans included year in, year out 15 per cent increases in public transport fares and yet they acted dumbfounded when patronage numbers actually dropped. Compare and contrast: the budget just handed down reveals any annual change to public transport fares will not be above inflation for the next three years. This delivers on our election promise to lower the cost living. Within my electorate, I have seen the Carindale bus interchange grow to become the second busiest public transport hub, which has been a direct result of the construction of the much-needed Carindale park-and-ride. It has been pleasing to see a 34 per cent increase in the patronage of individuals benefitting from the better use of the vacant land that remained dormant for years under previous ALP members. Even though some Chatsworth residents may not catch public transport on a regular basis due to circumstances, they will more than likely benefit from the flow-on positive effects of an efficient public transport system. My constituents can now have faith with on-time running of more than 95 per cent, as opposed to less than 85 per cent a mere two years ago.

Some Chatsworth residents may not be entirely happy with the choices that have been made by the government in framing this budget. I am fully aware of this. However, I ask those people: what plan does the opposition have? What plan do they have to pay down the debt that will enable better roads or a new high school to be built? The Bligh government said they would not sell off assets. As we all know, they snuck back into power and then did a reverse flip only weeks later. Ironically, the opposition is quick to criticise our government on our strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. However, it is important to note that, as of today, they have still not released any detailed substantial policies. In fact, to quote the member for Mulgrave, Queenslanders should be—as we all know on this side of the ledger—patient, have a Bex and a good lie down. The people of Chatsworth do not have that degree of patience.

The Treasurer has put together a strong budget that encompasses strong choices for the betterment of this great state. Instead of being patient, Chatsworth residents need to educate themselves on the ramifications of no action and join us in our fight to spend the taxpayer dollar more respectfully and wisely. I am indeed very proud to be part of a government that is continuing to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future. I commend the Treasurer for making the strongest and smartest choices that are necessary for a brighter future for residents in my Chatsworth electorate. The current generation deserves no less. Well done, Treasurer.

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (3.52 pm): I rise to make a contribution on the Appropriation Bill 2014, the third budget to be delivered by the Newman LNP government. For two and a half years, we have heard nothing but empty rhetoric from those opposite about being a grown-up, mature and strong decision-making government. Most people would agree that there is nothing grown up or mature about blaming everyone else for your actions, but that is exactly what this arrogant government continues to do. When they are not blaming the previous Labor government, they are blaming the current federal government or the public servants or the doctors or the judges or the media or the unions. Anyone and everyone are to blame, apart from the LNP, that is, those who were actually elected to govern. Like a child caught doing something wrong, this government looks for anyone else to point the finger at. Those are hardly the actions of a mature or grown-up government. One day the Premier or the Treasurer will walk into this chamber and take responsibility for something that happened on their shift, and those on this side of the House are going to faint in shock.

Let us look at this government's record of economic management over the past two and a half years. On all the economic indicators, the Queensland economy is worse off. In 2011-12, Queensland recorded growth in gross state product of 4.8 per cent, which then fell to 4.1 per cent last financial year. That is significantly lower. The domestic economy was hit much harder, slowing from 8.3 per cent in 2011-12 to 2.2 per cent in 2012-13, with household spending, private investment, dwelling investment and business investment all weaker. Over the same financial year, Queensland recorded its worst result for employment growth in more than two decades. So all the pain, all the sackings, all the cuts to services, all the outsourcing and all the asset selling have resulted in a net negative outcome and working Queensland families are worse off. All the pain from the LNP has resulted in fewer jobs, particularly full-time jobs, less services, less Commonwealth money for schools and hospitals, and less investment in public transport infrastructure. Nothing about this government's economic management has been in the interests of Queensland working families.

Those opposite claim that this budget is all about being strong and smart; it is about strong and smart choices. But let me be clear: there is nothing strong or smart about any of the decisions made by those opposite. There is nothing strong or smart about trashing the economy for your own political purpose, while business confidence plummets and investment dries up. There is nothing strong or smart about declaring yourself a friend to public sector workers before the election and then sacking them after the election. There is nothing strong or smart about hypocritically cutting ribbons on projects that you have previously trashed because they were initiated and funded by Labor. There is nothing strong or smart about promising Queenslanders that you would deliver cost-of-living relief and then hiking up electricity, water and public transport costs. There is nothing strong about picking on the vulnerable long-term unemployed by axing Skilling Queenslanders for Work and there is certainly nothing smart about having less Queenslanders working and more Queenslanders unemployed. There is nothing strong about picking on Queensland pensioners, cutting their concessions and increasing their cost of living and certainly there is nothing smart about it either, as the Premier's backflip today has proven.

As the opposition leader said, the Premier's backflip should never have happened. He never should have tried to get away with compounding Abbott's cuts with his own, but is the Premier's solution another disaster waiting to happen? The Premier announced today that he would simply make up the shortfall in Commonwealth concession payments by not honouring payments to the Commonwealth for federal programs. Does the Premier seriously think that Abbott and Hockey are going to take that lying down? We already know what Hockey's opinion of the Premier is. He was happy enough to make his public disdain known to everyone. Maybe Joe Hockey thinks that he can win back Queensland voters by picking a fight with the most unpopular man in Queensland. Again, the Premier is picking a fight instead of governing. Where and when will this immature and juvenile game of brinkmanship end?

That brings me to this government's broken promise on creating jobs. At the last election, this government promised to reduce unemployment by four per cent by 2018. Budget papers show that it has abandoned that election commitment completely. The people of Queensland took them at their word that they would make their best efforts to do that, but after three LNP budgets it has become painfully obvious that the LNP has no idea on how to stop the rise in unemployment, let alone reduce it to four per cent. Quite simply, the LNP has no plans for job creation and this week's budget proved just that. The LNP has destroyed confidence in the Queensland economy and Abbott has destroyed confidence in the Australian economy. After inheriting an unemployment rate of 5.5 per cent, the Newman government has driven Queensland's unemployment rate up, up and up to where it currently sits at 6.3 per cent. In my electorate of South Brisbane, on Brisbane's southside, the unemployment

rate sits at nine per cent. The last time Queensland's unemployment rate was that high was in October 2003. Currently, Queensland's unemployment rate is the second highest unemployment rate in mainland Australia behind Victoria, which sits at 6.4 per cent. There are 11,000 fewer full-time jobs in Queensland than when the Premier was elected in March 2012. Everyone suffers as a result of high unemployment—everyone suffers. The single most important thing a government can do to help with the cost of living is to get people into work. Again, on that count this government has failed.

Unlike the Newman government, Labor understands the obvious links between transport infrastructure, economic growth and job creation. Good transport infrastructure helps to drive economic growth. That is something that the former Labor government always recognised. Labor delivered massive investments in road, rail and public transport services. The LNP has been happy to cut ribbons and spruik projects built by Labor, such as the Northern Busway, the Moreton Bay Rail Link, the Springfield rail line and the Gold Coast light rail, but it rejects the economic strategy that made those projects a reality. None of those projects would have been built under the LNP—none of them. The fact is that those projects, funded and built by Labor, will connect people with jobs. Let us take the Moreton Bay Rail Link as an example. More than half the region's population, that is, 375,000 people, travel outside Moreton Bay to work, with 83 per cent of those using a private vehicle. The Moreton Bay Rail Link will make that journey quicker, more efficient and more sustainable. It will connect people with employment opportunities that they may otherwise not have had access to. That is the kind of benefit that sound investment in transport infrastructure can bring. If government makes the right decisions and invests appropriately and with value for money, it can unlock economic opportunities that previously did not exist.

But the fact is that this government does not make sound investment decisions when it comes to transport infrastructure. One need only look as far as the ill-conceived BaT Tunnel—the Bus and Train Tunnel. It is a project that is designed to meet the challenges of public transport growth over the next 10 years not the next 100 years. The BaT Tunnel has fewer stations and no connection to the existing rail network at Park Road Station. The stations that it does build are not future proofed. They have smaller capacity than the stations in the Cross River Rail design. The only major selling point that the minister has seized on to champion the BaT Tunnel, as an alternative to Cross River Rail, is the reduced property impacts.

The Cross River Rail reference design impacted a total of 108 properties. That was a mix of industrial and private residential properties. Labor had refined the reference design to minimise property impacts as much as possible. Labor's reference design, including the property impacts, was endorsed as the best possible solution to the rail capacity crisis by the LNP's handpicked, independent panel of experts which reviewed the project in 2012.

The minister says that demolishing Dutton Park station will save properties, but Labor had acquired many of the required properties and had allocated money in its last budget to acquire the remainder. In their election costings the LNP ripped \$35 million out of that fund and spent it on their election promises instead. Now the LNP is selling off the properties in the corridor that Labor had already purchased. The LNP wasted the money that Labor had wisely set aside to purchase the required properties and now they are making the community suffer by demolishing Dutton Park station.

Fixing the looming rail crisis will help drive economic—

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Watts): Order! Member for South Brisbane, could I ask you to hold for a moment. If the gentlemen at the back of the chamber would like to take their conversation outside that would be appreciated. Member for South Brisbane, you have the call.

**Ms TRAD:** I think a conversation is a very generous term for what they were doing. Fixing the looming rail capacity crisis will help drive economic and job growth, but the Newman government's BaT Tunnel is not the kind of solution we need. It is short-sighted and puts off til tomorrow problems that can be solved today.

Today is World Environment Day and we are yet to hear from the Queensland environment minister anything that has anything to do with the environment. I will take the opportunity in my speech on the budget to acknowledge the allocation to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and acknowledge that it has again decreased. We have a trifecta. Every year there is a decrease in the department of environment's budget.

Regardless of the fact that the Auditor-General delivered a scathing report on the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection—report No. 15 entitled *Environmental regulation of the resources and waste industry*—funding for the department has again fallen. It has fallen by

\$3.4 million. Funding for conservation programs will fall by over \$7 million, which is almost 10 per cent of the funding for that service area. Again, staff numbers in the department have fallen. That takes the departmental staff complement to one-third—one-third of what they inherited from Labor.

Again, the government has failed to acquire land to add to the protected area estate. In the 2013-14 financial year only \$9.6 million was expended for the purchase of properties, despite a budget allocation of \$27.9 million. This comes on top of shortfalls in previous years.

The one thing in this budget that the Minister for Environment is happy to trumpet is the funding allocation for the Great Barrier Reef programs. While this is a welcome development, I fear it may be nothing more than a smoke and mirrors trick. Some \$3.79 million over five years has been reallocated from existing programs, but I suspect this is already dedicated funding for reef projects.

I am also deeply sceptical that the \$12.1 million in new money is a real increase on existing funding. We have recently discovered that the \$40 million Reef Trust announced by the Abbott government was just a rebranding of the \$200 million Reef Rescue Package. There was no new money for the Great Barrier Reef in the federal budget. In fact, there was a cut to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

I strongly suspect the Newman government has taken Tony Abbott's deceptive lead on reef matters. Even if this funding is more than a rebranding of existing programs, it will not address the many deleterious changes the Newman government has already made to policies and programs affecting the reef. If only this budget has as much of a positive impact on Queensland's environment as the minister's call for Queenslanders to boycott Ben and Jerry's had on the ice-cream makers sales we could all be happy. But, unfortunately, it will not.

Under this government our vibrant and important arts sector is not a major hit, it has taken a major hit. In the first LNP state budget millions were cut from our cultural institutions, but the blunt force of LNP cuts to the arts sector was borne by the numerous small cultural organisations that incubate and develop the artistic talent and industry leaders of the future. Despite the deceitful commitment given by the shadow arts minister at the time, the member for Indooroopilly, that funding for the arts would not be cut, \$12.4 million was gutted from the Queensland arts grants program.

The list of cultural organisations defunded is long and outrageous. I will name them all here. The University of Queensland Press was originally defunded, but that funding was reinstated after a public outcry. The others are: Zen Zen Zo, Queensland Poetry Festival, Backbone Youth Arts, Queensland Youth Orchestra, Mirndiyan Gunana Aboriginal Corporation, Vulcan Women's Circus, Feral Arts, Youth Arts Queensland, Topology and Media Art Asia Pacific, better known as MAAP. MAAP director Kim Machan said, when she found out about the cuts to MAAP, 'Cutting an organisation that has some of the most developed and multileveled relations in Asia, it's quite perplexing.' It is not only perplexing, it is stupid, it is cruel and it is unnecessary.

In April 2001 the cuts resulted in the permanent closure of Youth Arts Queensland, an organisation that has helped thousands of young Queenslanders develop their artistic talents for over a quarter of a century. Today I stand in this place and I pay tribute to all of those people who have invested their time and energy into all the cultural programs and organisations that have had their funding cut by the LNP. I particularly want to note Youth Arts Queensland. To their previous board and staff I say, I want to acknowledge your efforts and accomplishments and I want to tell you that your efforts are appreciated by many, if not by those who call themselves members of the Newman LNP government.

I also wish to use my address on the budget today to bring to the attention of the House cessation of funding by the LNP government of the Accelerate program for Indigenous artists facilitated under the auspices of the British Council. This was and still is an influential program that has put Indigenous artists such as Alick Tipoti, Marilyn Miller, Michael Cook and Kevin O'Brien on the world stage. Recently Accelerate 2014 was launched at the Australia Council's National Indigenous Arts Awards. On the marketing material for 2014 there was no reference to Arts Queensland, no reference to Queensland and there will not be a winner from Queensland—nothing from Queensland; nothing from the state that boasts the second largest population of Indigenous Australians; nothing from the state that can boast such an envious line-up of talented Indigenous artists; nothing. This is a disgrace and it speaks volumes for what and who those opposite value.

Budgets are ultimately about one's values. They are ultimately about what one believes in and what one cherishes and promotes. This government we know promotes drinking over elderly Australians. They promote drink-safe precincts over Queensland pensioners. What this government promotes is political campaign spending above young artists and Queensland pensioners.

The Newman LNP government does not value jobs. That has been made consistently clear by those on this side of the House. The Newman LNP government does not value our assets or our arts or our environment. The Newman LNP government does not value small business or those Queenslanders struggling with the cost of living.

The Newman government also does not value the truth. When one looks at the Governing for Growth document that the Deputy Premier likes to brandish around, one sees that most of the projects—85 per cent of the projects—that are currently underway and contributing to the Governing for Growth strategy were actually funded and initiated by the previous Labor government. Of those under consideration, 75 per cent of them were initiated by the previous Labor government.

This government is a complete and utter fraud when it comes to the intergenerational infrastructure spend. This government cannot claim with any good conscience any of this, apart from a golf course and the 1 William Street project, in the Governing for Growth strategy as something that they themselves have initiated. They have shown themselves to be absolute frauds yet again.

Let's be really clear about what this is all about. The first Newman budget, with its \$4 billion worth of cuts and sackings, was all about funding the 2012 LNP election commitments. That is what it was about. The Newman budget that was handed down this week, with its \$33 billion worth of asset sales, is all about funding the next tranche of LNP election commitments. So the first budget was all about funding the 2012 election commitments and the 2014-15 budget, with its \$33 billion worth of asset sales, is all about funding the next lot of LNP election commitments.

From the first day on the job, the Queensland Premier, rather than governing with grace, humility and dignity as he promised, has been treating Queenslanders like fools every single day. Let me make clear to the Premier and let me make clear to every single member of the LNP government: Queenslanders are strong, Queenslanders are smart and they know their bright future starts with kicking you out at the next election.

 **Hon. JM DEMPSEY** (Bundaberg—LNP) (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) (4.10 pm): First of all I would like to thank the Treasurer for the 2014-15 state budget, which has been the result of careful planning and prioritisation for a brighter future for Queensland. I would personally like to thank him for the sacrifices that he has made and the time and effort that he has put into making sure that the Treasury department is way ahead and leading the other states and territories in this nation.

This is a budget that will grow our economy and make our communities stronger and safer. We want to keep delivering on our promise to grow a four-pillar economy and deliver better infrastructure for Queensland. But we are constrained by a \$4 billion a year interest bill left by the Labor Party. We must pay down the Labor \$80 billion accumulated debt, otherwise our future prosperity is threatened. This is crucial if we are to deliver better services that the people of Queensland expect and deserve.

Our Queensland police, fire and emergency services are vital in helping Queensland continue to remain a safe place to live, work and raise a family. The Newman government has provided approximately \$2.1 billion for the Queensland Police Service for the 2014-15 financial year so that it can continue to protect communities right across this great state. We will also continue to carry out our commitment to providing 1,100 additional police officers over four years. To date we have provided more than 750 additional police, over and above natural attrition rates, and \$109.4 million of the budget will be used to fund a further 267 officers in 2014-15.

The Gold Coast region has already seen the benefits of having a police helicopter in their region. An amount of \$3 million has been set aside to continue these services and a further \$3 million is provided to fund a second helicopter based in Brisbane at Archerfield. This is part of the government's commitment of \$18 million over four years to deliver police helicopter services on the Gold Coast and in South-East Queensland.

We have funded \$4.3 million to support the continued crackdown on dismantling and eliminating criminal motorcycle gangs across Queensland. There is \$2.1 million allocated to supporting the government's Safe Night Out Strategy, to address alcohol and drug related violence, restore responsible behaviour and provide a safer community.

In continuing with our four-year commitment to help revitalise Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, another \$1 million has been provided towards improving their links within the community. An amount of \$920,000 will be directed towards the cost of operating a policing hub on the Gold Coast and the establishment of a policing hub in Townsville. The hubs are designed to provide agile, highly visible policing, with the flexibility to focus on problem places, cases and crime types.

Last year, former Australian Federal Police Commissioner Mick Keelty handed down his review into Queensland's police and emergency services. This was a once-in-a-generation opportunity to examine Queensland's police and emergency services. The review report praised staff and volunteers. These people make an enormous effort to serve the community through their hard work, in often challenging circumstances. But it also found that we must ensure a better and more sustainable approach to delivering public safety services. We need to improve the systems and structures that Labor chose to neglect so that front-line staff in the portfolio are empowered to focus on delivering their critical work. The review recommended the establishment of a new public safety portfolio, under my new responsibility for Police, Fire and Emergency Services. Key structural changes recommended in the review have already been implemented.

As we are all aware in this House, the Queensland Ambulance Service moved to Queensland Health and Queensland Corrective Services moved to the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. The Public Safety Business Agency was established on 1 November 2013, and the Public Safety Business Agency Act 2014 commenced on 21 May 2014. The resulting portfolio consists of the Public Safety Business Agency, the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, and the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management. The new structure is designed to support an integrated and collaborative approach to service delivery.

The Public Safety Business Agency provides strategic and corporate services to the Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, and the Office of the Inspector-General Emergency Management, allowing them to concentrate on front-line service delivery. It will also perform operational functions including the Queensland Government Air Service, State Government Security and blue cards. From 1 July 2014, the Public Safety Business Agency will own and undertake asset procurement and management for the QPS and QFES, to facilitate these agencies focusing on front-line service delivery. The new agency's 2014-15 budget provides \$610.3 million in operating and \$140.7 million in capital to create safe and resilient communities by supporting front-line officers and providing better equipment and new technology.

There is \$20.2 million provided for replacement or upgraded police and fire and rescue stations across Queensland. This will see the delivery of replacement auxiliary fire and rescue stations at Ingham, Pomona and Pittsworth. Work will begin on replacement permanent fire and rescue stations at the beautiful city of Bundaberg and Petrie and upgrades at Bundamba and Burleigh. Upgrades will begin to the forensic service facility in Brisbane and to Nanango and Kingaroy police stations. Upgraded police facilities will be delivered at Thursday Island, Laidley and Chinchilla police stations and for the Brisbane City and Redland Bay Water Police. Additional police housing will be provided in Bamaga.

An amount of \$2 million will be set aside to fund upgraded closed circuit TV cameras at Brisbane City, Bundaberg, Rockhampton and Townsville watchhouses; \$60.9 million will provide for new and replacement police, fire and emergency services vehicles; \$3.1 million will deliver replacement police catamarans at Cairns, Townsville and the beautiful area of the Whitsundays; and a total of \$18.5 million will continue the delivery of a mobile service capability and expand the mobile device fleet during the upcoming G20 Leaders Summit in November 2014. The mobile devices will enhance officer and community safety by providing real-time access to information for officers in the field and free up officer capacity to respond to demands for service.

An amount of \$30 million will be provided to replace the existing human resource and payroll systems for the Public Safety Business Agency, Queensland Fire and Emergency Services, the Queensland Ambulance Service and Queensland Corrective Services. The new system will provide sustainable and supported human resource and payroll services. It will also provide managers with additional capability to support workforce development, performance and safety. An amount of \$39 million will be directed to continuing to support the public safety network, which delivers a secure fixed data network to the QPS and the Department of Justice and Attorney-General.

In 2014-15 a budget of \$620 million is provided for the Queensland Fire and Emergency Services. That is another budget for our fire and emergency services that has reached over half a billion dollars. This will help meet essential firefighting equipment and training needs including protective clothing and communication equipment for our valued Rural Fire Service Queensland volunteers. It will provide for a range of minor capital works. It will also enable fitting out all rural brigade trucks with red and blue flashing lights.

I am also pleased to see several initiatives in the budget which are designed to help the people of my electorate and the Wide Bay region. From the fire and emergency services side, \$1.5 million will be provided to commence the construction of the new Bundaberg co-located permanent

ambulance and fire and rescue station. The budget is also delivering over \$2 million for non-government organisations in Bundaberg to help those without a home. The busy Bundaberg Legal Aid office will receive \$600,000 to refurbish their offices and another almost \$600,000 will be provided for Centrecare's Home Assist to help give elderly residents a better quality of life. These initiatives show how this government is continuing to revitalise front-line services, keeping our communities safe and putting the needs of families first.

I want to end by mentioning the special parliamentary inquiry this government is running so that Queenslanders can have their say on how crime can be further tackled in this state. We have seen crime rates fall under this government, but we want to know what else can be done to make Queensland an even safer place to live and raise a family. The inquiry is being conducted by the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee, which will travel across the state to hear from all Queenslanders. The committee will recommend measures to reduce criminal activity, offending and reoffending, and build a safer community. I thank the Treasurer and his staff for their hard work on the 2014-15 budget. Again, with a strong plan the Newman government is delivering a brighter future for all Queenslanders. This budget builds upon the strong plan for revitalising front-line services to ensure Queensland is not only a great state but also a safe state to live and raise a family.

 **Mr CRANDON** (Coomera—LNP) (4.22 pm): It is a pleasure to rise today to talk about the Coomera electorate and the northern Gold Coast area, which is the fastest growing region in Australia. The budget that has been delivered is a tough and necessary budget. I will be looking over a longer term—over the past two years, the coming 12 months and then, if I have time, where things might go for the Coomera electorate into the future.

There are a couple of things that need to be said upfront, and that is that the funding for social housing in and around the Gold Coast and the funding for homelessness is very, very important from a social perspective to ensure that those within our communities who are doing it the toughest are able to be assisted. Unexpectedly, I must say from my perspective, there was a couple of million dollars put into the budget, which is greatly appreciated, to go towards the duplication of rail between Coomera and Helensvale. That is slated to be completed by January 2018. The overall cost is \$189 million, which is a lot of money, but it is absolutely essential if we are going to take advantage on the Gold Coast of the network improvements up here in Brisbane. Simply put, right now we have a bit of a roadblock on the rail, and that planning is absolutely essential prior to the Commonwealth Games in 2018.

Talking about roadblocks, I have two other roadblocks in the electorate, one of which is the Coomera River. As far as economic development is concerned, it is very important for us to see the Coomera River properly dredged. One of the issues we have is that the dredged material from the Coomera cannot simply be taken outside and dumped as sand because it is silt. It is other materials as well as sand. We needed an area for treatment of that dredged material. Thanks to some work done with the Deputy Premier we now believe we have that land in place. We are looking forward to the Coomera being dredged and, as a result, being able to bring bigger boats down the Coomera River to the very important and very large Gold Coast marine precinct at Coomera. We will be able to bring 250-tonne boats and ships down the river and lift them out of the water. When they are being refurbished, there are many millions of dollars being spent. One of the businesses there currently employs 60 people on an ongoing basis, delivering quite large ships and refurbishments for people right around Queensland and Australia. He told me that once they can bring those bigger boats in it will immediately increase his staffing numbers from 60 to around 90. That is one business in a very large precinct and the economic benefit to the community for a matter of a few million dollars of dredging being done.

We are blessed to have Commonwealth Games facilities in Coomera. The Coomera Sport and Leisure Centre has been provided with \$12½ million. What an absolute magnificent legacy that will be for the people in the northern Gold Coast and the Coomera electorate. Those sorts of facilities are thin on the ground. It is a magnificent structure and it really will be an icon for the local area—\$12½ million is fantastic.

The main game for the state seat of Coomera in this budget and previous budgets is the high need for infrastructure. The type of infrastructure I am talking about is schools. Over the last five years—and I have mentioned it in this place before—we have seen five new schools built in the Coomera electorate. Nowhere else in the state have there been five brand-new schools within a 10-kilometre distance along the M1. In less than 12 months time, in January 2015, we will see another two schools—a private school and a public school—come on stream. That is fantastic.

In 2015 we will see the transition of year 7 into high school. I have three high schools that will benefit from the funding required for that year 7 transition and a fourth one, Beenleigh State High, of which 60 per cent of students come from my electorate. Helensvale State High is well on its way to completing its \$10 million construction to accommodate year 7 students. It is a very large school with 2,350 students from year 7 to year 12. Just down the road we have Helensvale Primary, which has something in the order of 1,150 students. So there are a lot of young people within cooee of one another in the Helensvale area. For Pimpama State Secondary College, a further \$12 million has been made available to complete stage 2. I am hopeful that early in the 2015-16 financial year we will be able to enhance that further to make sure that we properly accommodate students. Ormeau Woods is ready to go. It has plenty of space for year 7 students and for growth over the next couple of years. They very much are the main game for us. The new state school at Pimpama is under construction. I witnessed the pour of the first slab for the school not too long ago. That will be coming on stream in 2015.

As I have mentioned, we have got five new schools over five years with two more coming on, both private and public. Some might ask why we need this type of growth in school construction. Well, we have had a 28.3 per cent growth in numbers from 2009 to 2014, and most of that is in the Pimpama-Coomera area of the electorate. The electorate stretches from Eagleby in the north to Helensvale in the south but most of that growth has been smack bang in the middle. To give members an idea of what that represents in terms of voter numbers, when I came into this place in 2009 there were just under 29,000 voters, and we are 90 short of 37,000 voters in 2014 as we speak right now.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRANDON:** And they are all going to vote for me. I am looking for the 27 per cent who did not vote for me last time and I will be talking to them about the reasons they may have been unhappy, and hopefully they will come across the next time around.

I have spoken about the current budget, but what are the important things we have done over the last two years? There is a very good reason why education spending is up seven per cent, and it is because of the very good reasons that I just outlined to the House. We are talking about a \$47 billion budget this year, with \$80 billion of debt that we are aiming to bring down to a \$55 billion debt level, using \$8 billion plus on further infrastructure. Some of that infrastructure would be slated for the Coomera and Albert electorates on the northern Gold Coast, including the absolutely essential work on exit 54, just to mention one area.

I will mention very quickly what we have done over the last two years. In the 2014 Great Results Guarantee, we saw \$131 million distributed, with about \$1.6 million of that coming into the Coomera electorate for my 10 state schools. In terms of school maintenance, we have seen the Advancing our Schools Maintenance Fund initiative, which is an injection of money into the schools to play catch-up because of the legacy we were left from Labor when they let schools run down. We have \$1.625 million in that. If we add that to the standard round of maintenance, we have seen a total of \$2.25 million over the last two years go into my schools just to bring them up to scratch, and I have got to say they are looking good.

In relation to capital expenditure for schools in my electorate, I have mentioned what we are doing in this coming year. Over the last two years, this is what we have seen: \$35 million in 2012-13 with another \$12 million in 2013-14. As I have mentioned, there is another \$12 million to come. I have mentioned the \$2 million for the rail.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr CRANDON:** I will round it up there because I am being wound up by a few of my colleagues. I understand that everybody is keen to deliver their replies to the Treasurer. I congratulate the Treasurer. I particularly congratulate the Treasurer and the Premier for making the announcement they made today to fill the gap that the federal budget left for our most conservative people, I would suggest, in the electorate—that is, the pensioners and others who are entitled to concessions. Congratulations in that regard. Congratulations on a fantastic budget. It will be onward and upward from here for the state seat of Coomera.

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (4.33 pm): I rise to support the Treasurer, who has now handed down his third budget and what is another responsible budget. Once again, we see a budget put forward by this government that makes the right decisions for the financial future of this state and for the people of Queensland. They are the strongest and smartest choices.

The Queensland Commission of Audit in its interim report in June 2012 recommended a two-stage strategy of fiscal repair to restore Queensland to financial strength: first, to arrest the deterioration in the state's financial position and stabilise the position; and, second, to pay down debt to restore Queensland's financial strength and regain its AAA credit rating. Stage 1 of the task of fiscal repair was addressed by the Queensland government in its 2012-13 budget, which outlined a plan to achieve \$5.5 billion in savings over the next three years. Stage 2 of the strategy was designed to provide the state with the strength to withstand adverse events such as further natural disasters or external shocks. The commission recommended that debt be reduced by \$25 billion to \$30 billion to restore Queensland's AAA credit rating. To achieve this, we have to make strong choices—do we tie up large capital sums in business the government currently owns, or do we put that capital to other uses, reducing debt and investing in new projects that will better service the people of Queensland? These are the questions we put to Queenslanders.

Unlike previous governments, we are committed to being open and honest with the people of this great state. The Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, travelled around the state and spoke directly to residents, outlining our financial position and the options moving forward—this government either cuts services, raises taxes, or sells or leases some assets. None of these are easy options—otherwise we would have called the process 'simple choices'—but we have not shied away from the reality. We have reached out to Queenslanders and had a conversation with them about their priorities for future investment and infrastructure and how we can work towards achieving these outcomes. Restoring our AAA credit rating is not just about ego for Queensland. It will mean not paying such a high rate to borrow money. It will mean we are a more attractive state to invest in. Ultimately, it will mean a stronger economic position for Queensland well into the future.

As we know, the weather has not been kind in the past couple of years and we have faced setbacks with ex-Cyclone Oswald and more recently Cyclone Ita impacting on infrastructure and on the lives of Queenslanders. We have also seen serious drought impacting many of our agricultural sectors, and that pain is ongoing. Without the measures this government already had in place, the effect of these natural disasters would have been felt far more deeply. I do not mean to downplay in any way the hardship faced by many as a result of storm, flood or drought. I am talking here about the long-term fiscal impact of these events on Queensland, which were mitigated by the tough decisions this government had made previously.

In my electorate of Thuringowa and in the Townsville region, my constituents are experiencing the benefits of a grown-up government in action. The Townsville Hospital and Health Service have not only slashed waiting times and improved services, they have addressed a massive operational debt. We can now, with confidence, continue to invest in health infrastructure knowing that it will be properly managed. Over \$41 million has been allocated for further expansion of the Townsville Hospital.

This LNP government is determined not to see a return to the crumbly old days of Labor where our schools were falling apart. We have spent millions in the last two years fixing the backlog of maintenance in Townsville schools, with most going to local tradies and businesses and boosting the local economy. This will continue, according to the 2014-15 budget, along with more infrastructure spending to accommodate the shift of year 7 to high school. Our schools also have more autonomy in how they design and implement literacy and numeracy support strategies thanks to the Great Results Guarantee.

**Mr Costigan:** It's a great program.

**Mr COX:** It is a great program; I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. Long-awaited road projects have been given priority—including stage 4 of the Ring Road, Mather Street, Blakey's Crossing and, announced in this week's budget, \$10 million for the lights on Woolcock-Pilkington streets. These projects mean more jobs locally, and the benefits to the region are far reaching.

I have loudly advocated for more support in the Townsville region to combat crime. This government has delivered, putting more police on our streets and bringing in the legislation to empower them and our courts. These efforts are paying off, with recent results showing a 27 per cent drop in property crime in Townsville. Last week's announcement of an additional 22 new police for a manned hub in Kirwan means the people of Townsville can feel even safer on our streets knowing this government does not just talk about the problem but we also bring solutions. Crime along with

other front-line services, such as health, education and roads, are front and centre in this budget, as they should be, so we can support the growth in Townsville. The current LNP government has always had a strong plan and stuck to that strong plan to address Labor's debt.

Where is Labor now? The previous disastrous government has left this and future generations a massive burden to repay, and I do not think our kids should have to pay off Labor's debt. Members may remember the shadow Treasurer's recent comments on the government debt—'keep spending until things improve'. This attitude is typical of Labor both federally and state-wide and it is echoed by the few remaining Labor members in this House. This government made a promise to the people of Queensland to keep costs down and cut waste and bureaucracy. We have kept that promise. Furthermore, we are finding definable, practical solutions to this state's debt.

The Port of Townsville and the Townsville-Mount Isa rail line are earmarked for long-term lease, generating potentially billions of dollars for the state and hundreds of millions of dollars for the region. If this does go ahead, three-quarters of the proceeds from the leasing of the port and rail line will go towards paying down the state's debt. The balance will become part of the Strong Choices Investment Program worth \$8.6 billion.

I make this promise now to the people in my electorate and across North Queensland. I will make sure that we see our share of that revenue reinvested in the Townsville region to provide the vital infrastructure and new development projects to stimulate our local economy and improve our future potential for growth. This budget and the Newman government's careful economic management over the past two years has allowed us to reinvest in things that matter most to my community. I commend this budget to the House.

 **Mr PUCCI** (Logan—LNP) (4.39 pm): I rise today to contribute to the debate in favour of the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2014. Regardless of race, colour or creed and regardless of their social status, employment situation or place of residence, Queenslanders share a common vision. We each share a vision for a prosperous future not just for ourselves, but also for our children and our children's children. The decisions we make today affect the lives of millions of Queenslanders both now and in the future, which is why no matter how tough they may seem, we must face these decisions head-on. If we do these things, then the next generation and the generations that follow will live in a Queensland far better than the one we have today, and what started here will indeed have changed our state for the better. In the words of former US President Ronald Reagan—

Each generation goes further than the generation preceding it because it stands on the shoulders of that generation. You will have opportunities beyond anything we've ever known.

A brighter future is Queensland's for the taking, but only under an LNP government with a strong plan. Like the everyday household, we must live within our means. The lack of economic rationalism that was the mindset of the Labor government created an economy that was simply unsustainable. 'You cannot escape the responsibility of tomorrow by evading it today.' These words that were spoken by Abraham Lincoln could not be more appropriate in describing the thought process of the former government. As they buried their head in the sand avoiding the errors of their ways, our state suffered. The Labor Party who sit opposite, the 'no position' party with no policies and no plans for the future, will continue to show contempt for the people of Queensland and try in vain to scare the people of Queensland. However, I listened to the Leader of the Opposition's reply to the budget and I did not hear one policy or one plan that Labor has to reduce debt while building infrastructure and bettering front-line services. I heard absolutely no plans for the future of Queensland, just more irrational, emotive fluff with no substance.

The approach taken by the former Labor government and the mentality behind their motives is difficult to comprehend. Any Queenslander knows we have to live within our means, yet this is a philosophy that was and is absent from Labor. Their frivolous fiscal irresponsibility could have devastated Queensland's economy if we did not take action. At home, there are always items we need to pay for like clothes, car maintenance or car payments and groceries. These are important items, but we cannot always afford what we want. Our state is in the same position but, rather than household items, we want improved infrastructure, the best front-line services and, most importantly, downward pressure on the cost of living.

The previous Labor government forecast a debt in excess of \$85 billion for the 2014-15 financial year. Our state would have continued to struggle to keep up with our growth and services would have surely suffered. This bleak outlook would have become a reality if not for the tough measures and tenacity of this LNP government to get our state back on track. The people of Logan share my outrage at the notion that we spend over \$4 billion in interest alone on our state's debt.

Imagine what we could invest in with that amount of money: improvements to schools in Browns Plains, upgrades to the Mount Lindesay Highway, a gated crossing way on Waterford-Tamborine Road in Logan Village, vehicles and resources for police and fire services, the establishment of a PCYC in Flagstone and, of course, a sustainable public transport network for the Park Ridge, Logan Village and Greater Flagstone areas.

This is not a budget designed to win elections; this is a budget for Queensland's future. As a government coming to an election, pork-barrelling would have been the easy option; it would have been the weak choice. However, we have seen this done in the past by the former government and we have seen where this has left Queensland. We cannot continue to make those same mistakes and expect new results. If we want change for the future we must make strong, honest decisions for the good of future generations.

This budget is for all Queenslanders; it is a priority to get our debt under control so that we can then invest back into our community. Once we stop paying \$4 billion a year on interest alone, funds will be freed up for upgrades to infrastructure and services, roads, schools and other vital infrastructure. This budget builds on the strong choices that we delivered in 2012 that has set our state on a road to recovery. Logan has been a big winner with a record budget in Health and Education with an increase of six per cent to Health and a seven per cent increase to Education. The 2014-15 budget carefully balances increases in Education, Health and Community Services spending, while not reducing services or introducing or raising any new taxes.

Just remember that only two years ago we had a waiting list for the waiting list in hospitals, ambulances were ramped at hospitals with a line down the road, there was a \$300 million black hole in maintenance at schools that created unsafe environments for our students, there were undermanned police stations and 30,000 Queenslanders were on the waiting list for housing, just to name a few. If we did not take action this would have only worsened.

This budget continues on our accomplishments to improve hospital waiting times, which are now the best in the nation; remove ambulance ramping, which is now virtually non-existent; clearing decades of maintenance backlogs within our schools, which will be at zero; provide for the additional prep teacher aide hours; and reduce the public housing waiting list by almost 40 per cent. The residents of Logan have all benefited from these things. Employment throughout Queensland has also grown significantly with 60,000 new jobs created in Queensland. Of the national total of job creation in the past twelve months, 50 per cent was created in Queensland.

Logan residents will be very pleased to hear that this budget has also improved comprehensive aged residents emergency—partners in assessment care and treatment services for our hospital and health services. This is in line with our commitment to providing stronger health care services to our ageing population. In just two years, Logan has received \$15 million towards Education. Record-breaking investment into Education has benefited Logan schools, which have seen the clearance of the maintenance backlog, the addition of further prep teacher aide hours, improved IT services and e-learning services. This government continues our commitment to improved outcomes through our Great Results Guarantee that will bring over \$1.4 million to local schools throughout Logan. These funds will go to empowering our principals to implement localised strategies and enable our students to have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

In 2012 our government promised to deliver 100 new first-year constables shared between Logan and the Gold Coast. As part of our commitment to revitalising front-line services, I am proud to report that the Logan district alone has received over 150 first-year constables since March 2012.

**Mr Costigan:** Great effort!

**Mr PUCCI:** I take that interjection from the member for Whitsunday. It was a great outcome—and is.

Furthermore, this budget has allocated \$3 million towards the continued provision of a police helicopter that services the Logan district. With wonderful community based initiatives that have brought the Queensland Police Service closer together with residents such as \$1 million to Neighbourhood Watch and Crime Stoppers, the myPolice blog and interactive apps for mobile devices, we continue to work as one to ensure our communities remain a safe place to work, live and raise a family.

Over the past two years, our government has undertaken the great task of reforming child protection services. With landmark child protection reforms, vulnerable Queensland families will receive more support than ever, with \$406 million over five years going to family services and better

child protection in this year's state budget. Through legislation, we have strived to create a safer community for young people. Logan will further benefit from a \$3.1 million allocation to the electorate that is dedicated to protecting our young people and children from harm or who are at risk of harm and whose parents cannot provide adequate care or protection for them.

On top of this budget's \$26 million increase to the record amount of \$5.1 billion funded for concessions, we have listened to Queenslanders and we will fund the full level of concession rebates so that Queensland seniors and pensioners will not be worse off due to the Commonwealth's concession funding cuts. Journalists and the opposition will call it backflipping or kowtowing to our seniors, pensioners and the like; I call it listening and acting.

These record-breaking concessions cover a wide variety of things: public transport; discounts on council rates, water, gas and electricity bills; vehicle registration fees; as well as subsidised optometry and dental services. I understand that some Logan residents may like to see more from this budget, but a state budget must be for the entire state. I will continue to fight for more infrastructure and public transport. By working together as a community, we will see results that will keep Logan charging as we build a brighter future. No matter how hard the opposition try to distract Queenslanders from the reality of their mess, the facts of their culpability are as clear as day.

Last year residents across Queensland had the opportunity to be involved in the Queensland Plan and have their say on their vision for Queensland. This successful engagement with Queenslanders produced valuable insights into the direction in which people want our state to head. One of the outcome priorities for Queenslanders was 'how do we move from me to we'? This budget does exactly that. This budget is about us, we—all Queenslanders; it is about moving from me to we.

This budget is about how we as a state can prepare ourselves for a brighter future of which the next generation can be proud. I pay tribute to the efforts of the honourable Treasurer and Minister for Trade in delivering the government's third budget and his continued efforts to unravel the mess left behind by his predecessor. I echo the comments of Joe Branigan in Wednesday's edition of the *Australian*, who said—

... Tim Nicholls can be proud of the turnaround in the sunshine state's financial position compared to the big borrowing and spending Beattie-Bligh era.

I am proud to be part of a government that is putting itself on the line to secure the future of our great state. We will look back on this budget and reflect on this moment as the day Queensland took a turn for the better. As British Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill said, 'The price of greatness is responsibility.' Queensland is a great state and together we will bear the responsibility with courage and tenacity as we work hard as a strong and united team to deliver on our plan for a brighter future. I will continue to stand up for Logan locals as part of my strong plan for our community, and I support the passage of this bill through the House.

 **Mr WELLINGTON** (Nicklin—Ind) (4.50 pm): I rise to respond to the Treasurer's budget. In a bid to stroke his own ego by rushing the Treasury back to a surplus, our Treasurer has brought down a budget the core aim of which is selling off \$34 billion—or 13 per cent—of the state's income-earning assets, which I believe will result in decades of economic hardship for all Queenslanders.

Up for sale or lease if this LNP is returned at the next state election in 2015 are: electricity generators CS Energy and Stanwell, Ergon's retail business, the industrial pipelines of SunWater, Gladstone and Townsville ports and the Mount Isa rail line. The privatisation of assets will increase costs, reduce services and, I believe, cause massive job losses because their owners are driven by profit and answer only to their shareholders. Their focus is not on service delivery or job satisfaction; it is on the bottom line. It is all about how much money they can make and how little they need to spend to make that money.

Professor John Foster, Professor of Economics at the University of Queensland, said that the government was going down a risky path in the rush to save interest on its loans by selling off \$33 billion worth of assets. There is no valid reason for selling the state's assets, which generate significant income for our state. According to Professor Foster, the sensible option was to extend the period of the loan and continue to service it with the income from the assets. Once you sell the assets you cannot afford to replace them, no matter how buoyant the state economy is, and you cannot control the price. The state will be paying for essential services such as water and electricity, and around Australia records show that once these important services are sold and privatised, no matter what the form or structure is, the cost will increase. Be it a government-private partnership or whatever you want to call it, costs will increase. This government is hell-bent on privatisation, which will result in increased costs and will have a devastating effect on our most marginalised and poorest

citizens, who are already struggling with higher electricity and water bills. The budget's forecast of a 15 per cent cut to the Electricity Rebate Scheme, the Pensioner Rate Rebate Scheme, the SEQ Pensioner Water Rebate Scheme, the Reticulated Natural Gas Rebate Scheme and the vehicle registration concession will have many Queenslanders struggling to put food on the table. On top of all of that, there is the \$200 increase in electricity bills.

The Treasurer knows that asset sales are not the only way of balancing the books. He can extend the period of the loans and increase taxes on gambling, mining, alcohol and cigarettes, to name just a few. But the Treasurer is not interested in doing the right thing for Queenslanders: he wants to be able to claim that he wiped out the state debt. I ask members: but at what price? This government stands condemned for its attacks on the most marginalised in our society. No wonder the pensioners and seniors were considering marching through the streets. I was prepared to stand with them, and I still will if they chose to walk, whether they walk by themselves or with their walkers or in strollers. We have seen the frugal resources of our pensioners and retirees being further attacked by this government. Every day I have someone in crisis coming into my office in downtown Nambour. Some of the stories that we hear would break the hardest hearts. Our elderly are amongst the most vulnerable in our society second only to our children, and they deserve to be treated better than this LNP government is treating them. I am sick of the blame game, and I call on this government to take some responsibility for what they are doing to the people who can least afford cuts to services and concessions.

The Treasurer talks about his Strong Choices listening campaign. Well, he did not listen when Queenslanders told him to increase mining royalties and gambling taxes instead of selling assets. Today there was a reader poll conducted by the *Sunshine Coast Daily* newspaper which said that the state budget for 2014 reveals plans for asset sales. The question read: 'Do you agree with selling assets to get out of debt?' The current result when I last looked was: 17 per cent 'yes' and 83 per cent 'no'. But this Newman government is not listening and refuses to listen. On Tuesday a big sign went up over Queensland saying 'for sale to the highest bidder' and the vultures are already hovering because they sense that a feast is at hand. The multi-million dollar LNP war chest that we hear about is brimming over. Now is the time for the LNP's mates and lobbyists to pick up a power station here or maybe a port or a railway line there. Those willing developers, whose companies might fail tomorrow sending thousands of subbies to the wall, never forget to drop in their cheque to the LNP war chest.

Let's look at history and the record. On Tuesday the Treasurer contradicted himself: on the one hand, spruiking that we will have a surplus in 2015-16; on the other hand, saying that it was imperative that we sell off the state's assets or face tax increases and massive cuts to health and education services. The Treasurer's dire predictions about reducing the state's debt are political and not based on fact. Labor learned a valuable lesson after selling off income-earning assets, and that is what we are talking about: selling off income-earning assets that can generate income for today, tomorrow and the future. Labor learned that lesson at the last election, and it is one that I think this government will ignore at its peril.

The sensible way forward—and the way that would cause minimal hardship and stress to Queenslanders—would be to take more time to pay down the debt; extend the mortgage and pay the house off more slowly, just like most mums and dads do. This would allow people the dignity of a job—yes, have a job in Queensland—give our school leavers a job to go to and allow our elderly, frail and aged to live in dignity without having to worry about paying their electricity bills. On Tuesday an elderly gentleman spoke to my electorate staff and he had them in tears. First he apologised for not being in my electorate, but he said he needed to call on someone who might 'stand up for the little people'. He went on to say, 'How much do they think we can take?' Then he told my electorate secretary that he relied on two medical machines to keep him alive. His fear was that he would not be able to continue to afford electricity for the machines. He said that he turned off his hot water system to help save electricity, but he classified himself as 'one of the lucky ones' because he had some land and could boil hot water over a fire to have a bath at night and if it was too cold, he and his wife could sit around the fire. This man attends the hospital twice a week and has to pay \$16 each visit for parking, and he says 'I am one of the lucky ones.' I do not think he is.

I think this is a heartless budget and a heartless government. I cannot believe that the ministers of this government sat around their cabinet table and approved and agreed with the further attacks on our pensioners in Queensland. It was only that the opposition, the crossbenchers and everyone else in Queensland said, 'How could this LNP government do it to Queensland's most vulnerable?' Today our Premier's big hero statement is, 'We changed our mind', but the question has to be asked why did all of the ministers who sat around that cabinet table agree to that decision in the first place? It is disgraceful!

**Mr Cox** interjected.

**Mr WELLINGTON:** Yes, I know it was the federal government's responsibility. That is a federal Liberal National Party government and we have a state Liberal National Party government in Queensland. You liberal nationals are responsible for it, but the community said 'no'. The old people are going to walk in the streets with their walkers and their walking frames, and you will have to listen. In two years this government has sacked thousands of hardworking Queenslanders, destroyed—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Watts): Order! The House will come to order. Those interjecting across the chamber and not at the member on his feet will cease. I call the member for Nicklin.

**Mr WELLINGTON:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. In two years this government has sacked thousands of hardworking Queenslanders, destroyed business confidence with its doom and gloom predictions—and there has been doom and gloom for two years—increased the deficit by billions and increased the unemployment figure to 6.3 per cent. This government cannot be trusted and we should not believe the spin it is rolling out to sell the budget, and I will give members some reasons why. With the 'for sale' sign up and the countdown to the next election already started, no doubt the champagne corks will be popping at the changes to the state's electoral laws allowing nondisclosure of donations of up to \$12,400. But there is another burden on Queensland taxpayers that has not been highlighted in this budget, and that is the so-called policy development fund which is just another cash grab by the political parties and the LNP because it is its proposal. Now the two major parties can claim massive amounts of money for what is described as policy development, and guess what? There are no guidelines for this policy development fund. It is outrageous that this government intends to pay itself extra money to develop policies when that is what our policy committees are supposed to do. Just a short time ago the Minister for Police was on his feet talking about the work that the policy development committee is going to do, yet on the other hand he knows he is part and parcel of paying taxpayers' money to the major parties. What a disgraceful action it is!

These disgraceful changes to Queensland's Electoral Act were the last straw that broke the camel's back as far as the former member for Stafford was concerned. He refused to support them and resigned. After the Premier's callous and vicious treatment of him, it is little wonder that he resigned. Just read the *Hansard* record of that week's sittings. I see the style of the Premier and his leadership team in here every day when parliament sits and I understand that the former member's resignation and consequent by-election for the seat of Stafford will cost taxpayers around \$1 million. Guess what? Whoever is elected may only be elected to the seat for eight months and there will be another election. What a waste of money! What a waste of Queenslanders' money! I have been saying for some time that this government should act responsibly. It should call an election and let Queenslanders decide instead of spending another \$5 million on trying to sell a budget that the Premier and the Treasurer cannot sell themselves.

Parliament has descended into a place of thuggery and viciousness where questions from the opposition and crossbenches are treated with contempt and responded to with abuse and scorn, and the record shows that regularly when parliament meets. We have already seen Newman's highly paid spin merchants devise a \$6 million budget questionnaire to gauge support for the sale of Queensland assets to private interests. This tricky and expensive piece of work presented questions that were totally skewed towards the government's position so that when you chose to say no to selling off assets it registered yes. Now the Treasurer has foreshadowed Strong Choices—another sales pitch that is yet again going to cost Queenslanders more than \$5 million in advertising because neither the Premier nor the Treasurer can actually sell the budget to Queenslanders. They have to spend our taxpayers' money to do it and that is disgraceful!

We have already seen the effect of the strong arm of the new LNP government in Queensland with its influence on the state's justice system. Under the new Liberal National Party Newman government, we now have a senior magistrate, our Police Commissioner and the Crime and Misconduct Commission all batting in the LNP's corner. Then we have the strong arm of the Premier smashing the independence of the Crime and Misconduct Commission and even sacking the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee when the government could not get its own way. Further, we had the government picking a fight with our hospital doctors that caused significant resignations and almost brought down our public health system. Its heavy-handedness destroyed any goodwill that previously existed and what it illustrated was that doctors did not trust this government. They did not trust the Newman government, notwithstanding all of the assurances our health minister endeavoured to provide to them. Our doctors were fully aware of the government's track record of

sacking those who disagree with it, and look at the budget speech at page 11. It is proud of its sackings—sacking people who disagree with it or anyone who dares to speak against it. In fact, this government has taken abusing and criticising anyone who dares to speak against it to a new level. We only have to look again at how it treated our judicial system to realise that this government has no respect for anyone, be it judges, doctors, nurses, ambulance officers, fireies and the list goes on.

In the past we have listened to the Premier and our Treasurer blame previous governments for the state of the economy, and today in the House we heard the Premier say that it now blames Prime Minister Abbott and the federal Treasurer. This government needs to stand up and take some responsibility for what it has done to our state. This is the third budget of the Newman government and it offers nothing to crow about. My continual calls for the continuation of the duplication of the railway line from Brisbane to the Sunshine Coast have finally been supported by the coast's five ministers, but there is nothing of any significance in this budget for this vital project which would take significant pressure off our Bruce Highway and drive growth in the whole Sunshine Coast region. There is nothing of significance in this budget to support that project. I was only thinking after reflecting on the debate yesterday regarding amendments to the Sustainable Planning Act that maybe if Stockland came along—because we know the close connection with it and this government—and lobbied for the duplication of the railway line, guess what? We would have the Deputy Premier in here saying, 'Yes, let's do it.' We would have other ministers saying, 'Yes, let's do it.' It is all silence. The silence in terms of the importance of this potential nation building project and its potential growth impacts for the whole Sunshine Coast is deafening from all of the other Sunshine Coast ministers in this Newman government.

I cannot thank the Premier or his ministers for what they are offering to my constituents. All I can say is that I apologise to my electorate for this government. I am sorry that this government believes that it is acceptable to break promises, to take the people of Queensland for granted and to treat hardworking voters like fools. I am sorry that this government intends to sell off our income-earning assets and burden our pensioners with increased costs. Queenslanders are not fools and will see this budget for what it is. I suppose that is why those opposite have to spend \$5 million to try to sell it, because they cannot sell it themselves! When the LNP won office with an overwhelming majority just two years ago, everyone had great hopes and great aspirations of how the government would perform, but I believe that we have now seen a significant change in that the Newman government will now be recorded as one of the most despised governments in the history of Queensland. Recently commentators have compared it to the Bjelke-Petersen government. Guess what? After the fall of the Bjelke-Petersen government, there were only a handful of members elected to sit on the opposition benches. Who knows what history will show at the next election. Maybe we will see a repeat of that.

Today's budget is big on rhetoric and small on delivery. The Newman LNP is still blaming the Labor government for its own fiscal failures while conveniently forgetting that, despite going through the global financial crisis and suffering the worst floods in Queensland's history, Labor managed to keep Queensland afloat without sacking staff. It did not sack people! It kept people in jobs! It also went on a building program. It built roads, it built bridges, it built hospitals. It kept people employed, and those opposite blame others for their faults. For two long years the people of Queensland have suffered the breathtaking arrogance and contempt of this dictatorial government—a government that abuses and attacks anyone who dares to question its actions. But its bullying and intimidation is just like a tonic to me: it strengthens and fuels my determination to do whatever I can to get rid of the Newman government, and I know it does the same for many other people in Queensland.

Many of the announcements in the budget relating to my region are simply a continuation of funding projects which are already on the drawing board. Recently there was the announcement about the state government continuing funding for the Hinterland Connect bus service. That is great news. Now it is up to the council to match it and do the same thing and put its money on the table so this important bus service can continue. Another issue is the continual announcements about the extension of the Nambour Railway Station car park. I think the minister and the government have announced that three times, and guess what? I had my staff go have a look at that half an hour ago and they said, 'Peter, it still looks like an abandoned wasteland.' This is in the central business district of Nambour. It is disgraceful! I have written to the minister about this and I said—

**Mr Cox:** How long has it been like that?

**Mr WELLINGTON:** Over 12 months. I wrote to the minister some time ago and said, 'Minister, can you please look at this?' I even sent him photos. I did not even get the courtesy of a response—not even the courtesy of a response—and this is right beside our railway station, right beside the car

park, right beside the Meals on Wheels kitchen. This government should hang its head in shame! Earlier this morning a member of National Seniors popped into my office and said, 'We were ready to march on parliament with our walkers. We were going to go down there.' This government may think it can take on the unions, but only fools would take on the senior citizens of Queensland.

**Mr Cox** interjected.

**Mr WELLINGTON:** The Premier's backflip certainly was welcomed. Yes, I appreciate and thank the Premier for saying he got it wrong. He got it wrong because the cabinet members—

**Mr Cox** interjected.

**Mr WELLINGTON:** There was an article in the *Sunshine Coast Daily* and there were some interesting blogs that responded to that article which spoke about how the Premier had changed the decision.

I look forward to the next election, whenever the Premier chooses to call it. I say: bring it on. I know that there are many people the length and breadth of our great state who are waiting, keen, excited to go to the ballot box and vote. And guess what? They are going to vote the LNP out. I say that anyone else could be better than this LNP. This LNP came in with great expectation. I look at the Minister for Health and I think that he is one of the members who could lead this government with dignity and respect. He is a man of ability. But guess what. He is not in the leadership team. We have the Premier, we have the Attorney-General, we have the Deputy Premier and we have the Treasurer. I look forward to the debate continuing on this important budget. I look forward to the vote when it finally happens.

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (5.10 pm): It has been interesting to listen to this debate on the budget during the course of the day, because there has been an extraordinary amount of revisionism and a whole lot of collective amnesia from opposition members and even from some on the crossbenches. I have been in this place now for a couple of decades at least. I have never seen any government inherit a more parlous state. I would yearn for the day when a conservative government comes into power in exactly the same financial position as a Labor government comes into power and that is with full coffers and a very strong fiscal position. But that is never the legacy that is left to a conservative government and it was never left to this conservative government.

Indeed, it was quite extraordinary to listen to the honourable member for Rockhampton during the course of the day, who said that this government has a greater level of debt on the books than what the Labor government had when it left office. Of course it does! The honourable member does not fundamentally understand forward estimates and does not understand what committed obligations are. The Labor Party's forward estimates were heading towards \$85 billion worth of debt. Unless the honourable member and others had been living under a rock, over the past two years we have managed to reduce that trajectory to \$80 billion—a significant reduction to where we are going to be able to max out that credit card and then be able to start to significantly reduce it from there.

The other thing that the honourable members opposite and crossbenchers have not considered is that the independent arbiters that look at and can adjudicate appropriately the state of our fiscal performance are the ratings agencies. Those ratings agencies have judged Queensland by saying that we are not carrying a sustainable level of debt, that our whole program in this state of fiscal delivery is unbalanced and needs correction. That is why Queensland's credit rating was downgraded from AAA to AA. Even if the contention of the honourable member for Woodridge is right, the cost of the floods was \$5 billion of an \$85 billion debt, which still puts our debt to equity ratio in this state on an unsustainable trajectory. We have to bring that debt down to around about \$50 billion. That is far more than what Cyclone Yasi and any of those other disasters cost. I would instruct the honourable member for Woodridge to understand economic and fiscal management 101. The simple reality is that we have to do something about the debt.

Those on the other side advocate a patience program to fix our economic malaise in this state. It is a pie in the sky program of 'Look over there. There's a pie in the sky.' How are we going to afford this pie in the sky? We are going to pay for it by what? More debt and deficit? Or are we going to pay for it through economic growth, solar power schemes, or whatever else that comes from the other side? I go back to what happened during the days of the Beattie government in Queensland—those halcyon days of government in this state, where we had an historically low level of unemployment. The honourable member for Mulgrave would have us believe that by having low unemployment we would have a AAA credit rating and we would be able to afford things. That did not happen, did it? The honourable member for Mulgrave would have us believe that just by having an unprecedented

level—or any level—of economic growth then we would have a AAA credit rating and we will be able to afford all the indulgences of the Labor Party. That did not happen, either. It got worse. Indeed, we saw a Labor government that received \$30 billion in unbudgeted revenue growth over the period from the early 2000s to the end of almost 2010 and it blew it all. This growth was not budgeted. This was windfall revenue. So despite low unemployment, despite the fact that we had unprecedented economic growth, despite the resources boom, despite the fact that the Labor government sold assets, it still had a debt trajectory heading towards \$85 billion.

The only way we would be able to gauge how the members of the Labor Party would run the state in the future, if Queenslanders were so inclined to vote for them again, is to look at their performance in the past. Their performance in the past is an eye to the future. It is the portal to the future. It is their way of doing things, which is debt and deficit, because they do not understand how you balance your books.

This budget is one deserving significant recognition. It is a budget that is honest, disciplined, realistic and affordable. That is something that Queenslanders might not necessarily like as we make hard decisions, but at least they know that this government is intrinsically consistent. It says what it is going to do and it goes out there and does it.

The members of the Labor Party would seek to have the people of Queensland believe that they are something which they are not. Indeed, if the people of Queensland re-elected the Labor government, the greatest guarantee that we could give—with absolute certainty—would be that Labor will say that it will not sell assets, and it will, because it is in Labor's DNA. Labor did it before. Labor will sell assets if it is re-elected. Labor will not have a plan of what to do with the revenue and it will cause even further downgrades to our credit rating in Queensland.

This is an honest, disciplined, realistic and affordable budget. It tells the people of Queensland what our options are. There are only four ways that you are able to afford things, because there are no money trees. There are no magic puddings other than at the level that the Labor Party works on in Queensland. There are no pies in the sky. The cargo cultism that the Labor Party aspires to does not exist out there in the real world. So what are your options? You have to borrow, you have to tax, you have to reduce services, or you have to sell something. They are the options that are available to you, because in order to do something over here someone has to pay over there, unless you can run things more efficiently. We have certainly run things a lot more efficiently since we have come to government in Queensland. This Treasurer deserves significant recognition for what is an honest document that sets up Queensland for a far better future, even though the options for many are probably unpalatable. We know what we started with in regard to the general malaise in our underlying fiscal position in this state.

We know the position of Queensland Health. Today, we had the opposition leader stand up and say that we have been in government for two years, so we can take 100 per cent responsibility. I would be very proud to take 100 per cent responsibility for what we have achieved in Health, because Labor did not achieve any of that in Health when it was in government. When the Newman government took over there was a \$300 million budget black hole. We now have a position of financial stability in Health, more services being delivered, shorter waiting lists and long-wait dental waiting lists now down to 130 at the end of May from 61,500. That did not happen under the Labor Party. There was no plan from the Labor Party to do that. Surgical long waits in Queensland are down from 6,500 to 2,800 and trending south very quickly. Our emergency departments are performing very well. Indeed, we still have the most dramatic rate of improvement in all of Australia when other states are struggling to even hold the status quo. There have been remarkable improvements in that area and efficiencies rights across the government. Obviously, my other colleagues can talk about improvements in so many of their areas and what they have done.

This budget is about good hands-on management, because running a government is like running a business. You do not spend more than you have and, if you need more, you have to find that money from somewhere. But in order to justify spending more, you have to be able to demonstrate to people that you have spent responsibly. That is why, under this government, we have historically low levels of expenditure increases compared to our predecessors and a historically much higher level of service delivery in proportion to our expenditure. We are making every dollar count and every dollar deliver more.

Indeed, this \$13.6 billion Health budget is a significant increase, but it is an increase that is sustainable and that is delivering results. Whilst it goes up about six per cent this year, it purchases around about 4.5 per cent additional activity. If you go back to the last six years of the previous Labor government, there was a 42 per cent increase in expenditure and a 17 per cent increase in activity.

They were throwing money away but they were not delivering a commensurate additional level of services in Queensland. It has to be sustainable. That includes the Queensland Ambulance Service and we should be very proud of the results that they are achieving in relation to reduction in response times, additional front-line officers who are out there providing services to Queensland and new infrastructure across this state.

I heard the honourable member for Nicklin say that the previous Labor government was able to deliver this amazing utopia where there were all of these extraordinary sorts of things and they did not sack anyone. The Leader of the Opposition was the one who held the record for sacking the most people when she was in government. She went out and sacked about 500 railway workers when they privatised Queensland Rail. I do not know what honourable members opposite were doing at that time. I invite them to go to the newspapers and have a look. They said they were going to sack these people and they did.

In Queensland Health 2,900 employees received a letter saying, 'You have been identified as being surplus to requirements'. I do not know if that is sacking. I do not know what that is. Certainly many of them were not there at the end of that process. Maybe they went away in a totally consenting way and everyone lived happily ever after. Has anyone ever thought to talk to them? I know many of them were front-line officers and they did not feel very happy about the way that they were not sacked whilst apparently being made go away into the ether out there somewhere.

I will give members some examples of the previous government selling off assets. This morning in this place there was revisionism in the speech of the honourable member for Inala. The Leader of the Opposition stood up in here and said the Premier does not seem to have a problem because the previous Labor government borrowed to refurbish the Cairns Base Hospital and borrowed to extend the Mackay Hospital. Once again that is a complete misrepresentation from the opposition. The opposition leader should come back in here and apologise to this place. The previous Labor government actually sold the airports in both those communities to fund those hospitals. They actually funded them by selling the airports in those communities. They actually sold the Cairns Airport and the first thing they did was to pay off the residual debt of that particular airport and then they put the rest of it into rebuilding the Cairns Base Hospital.

That was in Anna Bligh's own words. That is what they did. It was the only honest asset sale. They did exactly the same thing in Mackay. Yet today the honourable Leader of the Opposition indicated that that was all on borrowings. No, it was not. It was on asset sales. It was the only time they were ever honest about asset sales. Our Treasurer is being honest in saying that we need to retire mature assets in order to be able to invest in new assets for the future of Queensland.

Let us be consistent, Leader of the Opposition. Let us be consistent, Labor Party in this place. Look at your own record. Do not try to recreate it. Do not rely upon what you would hope would be the collective amnesia of the people of Queensland by rewriting history because you are completely, absolutely wrong. We started with a cot case.

I received a letter from the Premier, my charter letter, which actually said, 'Congratulations. You have inherited a basket case. It is now your job to address waste and inefficiency and rebuild Queensland Health and reinvest in front-line services.' I can only imagine that other ministers received the same letter. The former Labor Premier in Queensland agreed. She said it was a cot case and she wanted to cut it in two. We left it together. We brought in local control and we have actually fixed that to the benefit of Queensland.

With regard to my electorate, I am very pleased that we are finally starting to repay the support of my electorate and many of those people across rural and regional Queensland. Much the same sort of area is represented by the honourable member for Gregory. I know that his constituents are also very appreciative of the work that has been done by this government. We are seeing the historic neglect of rural health services now being fixed across Queensland with a \$320 million investment in what has been neglected refurbishment and basic maintenance work. Not only that, we are starting to rebuild some of those smaller hospitals throughout those areas such as Moura, then moving through to Alpha and then we have to prioritise places like Blackwater, places that were not even on the radar screen of the previous government.

The Flying Obstetrician and Gynaecologist Service will be flying 1,000 hours a year, up from 400 hours. We will be reopening birthing services throughout Queensland. There will be significant investment in the uptake of telehealth throughout this state and a mobile surgical van moving throughout Queensland in this financial year to offer people the opportunity of surgery in their community so that they can recover in their community.

In my electorate what we have seen from the work of the hospital board is a CT scanner in the Goondiwindi Hospital, something which we could only have dreamt of before. We are seeing new air-conditioning being put into the Stanthorpe Hospital. Right throughout my electorate we are seeing a significant investment of hundreds of thousands of dollars with regard to the Great Results Guarantee, courtesy of my good friend and colleague the Minister for Education, which will put those schools on an even better platform in the future. We are seeing an investment in roads and an investment in community services in areas historically neglected by the Labor Party.

The communities across the Southern Downs are most appreciative of this budget. They look forward with sanguine realisation at the fact that the only way we are going to be able to invest in community hospitals, schools, the partnerships with local government, what needs to be done with regard to rural roads, all of those sorts of things, is to be able to liberate our capital capacity by retiring those assets which are mature so that we can reinvest. I think that this is a really good balance by the Treasurer of Queensland.

The 75 per cent proposed into debt reduction will help win back our AAA credit rating and will reduce our interest bill in Queensland by around about \$1.7 billion a year. The cost of that interest bill alone is equivalent to six nurses every hour, 144 nurses every day and 52,000 nurses every single year. That is what the cost of that is. It is a balance: 75 per cent into retiring debt, 25 per cent into rebuilding Queensland and investing in our future. It is in the hands of Queenslanders. It is an honest approach to fixing our underlying fiscal decay caused by the Labor Party. We are asking Queenslanders to judge on that, something the Labor Party was never prepared to do.

 **Mr GRIMWADE** (Morayfield—LNP) (5.26 pm): I rise tonight to speak to the Treasurer's budget handed down in this place on Tuesday; a budget that continues to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future. This budget carefully balances increases in education, health and community services spending while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing any services. I have fought hard to secure our fair share of funding for infrastructure and services and I will now outline how our local area will benefit from this year's budget. Locally, mums and dads will begin to see trucks, tractors, cranes and hard hats begin to roll into the Morayfield electorate with major infrastructure projects underway or about to start.

Health is an important issue in the Morayfield electorate. This budget delivers a record \$13.6 billion in funding. This is up six per cent on last year and is over \$2 billion more, or 18 per cent higher, than the last Labor budget delivered two years ago. In just two short years we have seen Queensland Health turn from the sickest hospital system in the nation to the best performing in the country. One can remember back two years ago under the former Labor government where we had waiting lists for the waiting lists, ambulance ramping at hospitals for hours, nurses not getting paid due to the Labor Party's Health payroll debacle and, of course, the fake Tahitian prince running off with millions of dollars undetected.

Contrast that to now, where we see Queensland Health with the best emergency department waiting times in the nation, the lowest waiting times for elective surgery in the country, ambulance ramping has been eliminated and the public dental waiting list has fallen from 61,500 Queenslanders who were waiting longer than two years and up to 10 years for routine dental appointments down to just 130 patients today.

Being a father of three children I understand the importance of a great education system. Since being elected two years ago I have fought day and night to secure funding for new schools, buildings and increased education resources for our local areas. This budget includes funding for the new Burpengary State High School. It includes \$14.3 million for new classrooms, buildings and amenities at Narangba Valley State High School, Morayfield State High School, Caboolture Special School and the new Carmichael College in Narangba. It includes \$1.7 million in Great Results Guarantee funding. This funding allows local school principals and P&Cs the autonomy to use these funds to target specific literacy and numeracy programs in their schools to ensure every child has the opportunity to meet the minimum standards.

These commitments build on last year's funding for the new \$1.2 million kindergarten at Jinibara, the \$2 million of additional funding to clear every local school's priority maintenance backlog, making our classrooms a safe environment to learn in and, of course, the school zone flashing lights delivered at Morayfield East State School, Minimbah State School and Narangba Valley State School.

One of the biggest achievements we have made as a government includes increasing funding in the community services portfolios. This budget sees \$406 million of new money invested to protect our children, with funding being made available for child and family services. On top of this, we have

announced that we will be doubling disability funding over the next few years, taking Queensland from the lowest per capita funded state for disabilities under the Labor Party to the highest per capita funded state under the LNP.

The implementation of this government's 2020 housing strategy will see 12,000 new public housing dwellings built to reduce our public housing waiting lists. I have announced that this year's budget will include \$3.6 million for a four-storey 17-unit housing complex in Caboolture South. We have worked hard to reduce the public housing waiting lists. In 2012, we inherited a situation where 431 families within the Morayfield electorate were on the public housing waiting list and so far we have managed to lower that number by a staggering 29 per cent to 307 applicants. The new \$3.6 million complex will further reduce the waiting lists in our area. As members can see, we have really kicked some goals in the departments of child safety, disability and housing, helping the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people in our communities.

Over the past 12 months, one of the government's focuses has been to ensure that our communities are the safest places to live, work and raise a family. We have introduced the toughest sex offender laws and the toughest anti-hooping laws. We have strengthened the youth justice system and we have tackled criminal gangs head-on. This budget will see another 267 police officers employed, trained and put on the beat in our local communities. This is part of our government's commitment to increase police numbers on the beat by 1,100 and since 2012 we have seen 750 new police officers put on the beat around Queensland. Locally I am proud to say that we have delivered 36 more police officers into our community and residents in Narangba would have seen our new bike cops riding around the local streets. The war against criminal gangs is starting to deliver real results for our local area. Robberies are down 55 per cent, vehicle thefts are down 27 per cent and unlawful entries are down 14 per cent.

Transport and road upgrades remain a high-priority item for our local community as the population continues to grow. Over the past two years we have completed the Morayfield Road upgrade and completed upgrades at both the Narangba and Burpengary train stations. This budget will build on that, with \$4.6 million allocated for a new bus station at Morayfield and \$400,000 to improve bus stop facilities along Station Road, Burpengary. On top of this, we have invested in making public transport more affordable.

This budget confirms the commitment that this government made to ease the cost of public transport fares. Over the past two budgets we have halved Labor's scheduled 15 per cent fare increases and in this budget we have announced that any future increases will be capped at a rate less than inflation. Regular go card users will also continue to benefit from the free travel after nine trips commitment. To demonstrate the significant savings that regular commuters are benefitting from, I provide the following example: someone travelling from any station within the Morayfield electorate to and from the CBD Monday to Friday will receive free their Friday afternoon trip home, plus any other travel undertaken during that week, including any travel on weekends. Regular commuters will have saved around \$920 a year compared to what they would have paid if Labor had won the election in 2012.

Queenslanders understand just how unpredictable our weather can be in this great state and, boy, have we had our fair share of natural disasters over the past few years. In Burpengary, Dale Street residents know better than most what devastating affects those disasters can have. The residents of this street have, quite frankly, been to hell and back, with their homes being inundated many times with flood waters. I have seen this first hand. I stood shoulder to shoulder with the street's residents, watching the heartache in the faces of families as they were forced to stand defenceless against the rising water levels in the street. I am very proud to announce that this budget includes funding to contribute to the \$5.8 million Dale Street flood mitigation project. Those works include an 820-metre flood levy, funded by all three levels of government. I thank both local councillor Peter Flannery and federal member Wyatt Roy for working with me to fund this very important piece of infrastructure.

A lot has been said about the concessions that are being delivered in this year's budget. In fact, this budget contains \$5.1 billion worth of concessions to help ease the cost of living. Recently, the federal government terminated funding that supported concessions for seniors and pensioners. Those cuts flowed through to older Queenslanders. In my opinion, seniors and pensioners simply could not afford to wear the cost of the concession cuts made by the Commonwealth government in its budget. We are listening to Queenslanders and that is why we have acted today to reinstate the full value of concessions, at a cost of almost \$50 million. This means that Queensland seniors and pensioners will not be worse off because of the Commonwealth cuts.

I remind our local community about the other steps we have taken to ease the cost of living on families. So far, we have frozen tariff 11 electricity, which saved the average family \$120 in 2012-13. We have paid an \$80 water rebate to all households in South-East Queensland. We have frozen motor vehicle registration for the whole term of this government and reintroduced the stamp duty concession on the purchase of a family home, saving over \$7,000 on the purchase of a local family house. Those cost-of-living initiatives save the average family around \$330. We have implemented a Great Start Grant to provide people building a home with a \$15,000 hand up, which will help to stimulate local trades by getting the building industry going locally.

Finally, we have invested \$47.8 million in the Get in the Game grassroots sports initiative, where those most in need in our community can access \$150 grants to enable their children to play a local sport. In the Morayfield electorate, over 750 local families have benefitted already from those vouchers. Local hardworking mums and dads who volunteer their time at local sports clubs have not missed out in this budget. This budget provides funding of \$98,532 for new field lighting at the Findlay Street sports complex and \$100,000 for lighting upgrades at the Caboolture Lions AFL club. That funding builds on last year's commitment of \$721,000 towards the Harris Avenue sports field redevelopment and over \$40,000 provided to clubs such as the Burpengary Jets Netball Club, the Narangba Demons Baseball Club, the Narangba Dynamos Netball Club and the Caboolture Sports Club to help grow their clubs and to pay for volunteer training for coaches, first aid officers and umpires.

Although we have been able to turn this state around and deliver for our communities, strong choices have to be made so that a brighter future can be ours for generations to come. We need to reduce the state's \$80 billion debt and the annual \$4 billion interest bill. This budget outlines our plans to secure our finances by making the strongest and smartest choices to reduce the debt, so that we can sustainably invest in schools, hospitals and infrastructure into the future. We are making significant progress in restoring our finances, growing a four-pillar economy, revitalising our front-line services and funding infrastructure projects and jobs, with more than 60,000 jobs created in Queensland in the last year alone.

Every morning I get up thinking, 'How can I make our area a better place to work, live and raise a family?' This will be the last budget delivered before the next state election. At that election, the good people of the Morayfield electorate will have the choice to re-elect me based on my record of delivering for our local area or electing one of the old recycled Labor Party gang responsible for getting the state in the mess we inherited in 2012. 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 fully utilised and that the people who elected me can trust that I will continue to deliver for them. I will continue to listen, to fight and to deliver for our local area. I thank the House.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (5.38 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2014. This budget is a sensible budget that continues to deliver on the government's strong plan for a brighter future for all of Queensland, including my electorate of Mudgeeraba. This budget sees huge investments in education, health, disability services, homelessness, correctional services and road infrastructure, both in our state and in my electorate in particular. As a registered general nurse—and for the benefit of the House I table my current practising certificate—members would be aware that health care is one of my greatest passions and I welcome the commitment from this government to invest an additional six per cent into health in 2014-15.

*Tabled paper:* AHPRA Nursing and Midwifery, Registration Details for Rosslyn Mary Bates—28/04/2014 to 31/05/2015 [\[5342\]](#).

Only our government has a strong plan for health care and hospitals in our state and I am proud to be part of a team that is delivering on its commitments to revitalise front-line services. It has been a pleasure to serve on the Health and Community Services Committee, where I can continue to be a strong advocate for health issues and, particularly, for the future of nursing.

In my maiden speech I vowed to represent nurses in parliament and be that vocal and credible representation that nurses are so rightly demanding. I will ensure that this most trusted and dedicated profession gets the acknowledgement it deserves. We will also see an additional \$690,000 for Child Safety Services and almost \$5 million for disability services in Mudgeeraba. It is great to see this government so consistently providing assistance to those who need it most and delivering on its commitment in these key areas.

In my maiden speech over five years ago I made some significant commitments to the residents of my electorate. I vowed to be their voice in this place and to ensure that the local services we had been missing out on were delivered for our local community. Together we have been able to see the vision for our local area that I outlined in 2009 come to fruition.

I vowed to bring about a significant increase in police numbers in Mudgeeraba and surrounding electorates that would lead to a major reduction in graffiti crimes and hooning. Since 2012 Queensland has seen 750 new police officers hired as part of our commitment to hiring 1,100 new officers over four years. Locally this has produced results. We have seen year-on-year decreases in graffiti. Hoons have been deterred due to the toughest anti-hooning laws in the country. Over 2,000 hoons have had their vehicles impounded. I have worked tirelessly with our local police, our Neighbourhood Watch groups and our Mudgeeraba Police Community Consultative Committee to fight back against crime and antisocial behaviour in our local community.

In my electorate, as members would be aware, roads are consistently the issue of most concern to local residents, with Mudgeeraba being the largest electorate on the Gold Coast by area and covering a range of state roads that are of vital importance to locals who seek to commute from the hinterland suburbs. This budget will see a tremendous investment in local roads in my electorate which will be welcomed by Mudgeeraba locals.

Since being elected, this government has been one which has delivered on its promises and we have seen some huge investments in local infrastructure and services. I promised to ensure that we would see the end of the infamous Mudgeeraba car park and that residents of my electorate would be able to commute with ease and spend their days productively rather than fighting traffic gridlock.

When I was elected in 2009 a tired Labor government and a complacent local Labor member had simply refused to plan for the future and recognise the huge amount of growth that our wonderful area would see in just a few short years. Roads which were of vital importance to local residents were treacherous, they were deteriorating and they were dangerous. Mudgeeraba locals were simply being ignored.

Since then, we have secured hundreds of millions of dollars of upgrades for our roads and long-term planning has been achieved. The M1, not just the most crucial piece of road infrastructure for local residents of my electorate but also one of vital significance to the Gold Coast and Queensland, has been improved exponentially. We have seen the widening of the M1 from four lanes to six from exit 73 to exit 77. The upgrade from exits 77 to 79 will soon be complete. We will see an additional two kilometres of road widened to six lanes with the 2014-15 budget contributing \$38 million toward this upgrade.

Not only this, but I recently announced, alongside my federal colleague, Karen Andrews MP, roadworks to the value of \$9 million which will see the M1 widened to three lanes southbound from the Mudgeeraba interchange at exit 79 to the Robina interchange at exit 82. Motorists would have already noticed the realignment of the northbound and southbound lanes and the installation of safety barriers to allow work to continue further south.

In Reedy Creek local residents are also seeing significant works undertaken to improve the traffic flow in our area. In addition to the more than \$400,000 spent improving the roundabout at Old Coach Road, over \$2 million is currently being spent on upgrades in Reedy Creek, including the completion of widening the southbound off ramp at exit 84 to provide an additional right-hand turning lane and modifications to the traffic signals and median strip island. Works began last month to install a dual right-turn lane from Old Coach Road into Bridgman Drive, relocate the existing Energex pole and bus stop facilities, and realign the footpath.

Work in Reedy Creek has also included the installation of noise barriers to mitigate sound from the M1, and the painting of a beautiful mural on it at Encamp Street. This is not only a great visual attraction for our local area but it will also decrease the potential for graffiti in our neighbourhood.

Until 2009 Worongary Road was one of the most dangerous and underfunded roads in the Mudgeeraba electorate. It has seen huge improvements over the last five years—to the value of almost \$7 million—in addition to routine maintenance. I recently announced that the Worongary Creek Causeway would be upgraded, with works set to begin later this year. In this budget \$3.2 million has been allocated for this important upgrade. This much-needed work will improve the flood resistance of this key road.

In 2009 I also promised rapid and significant upgrades to Beechmont Road as families feared for their safety and motorists were put in danger just by using this important road. In line with this promise, Beechmont Road has seen over \$11.2 million in improvements since my election to secure the safety of local motorists. Most recently works were undertaken to stabilise slopes and landslips. Not only this but work will soon begin to improve safety for motorcyclists at the Clagiraba end of the road.

The Gold Coast-Springbrook Road has similarly seen millions of dollars spent on improvements in order to increase safety and deliver crucial maintenance. In recent months slope stabilisation works have been completed and locals are able to travel safely down the mountain.

I also promised to find a solution to the issue of acid sulphate in the Witt Avenue canal in Carrara. I am still awaiting the outcome of legal action undertaken by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection. Residents would recall that whilst the government won the case in court, the defendant has mounted an appeal. This is another issue that was never resolved by the Labor Party. I look forward to a resolution on this important issue.

I also swore to Mudgeeraba constituents that I would work to strengthen our local community through supporting our schools, sporting organisations, non-profit organisations and diverse range of community groups. In line with this promise, I have maintained close working relationships with my local schools that include, as members would have noticed, regular visits by young student leaders to Parliament House; visiting them for awards ceremonies, events and catch-ups; and working with principals and staff to deliver better outcomes for students.

In this budget we see a seven per cent increase in funding for education in our state to \$11.8 billion. This means that schools in my electorate will continue to benefit from fantastic programs like the Great Results Guarantee. In 2014-15 state schools in my electorate will receive \$1.4 million. This is in addition to the great work that has already been done to strengthen our schools by working with principals and school communities and through programs like Great Teachers = Great Results, the Advancing Our Schools Maintenance Initiative and the Great Results Guarantee.

This is a government that is delivering on its promises to foster greater engagement with local principals and provide them with the tools they need to give our kids the best education possible. In my electorate schools have received funding totalling over \$5 million in just the last year through these great programs.

Also amongst my commitments to my constituents has been a new state high school west of the M1. This has been something that has attracted widespread local support lately. It is now the case, however, that Robina State High School, which services high school students throughout my electorate, is no longer at capacity and can continue to provide education to local students in the years ahead.

This government has established the Queensland Schools Planning Commission, an apolitical commission led by a highly qualified and independent commissioner in the Hon. Bob Quinn, which has been tasked with independently assessing the need for new schools according to population trends and school capacity throughout the state. I have not lost sight of the long-term need for a second state high school in my electorate or the local support for this idea, and will continue to revisit this issue into the future. In the meantime, my seven senior private schools and Robina State High School are more than capable of dealing with the secondary education needs of children in the Mudgeeraba electorate.

In addition, the Mudgeeraba electorate has received millions of dollars in grants to fund community groups, sporting organisations and non-profit groups and to ensure their contribution to the local area continues long into the future. In the last year alone, over \$80,000 from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund has been given to sporting groups and community organisations such as Multicap, the Gold Coast Model Flying Club, CareFlight and the Mudgeeraba Little Athletics Association.

The Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund has provided funding of \$35,000 to the Gold Coast Dolphins Cricket Club and \$10,774 to the Lions Club of Carrara. Our Get Going program has given funding of over \$30,000 to sporting organisations such as the Mudgeeraba Tennis Club, the Robina Raptors, the Mudgeeraba Baseball Club and the Gold Coast and Hinterland Axemen Club. The Caring for our Community program has given funding of \$12,000 to great local organisations such as the Gold Coast Junior Rugby League Club, CareFlight and the Trinity Anglican Mission. I have had the pleasure of seeing how this funding is invested firsthand through my regular visits, meetings and engagements throughout the electorate.

The state-wide swing at the 2012 election was 13.7 per cent and the swing in Mudgeeraba was 22 per cent. Residents in Mudgeeraba know which party and which member of parliament has delivered for them on all local fronts. I will continue to do so. Our government is delivering on its plan, producing great results for the Mudgeeraba electorate.

I congratulate my very good friend Tim Nicholls, the Treasurer, for his methodical efforts to return this great state back to prosperity after years of economic vandalism by those opposite in the Labor Party. This is a budget that sets out a strong plan for a brighter future, and it gives me great pleasure to commend the bills to the House.

 **Mrs MADDERN** (Maryborough—LNP) (5.48 pm): A short two years ago, the LNP government inherited a financial state of affairs completely out of control with front-line services in disarray and not meeting the needs of the community. Money was being spent at an increasing rate with no consideration to the income needed to support that expenditure. The Labor answer was to borrow, borrow, borrow and not worry about how to repay. Householders know with their own budgets the need to understand their financial circumstances, to assess their goals and to plan to achieve those goals, and householders understand that achieving their goals does not happen overnight. It can take years to save the money to send kids to university or to pay off the mortgage on the home.

State government budgets are no different. In the short two years since the election, the LNP government has assessed the situation, developed a long-term plan to bring the budget back under control while at the same time delivering and growing efficient front-line services, particularly in the areas of health, education, community safety, roads and infrastructure. The final part of the plan is developing a strategy to pay down some of the accumulated debt and provide funding for future infrastructure development which is so vital to the growth of the Queensland economy and the wellbeing of our communities.

For the Maryborough electorate, the 2014 budget builds on the basis that has been put in place over the past two years. When the LNP government was elected in March 2012, services in the Maryborough Hospital were very, very limited. Since then, a centre of excellence for endoscopies has been established, with a reduction in waiting times from two years to four weeks; a state-of-the-art rehab unit has been established; a centre of excellence for orthopaedic surgery has recently been established; wards are being utilised for subacute care, with a threefold increase in bed utilisation; and there are now 15 dental chairs, with waiting lists down from eight years to less than eight months. Ward 1 is currently been fully rebuilt to provide hospital beds that meet the current standards. These are the achievements of the last two years.

This budget continues to build on this work. An additional \$24 million has been allocated to the Wide Bay Health and Hospital Board, giving them the flexibility to look at continuing to grow some additional services at the Maryborough Hospital as part of the overall plan for the Wide Bay Health and Hospital Service.

A similar story applies to the education sector. Over the past two years, Aldridge State High School has been given independent school status, funding in excess of \$2 million has been given to schools to ensure their maintenance backlog is up to date, funding has been given to both Aldridge and Maryborough high schools for facilities to cater for the transition of year 7s into high school and some capital funding has been provided to a couple of the private schools. This budget allocates approximately \$2.26 million in funding for the Great Results Guarantee for schools. While I do not know how all schools propose to use this funding, I do know that in some cases it will result in the employment of additional teachers, teacher aides and support people.

Anyone travelling the Bruce Highway from Curra to just north of Howard will have noted the significant increase in overtaking lanes and the intersection works at Walker Street at Maryborough, Howard and Torbanlea. While there has been the odd grumble about 'roadworks', the completed works make a significant difference to the ease of driving and to safety on the highway. There have been other upgrading works on roads in the electorate including the Maryborough-Hervey Bay Road. In this budget, this ongoing work in upgrading road infrastructure continues. There is more funding for overtaking lanes on the Bruce Highway and \$3 million towards preliminary work on the construction of the Tinana interchange. Residents in Tinana will be pleased to know that \$2 million has been allocated to upgrading works on the Woongool and Gympie Road intersection.

Clearly from these examples, this budget builds on previous work, and this is the case across all areas of responsibility of the government. Boaties will be happy that funding has been allocated to progress the Burrum Heads boat ramp and to upgrade the Beaver Rock boat ramp to two lanes. Just

a little over \$1 million will be made available to non-government organisations to deliver specialist homelessness services aimed at both reducing the number of homeless people and the number of people becoming homeless, and \$770,000 has been allocated to provide supported accommodation in Maryborough. There is funding for library materials, flood monitoring equipment, electricity line upgrades, funding for Aboriginal cooperative housing and ongoing funding for the boot camp.

It is most satisfying to know that the LNP government, with the formulation and presentation of this budget, has taken one more step in the plan to make Queensland the most prosperous state in Australia with the very best level of front-line services to the community and all without any new taxes or increases in existing taxes. We know there is more work to do, but the plan is in place and step by step we will achieve our goals. We will have an ongoing conversation with Queenslanders about the best way forward to pay down some of the debt and to build the infrastructure which will promote the future prosperity of the state and my community. I thank the Treasurer and his team for the hard work put into developing the budget, and I am pleased to support these bills.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (5.54 pm): I rise to speak to the cognate appropriation bills before the House. At the outset I acknowledge the guests that I have from the Broadwater electorate here this evening. This is a fiscally responsible budget. It is a workmanlike budget that continues to deliver on this government's strong plan for a brighter future. It is a budget that delivers in the areas that matter to Queensland—health, education and community services.

We have seen measured increases in education funding of seven per cent and health funding of six per cent and, of course, a significant investment in community services, with more than \$400 million in response to the Carmody inquiry, and a further nearly \$45 million for the implementation of the Safe Night Out Strategy. It is important to note that all of this increase in funding has come with no new taxes and no reduction in services.

I think it is also important to note that the Premier announced today that there is going to be a further increase in the funding for concessions—a further increase than the 9.9 per cent that was announced by the Treasurer in his budget—so that pensioners in our great state will not be worse off. Given that there are more than 10,000 residents in my electorate who are over the age of 65, I think that it is absolutely fantastic news that this government has been able to fully absorb the cuts that were implemented by the federal government in their most recent budget.

I think it is also really important to note that this will be the first budget surplus that Queensland will see in a decade. This continues our commitment to the people of Queensland to get Queensland back on track and to restore the economy. We have long been committed to restoring finances in this state and sustaining economic growth. I think it is time that we compare and contrast with Labor, Labor who failed in government and Labor who continue to fail Queensland in opposition.

Queenslanders understand that there is a debt problem and Queenslanders want something done about it. They have had their say and they have now been presented with a plan that will guarantee funding certainty for the schools, the hospitals and the infrastructure that we will need for our future. We have presented Queenslanders with what is the strongest choice and the smartest choice.

This is a budget that delivers locally in the community of Broadwater. We have seen investment totalling nearly \$10 million in my community alone. I am particularly pleased to see that we have seen further investment in Coombabah State School, Coombabah State High School, Biggera Waters State School and Labrador State School for the Great Results Guarantee. I am sure that all members of this House would agree that education is an investment in the future, and anything that we can do to work with schools to make sure that the next generation of leaders are well prepared to go out into the real world is a fantastic thing. I welcome the investment in our local schools in this budget.

We have also seen investment of more than \$1 million in the Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre. That is \$1 million in just this year alone. The Runaway Bay Sport and Leadership Excellence Centre will play a pivotal role in the 2018 Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast both in the lead-up to the games in terms of hosting international teams and when it hosts the weightlifting at the 2018 games.

As the member for Broadwater, I am always passionate about the Broadwater and what it is that we can do to increase safety and accessibility. This government, like its conservative predecessors, has long been committed to looking after waterways on the Gold Coast. In 2012 we established the Gold Coast Waterways Authority, with the commitment to fund \$30 million over four

years. I welcome the nearly \$8 million that has been invested in the Gold Coast Waterways Authority in this particular budget. In particular, I welcome the funding that has been set aside to increase safety and accessibility.

For those who have not had a chance to see the Broadwater, it is indeed one of the busiest waterways on the Gold Coast as well as one of the most beautiful. I believe that it is the jewel in the Gold Coast's crown, and the investment that we have made will go a long way to allowing the Gold Coast Waterways Authority to continue to look after the Broadwater and other local waterways.

I am also particularly pleased to see this budget deliver an investment in disability services at a local level, an investment in child safety at a local level as well as support for homelessness services. I think it is incumbent on us as a government to, where possible, help people in our state and our community who need it. I really do welcome the significant investment that we have seen in the community services sector. While the minister is in the House, I would like to pay tribute to the great work that she has done and thank her for coming to my electorate just the other day when we opened a great facility that will allow people in our community with a disability to live independent lives. I have no doubt that we will continue to see great strides taken not only by this minister but by this government generally as we work towards empowering people with a disability and making sure that Queensland is one of the safest places to raise a child and have a family.

It is also critically important that we acknowledge the great investments with regard to the new Gold Coast police hub, the further investment in the Gold Coast police helicopter and the additional police officers we will see in Queensland. When you look at the investment in the Safe Night Out Strategy, you can see just how committed this government is to making sure that Queensland is an incredibly safe place. This is a government that is actually prepared to look at what the solutions are, particularly with the Safe Night Out Strategy. Research suggests, if one has a look at it, that the solution is to change the drinking culture and educate people about the way they should behave when consuming alcohol. What we have seen with this investment will be great across Queensland and specifically in the entertainment precincts in Surfers Paradise and the restaurant area and restaurant hub in Broadbeach.

There are thousands of Broadwater residents who are aged between 18 and 30, and I am sure they will welcome this kind of investment. When I was asking them what they wanted us to do, the feedback I got from them was that they wanted some independence and autonomy. The people who behave properly do not want to be punished, and we have seen that again with this budget and this funding.

I had the opportunity to sit through the entire 50 minutes of the opposition leader's reply to the budget speech, and I have to say that it galls me that the opposition leader would come into this place and have no alternative plan for Queensland. The Labor Party simply have a legacy of debt and deficit, and their solution to the debt problem is to just relax, be a little bit patient, and have a cup of tea, a Bex and a good lie down.

I will agree with one thing that the opposition leader said. She said that Queenslanders have a clear choice, and they do. We can compare and contrast. We have a government that has revitalised front-line services in Queensland, a government that has delivered jobs for Queenslanders, a government that has cut crime levels across the state, a government that has a plan to reduce the debt levels in this state, a government that wants to listen to Queenslanders, a government that wants to put in place a plan so that we can invest in the infrastructure, the schools and the hospitals we need for our future, a government that has a plan and wants to talk about the strongest choice and the smartest choice, a government that has a strong plan for a brighter future. Then we have an opposition that is an opposition of no position, that on most policies flim-flams so much it has more positions on a particular issue than it has members of parliament.

At the end of the day, Queenslanders will have a clear choice. They will be able to choose between a government that continues to deliver as it has done in this budget in the areas that matter for the people of Queensland—with investment in health, education and community services—or a Labor Party that treated them poorly when they were in government, a Labor Party that misled them about what their actions were going to be.

We are a government that has a plan for a brighter future and wants to take the people of Queensland on that journey so that together we can work for a better Queensland. Ultimately, this is what this budget delivers through its record investments. This government continues to do that, in the

sense that it listens to Queenslanders. Again, we can compare and contrast that with the former failed administration that refused to listen to Queenslanders. We know exactly what their legacy was when we look at the \$80 billion debt and the \$450,000 of interest that is paid every single hour of every single day.

This government wants to be able to invest in regional Queensland. This government wants to be able to look after the future generations of Queensland. This is a great budget and I commend the Treasurer. I am sure there could have been a temptation to fling many things around and not make sensible decisions about the future of Queensland and its economy, but this is a workmanlike budget that is fiscally responsible. I look forward to continuing to support this budget as it continues its passage through the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (6.05 pm): I rise to speak on the 2014 budget. I was in here on the night that we saw the privatisation of many of our assets—the ports, the railways and some of the state forests—and I think we were debating that matter until at least 4 or 4.30 in the morning. I can remember the venom at that time of the LNP members who were in opposition. They were voicing their anger at the Labor Party and saying, ‘How dare you sell off our profitable assets, our income-producing assets’—to the point where they were frothing at the mouth. Their argument was that we should not be about selling assets, rather we should be about building assets and growing the economy and having income going back to the state. There was only one person who was very, very supportive of this—and that was the Treasurer. He was frothing at the mouth because he wanted more sold. It is very hypocritical to hear LNP members tonight bragging about how we need to sell our assets but then accusing the Labor Party of doing the same thing.

The state budget is a massive con job, but it is not conning. The LNP is going to try to sell off at least \$33 billion in state profit-producing assets if it wins government at the next election. These assets belong to every Queensland, but the government is relying on its 30-seat majority to flog them off. The government believes that because it has a 30-seat majority it can make many sacrifices. If it had a five-seat majority, the LNP members would be talking a different language. They would be saying, ‘We are growing the economy. There is going to be six per cent growth by 2016-17. There will also be a \$700 million surplus.’ That is what they would be saying if there were a five-seat majority, but there is a 30-seat majority.

I have only been here for 10 years—I heard that the member for Callide has been here much longer, and likewise the member for Gregory who has just walked out of the chamber—but I have seen this parliament change over the years and new faces have continued to come in and many people have left. I will tell members why there are not many people who have been here for a long time left; it is because they have been too frightened to take a stand for their electorate and make the decisions. They just agree to what their government is putting forward that is controversial and that is against the interests of the people of Queensland.

When Newman came to power, it was like, ‘Do you realise who we are? We are the Newman government. We can do anything we like, but we will never do anything terrible like the Labor Party did and sell our profitable assets.’ I can see all of the backbenchers in here who said in their maiden speeches, ‘There’s one thing we will never do and that’s go down the path of the Labor Party and sell our assets. We will always stand up for our electorates.’ I want to say this to the LNP: yes, you have a 30-seat majority but you will not have many of those 30 seats left after the next election because there is a tidal wave coming unless you take this chance and make a decision. The LNP is turning its back on Queensland.

These are our assets built by the hardworking taxpayers of Queensland. Have LNP members ever been out there on the railway tracks and seen the TIs and the South Sea islanders working those tracks and building them? These assets are about to be sold off and, as I said, the government members and the Treasurer are frothing at the mouth to have them sold. I am calling on the Treasurer to conduct an independent assessment—

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Berry): Order! Member for Dalrymple, just hold on a second. Honourable members, I do want to hear the member for Dalrymple if you would not mind.

**Mr KNUTH:** I am calling for an independent assessment of the income that will be lost over the next 20 years if these assets are sold. Surely that is not much to ask for—an independent assessment of the income that we will lose over a 20-year period. I am appalled that the government

is—and I will not use the word ‘misleading’; I will use something else, but I cannot think of another word, so I will have to say—misleading Queenslanders by spruiking that the private sector investment will drive electricity prices down. We have already suffered a loss due to the entry of private investment into the retail arm of our energy sector and this has seen electricity prices triple. The Treasurer was saying that, by stopping electricity prices from going up, we will ask private investors to invest into our energy sector. We have already done that. That is why we have seen our electricity prices triple.

Peter Beattie even got up and said that the biggest mistake he ever made was privatising the retail arm of our energy sector because he could not believe how greedy the corporates were in ripping off the average consumer. This is exactly the same thing. The last thing we want is multinational corporatisation and then we have to pay our electricity bill to those big corporates. The reality is that privatisation of energy assets will see further skyrocketing of households’ and businesses’ electricity costs. Corporations invest to generate profits, and profits will come from everyone’s electricity bills, hitting hard and heavy on the already stretched budgets of households, businesses and farms.

I keep hearing about this carbon tax. I was also here the night when the Labor Party, with the LNP, voted to pass the cost of the carbon tax not onto the energy companies but onto the consumers. So we are receiving an extra cost not just because of the Labor Party but also because of the LNP. I feel that it is very hypocritical of the government to point their finger at someone regarding the carbon tax when they did the same thing themselves. In selling profitable assets they are doing exactly the same thing themselves. But, worse, they are using their 30-seat majority in this House in the belief that they can hoodwink the people of Queensland into selling something that is very, very important to us. When each member of parliament came to this House, they said, ‘I am going to take a stand for my electorate.’ Some may have thought they might be able to feather their own nest, but most came in here for the people of Queensland.

I say go to the Mount Isa railway track and talk to those workers and say, ‘I’m going to vote to sell this off and you are going to work for some Indian company.’ That is what happened at the Bowen port.

**Mr Dowling:** That’s racism. Why do you hate Indians?

**Mr KNUTH:** Why not, because that is what happened. ‘But you are going to work.’

**Mr Dowling:** Unbelievable!

**Mr KNUTH:** Why doesn’t the member opposite go and tell them that they will work for some foreign company that does not understand those little townships, that does not understand how those townships rely on those railway stations or that the towns rely on those jobs. All they have to do is upgrade that railway track. It is very simple; as the railway track is upgraded, it will receive more transport haulage and there will be more profits going back to Queensland. It is so simple, but what does the government do? It sells it off. The chief economist has said that the budget is a billion dollars short. Of course, we are a billion dollars short, because we privatised the coal component of Queensland Rail. Previously, \$1.2 billion was coming in each year that we now do not have, and the government is telling us that the privatisation of assets is a great thing. It is these assets that are keeping our schools going and paying off debt, which they keep talking about. At present, the Mount Isa line returns a quarter of a million dollars each year, and we are selling that. How stupid! That is already coming in and is paying off interest. If we keep selling these assets, governments will have to resort to mass taxation and increased charges to boost the state’s falling income.

I was disgusted—and I do not think I was the only one—that the government had proposed punishing our seniors with a cut of \$233 million that was available to concession card holders as a discount on their rates and electricity bills. These are our most vulnerable citizens. While the LNP throw money at a \$6 million Premier’s precinct, a new \$5 billion tunnel and feather their own nest with a massive pay rise, the elderly are told to tighten their belts. This is shameful. However, they backed down. Some of the backbenchers said to us, ‘We can’t take this anymore. We sacked 14,000 public servants. We declared war on doctors and motorbike riders. Now we are targeting the frail and the elderly. And the only friends that we have left are the big corporate buddy mates. They are the only ones who are going to look after us, who give us the cash in the pocket. These are the only ones. So

we are losing everyone: the motorbike riders, the public servants, the police, the firies—the whole lot. The only friends we have are the big corporate buddies who will give us cash donations at whim.' That does not leave many voters left.

I will read a letter that I have received, because the Treasurer talked about the strong choices and a \$5 million campaign. The letter from Mr Glenn Whybird, a former LNP voter, states—

We, the public, were recently invited to assist the government by answering a web based questionnaire. In good faith I opened the link to participate, but was completely dismayed by the bias inherent in the questions. In all conscience I could not participate, because I could not see any way that my real opinion could be obtained. Filling out the survey, I believe, could only be used as support for the present government's apparent railroading policies. These appear to be forging ahead with their own agenda and, at the same time, claiming that they are being consultative.

Along with an increasing number of Queenslanders, I am absolutely horrified by the seemingly increasing amount of money being wasted by the Newman Government on advertising. This horrendous expenditure is totally unnecessary, achieves nothing for Queensland except promote the ego of this apparently dictatorial government. I would like to know how much money has been spent on advertising since this irresponsible government has come to power? Newman and, what I see as his minion henchmen, appear to have cost many jobs in this state, yet they claim to have created jobs. The only jobs I can see that they are responsible in creating is in the advertising industry.

If it wasn't so pitiful, the parliamentary allowance grab by this group of government parliamentarians would be a complete joke. At the same time that they are asking their average constituents to accept savage cuts to services and rampant price increases, they grant themselves a disgraceful increase. The electorate does not see it any other way than politicians feathering their own nests and thumbing their noses at their constituents who put them there.

I, along with many others, hoped after the last election that this inexperienced group of our elected representatives would have the intestinal fortitude to make decisions for us that were fair and equitable for our State.

I think he is right there because that is why the LNP backbenchers believed they were coming in. It goes on—

I, along with many others, am severely disillusioned.

Any representations you can make to have these issues would be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Glenn Whybird

I table that letter, and he is very happy for me to do so.

*Tabled paper:* Letter, dated 30 May 2014, from Mr Glenn Whybird to member for Dalrymple, Mr Shane Knuth MP, regarding the performance of the Queensland Government [\[5343\]](#).

Reading from today's *Townsville Bulletin*, the headline is 'Funding snub will cost votes' and it states—

Premier Campbell Newman would have to be crazy to turn his back on North Queensland.

Fortress Townsville delivered five LNP members down in George St but it's unlikely they will all be returned after the next election if the region doesn't get its fair share of the privatisation of local assets.

The retail arm of Ergon could be sold off to investors while the Port of Townsville is expected to be privatised via a 99-year lease if the LNP win the next election.

Those two assets could raise as much as \$2 billion for the State Government.

But what is the Government promising to deliver for North Queensland?

Nothing.

We aren't guaranteed of even getting 1c because the money will be distributed through a competitive grant process after the election.

How can we trust you? Can you explain or show me how we can possibly trust you? Then it states—

Cairns could get another convention centre while Mackay may get an even newer stadium, while our city gets robbed again.

Thuringowa MP Sam Cox has staked his career on getting the money for North Queensland but I'd suggest the LNP give a rock-solid funding guarantee to the region or he will lose his job.

I, just like many other non-committed voters in the region, will switch my vote if there is no guarantee that the proceeds of privatisation will be reinvested in North Queensland.

These are the comments from the Treasurer, who says—

Do you want to own a power generator or a port, or would you like to see the port leased and the proceeds of that used to build a new football stadium?

Have you ever seen the port of Townsville, with all the trains and cranes moving that equipment and the magnitude of those ships? What is he saying? He says, 'What would you rather, a port or a football stadium?'

Then the member for Mundingburra, David Crisafulli, is quoted as saying—

I think we are facing a golden opportunity that comes with a long-term lease of the port to actually do something. Great cities have a stadium in the CBD.

The member for Thuringowa, Sam Cox, said—

As long as it is spent on something the community and council is happy with, I am in favour of it.

I notice that was one member of the council who wanted a sports stadium. This is about squandering our income-producing assets. The Great Northern Railway, which was built by the hardworking taxpayers of Queensland and which provided work for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and South Sea islanders for the purpose of opening up massive investment, is about to be sold off; likewise the ports—and you are talking about selling all of this off for a sports stadium? It is like selling your business to pay off 25 per cent of your house and to put in a swimming pool, and then you realise that you have to go and get a job.

If the backbenchers could get out of their subterranean existence to venture out and have a look at the real world out there, they would see that Queenslanders want good governance and good government. The Treasurer bragged about returning to a \$800 million surplus in 2016. We were very disturbed to discover that the amount allocated for road infrastructure funding in the south-east was \$7 billion but only \$700 million for North Queensland. We did not see anything in the budget for the upgrade of the Gregory Development Road. I put in a submission to the Deputy Premier to upgrade Snake Creek, Stockyard Creek, the Basalt River, Clarke River and the Cape River. There are also 70 kilometres left to upgrade which would provide investment to open up those areas, and likewise for the Hann Highway. If you say that I have not brought it to your attention, I am bringing it to your attention right now.

The budget should be about investing in these areas and opening them up; not spending all this money on sports stadiums. Of course they are a great thing, but we have plenty of them at this present moment. There is a lot more that I could speak about, but time is not on my side.

 **Mr GIBSON** (Gympie—LNP) (6.25 pm): I rise for what is my eighth budget-in-reply speech and for what will be my last. Firstly, can I thank everyone for their kind messages of support over the past month for both my family and me. They have been greatly appreciated, especially in those dark moments when depression and anxiety take hold.

To my colleagues on both sides of the House, both current and former MPs, politics is by its very nature an adversarial contest where no quarter is given and none is expected. Whilst it will never make the nightly news or the front page of the morning papers, the concern that you have displayed for my wellbeing has reiterated my belief about politicians, which I espoused in my maiden speech back in 2006 when I said—

Those of us who have made the pilgrimage to parliament share many common ideals and make significant sacrifices ...

Your genuine concern showed my family that, whilst as politicians we may often disagree on ideas, we can always show compassion and kindness towards each other in times of difficulty. For me, that is a news story as refreshing and as important as any to be told.

To the literally hundreds of people from my community of Gympie who have sent 'get well' cards, emails and texts, those who called into the office or dropped by personally to pass on a message to my staff, to those who stopped me in the street to say 'don't worry' or sat next to me in the doctor's surgery to let me know that things will get better, I do not have the words to express my gratitude, but please know that it meant so very much to me.

Some of those emails and letters brought tears to my eyes as I read messages from people who shared with me moments that I had forgotten: from helping a farmer get their cattle agisted during the drought, to just taking time to listen to a person's fears during the fight to stop the Traveston Dam. For me those moments were just about doing my job as an MP, but I am now so much aware of how important those moments were to someone during a difficult time they were going through and how doing something simple was able to provide hope for them in their time of need. Your emails and letters reminded me that simple words of concern can hold real power to provide

hope. It was the power of words that caused my breakdown: words that caused stress and anxiety, words that created fear and dread; and in the end, it was words that removed hope that were the final straw.

I recognise the truth in that great quote from the American publisher, editor and politician William Randolph Hearst when he said—

News is something somebody does not want printed; all else is advertising.

To those journalists who did their job in reporting the story, but did it with a sense of professionalism and a touch of humanity, my family and I say thank you.

In regard to the matter from my past that caused the furore in the first place, I wish to apologise to anyone that I have caused pain and embarrassment to. I am sorry. Most importantly to my family, who stood by me then, only having to endure it all again 15 years later: I am so very sorry. I love you all so very much; not just because of who you are, but because of who I am when I am with you. I am blessed to have you in my life.

Not all the facts of the matter have been reported and it is not my intention to revisit them again suffice to add one pertinent fact: that a magistrate, having access to all of the facts before him in sentencing, including that the money had been repaid in full, chose to direct that no conviction be recorded. The vindictive selective release of information from my past and the manner in which it was used is the subject of a criminal investigation of which I may be called upon to give evidence and, as such, I will not be making any further comment except to clarify the record on one matter: Mr Scott Elms and I have never been friends. Our interactions, both social and otherwise, have always been on a professional basis. I have never engaged with him on a purely social basis and nor have I ever gone on any holidays with him either in Australia or overseas as has been reported to me that a local Gympie councillor has. On the issue of threats made towards me by a serving police officer—

**Madam SPEAKER:** Honourable member, I am very sympathetic to the fact that you have time on the clock. I would also remind you that there are matters before an Ethics Committee for consideration and to take care not to impede into that.

**Mr GIBSON:** I am aware of that, Madam Speaker.

**Madam SPEAKER:** In about five minutes I am going to adjourn the House for dinner and there is an opportunity if you wish to also incorporate into *Hansard*. I call the member for Gympie.

**Mr GIBSON:** On the issue of the threats made to me by a serving police officer, Mr Llew O'Brien is a friend of Mr Elms who recently resigned from the LNP in protest of Mr Elms's dismissal from the party. These threats included him stating that I should not question his loyalty as he had 'delivered death threats on behalf of the party'. This officer is currently the subject of an internal QPS investigation and, as such, I will not be making any further comment.

To the issue of my mental health, I always believed that I was a resilient person as I had dealt with so much in my life, including my parents' disability. I felt that there was not anything that life could throw at me that I could not work through by myself. I was wrong. The demands of being an MP take their toll—from the hours we work to the stress we place on ourselves to the cumulative impact it has upon all of our families and loved ones. The past few months have shown me there is nothing wrong in saying I am not coping and there is definitely nothing wrong in seeking professional help when it is needed. Suddenly programs like R U OK? Day, Beyond Blue and its Man Therapy and Movember's work with mental health for me have shifted from just being nice causes to support to something that is really important for our community. I realise we do not always have a choice about what happens to us. Our past is exactly that—our past. Every day is a new day. Every moment is a new moment. You do have the ability to choose to be prepared and to make new and better decisions in each and every situation you encounter in the present. The process of my recovery over the past few weeks has enabled me to reflect on so many subjects and to attempt to put things in some form of context so they make sense. If I am ever tempted to write about my time in politics, I think I shall title it 'What was I thinking?'

I am proud to have had the opportunity to be a strong local champion for my community over the past eight years and that, in addition to the increases in education, health and community service expenditure, I have been able to secure the following funding for our region in this budget: nearly \$1 million for the Cooloolo Coast for projects like the upgrade of the Leisha and Freshwater tracks and the planning for the replacement of all toilet blocks at Inskip Point for beach campers; \$1 million for boaties with the upgrade of Snapper Creek boat harbour with a new car park, two-lane ramp

widening plus a floating walkway and resurfacing of the Carlo Point boat ramp; over \$1.5 million for a new auxiliary fire and rescue station at Pomona; ongoing funding for necessary work to restore the Rattler back to operation in the Mary Valley; and over \$1.6 million in funding for local students in our state schools as part of the Great Results Guarantee. I was very disappointed that the federal government cancelled \$50 million in funding for a range of pensioner concessions, but I am proud to be part of a state government that today announced it would fund that shortfall from the federal government.

**Government members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr GIBSON:** For regions like mine, those concessions can often be the difference between putting food on the table or paying a bill. I call on our federal member to stand up for the people of Gympie and Wide Bay, especially those on fixed incomes and those doing it tough financially, and to fight those elements of the federal budget that make it tough for our local families. There will be those who will criticise me for my decision to leave politics and will say that I have failed to deliver for Gympie. May I reply by quoting Theodore Roosevelt—

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena ...

For those determined to judge me on my past, I can only say you will not find me there. I made the effort to make the changes; the question now is can you? I believe that your past does not define you, nor should it limit your future. I have made some mistakes and poor choices in my life, but life is a great teacher and if given the chance I would love to go back and change things. The reality is I cannot, but I can learn from those experiences. I would like to think it has been the lessons learnt from my past that have helped me to become a better person and is the reason I have put my heart and soul into doing the best job I can as the member for Gympie for the past eight years. My life, like many others, has been a roller-coaster ride with exhilarating highs and petrifying lows. But it has been my journey in politics that has taught me the most—the most about myself, the most about other people and, most importantly, the most about what a community is capable of achieving if they all put their minds to it. This is a great state and it does have great opportunities. It has been my privilege to be a part of a government that is delivering a strong plan for a brighter future.

**Government members:** Hear, hear!

Sitting suspended from 6.38 pm to 7.40 pm.

 **Mr HATHAWAY** (Townsville—LNP) (7.40 pm): I rise to speak in support of our Treasurer's budget for 2014-15. This is his third budget and I congratulate the Treasurer as he continues, through prudent planning and discipline, to deliver on the Newman government's election promises and also a strong plan for a bright future. Mark my words: this is not just hollow rhetoric. What is important to Queenslanders is results, pure and simple.

The Newman government's careful economic management over the past two years has allowed us to reinvest in what matters to the community. We have demonstrated to North Queenslanders that results count as we deliberately and methodically tick off the elements of our contract with North Queensland. It has been a clearly articulated plan from the get-go—initially our first 100-day plan and then subsequent six-monthly plans. Like all plans, where external factor impacts have required contingency and minor deviations, we have re-engaged with Queenslanders to seek their opinion. The implementation and execution of the current plan in and of itself is simply not enough. That is why as a government we have continued to look to the future in the far, medium and near terms to develop portfolio strategies that will guide the plans that will influence and inform immediate action. This budget is proof positive of a government that governs with conviction and that is simply to do what is best for Queensland and all Queenslanders regardless of where they live.

This state budget includes a capital spend of almost \$680 million in the Townsville region alone. The budget has again delivered on our commitment to provide Queenslanders with better front-line services. We have increased Health funding by more than six per cent to \$13.6 billion. The Townsville Hospital and Health Service will receive a record \$758.1 million to deliver public health care. That is an increase of \$20.9 million on last year's budget. An amount of \$41.2 million has been allocated towards the Townsville Hospital expansion and \$4 million has been allocated to the Planned Procedure Centre as part of the hospital redevelopment works. A number of other Townsville health services have received attention in this budget. There is \$16.3 million for the Townsville regional cancer centre expansion, \$1.843 million to major subacute facilities and \$2.848 million towards health technology equipment.

The Newman government is committed to improving front-line health services and we will continue to do that in the future, just as we have done since being elected two years ago. We have delivered on our election promise to provide a dedicated paediatric intensive care unit at the Townsville Hospital. In July 2012, the hospital received \$14.75 million over three years to deliver this unit. This funding allowed the hospital to make available three dedicated beds for use as needed within the main adult intensive care unit. Last year, between January and November, 168 children had been cared for in the PICU. We made a commitment to ensure that we provided the best health services in the best time and the best place. As part of that commitment, earlier this year we announced that the three-bed PICU would be expanded into a stand-alone unit with seven beds.

The latest Queensland Health performance data proved that there has been a significant improvement in Townsville Hospital's elective surgery waits across all three categories: urgent, semi-urgent and nonurgent. The number of patients at the Townsville Hospital waiting longer than the clinically recommended times for their surgery has dropped dramatically from 747 in March 2012 to just 39 in March of this year. Two years ago, 89 per cent of patients had their urgent surgery, or category 1 surgery, within 30 days. Now, that figure is 100 per cent. Again, two years ago 61 per cent of patients had semi-urgent surgery, or category 2 surgery, within 90 days. Now, that figure is 95 per cent. To put those percentages into patient numbers, as at yesterday we have no category 1 patients waiting. We have only 12 category 2 patients and only one category 3 patient waiting. This time last year we had three category 1 patients, 127 category 2 patients and 90 category 3 patients waiting respectively. These figures speak for themselves. Patients waiting for surgery at Townsville Hospital are being cared for faster than ever. There have also been shorter stays in our emergency department. Two years ago, 62 per cent of patients' length of stay in the ED was under four hours. Now, that figure is 78 per cent of patients.

We have also made significant inroads into addressing the very long dental care waiting list in the Townsville region. In March 2013, there were 2,207 people waiting longer than two years for general dental care. In March 2014, there were none. We can always do better and we will with the record level of resourcing for the Townsville Health and Hospital Service—a record \$90 million, or 13.6 per cent more per annum than there was in the last budget under Labor. With this increased budget, this improvement should continue. I also note for the record that it would not have been possible without all the hard work of our local clinicians and health staff. I congratulate them on their efforts and dedication to improving North Queenslanders' clinical outcomes.

The state budget also delivers more support for our teachers and students. The budget for education and training has increased by seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. There will be 761 additional teachers and teacher aides allocated across the state and Townsville will get its fair share. Almost \$8 million has been allocated to schools in the Townsville region to prepare for the transition of year 7 into high school next year. Pimlico State High School has received a further \$1.39 million to go towards building these classrooms for the year 7 students. This is in addition to the funding provided in last year's budget, when that school received \$2.65 million.

We have also committed more than \$66 million as part of our five-year, \$537 million Great Teachers = Great Results action plan. An amount of \$131 million has been allocated to the Great Results Guarantee initiative, which continues on our commitment to boost student literacy and numeracy outcomes by engaging them in learning that will benefit them now and in the future.

In regard to education funding, we have introduced a range of new initiatives that have not only provided much needed funding but also allowed the school communities themselves to decide where they want to spend the money and what is best for their student demographic. Earlier this year, 33 state schools across Townsville shared in more than \$4 million in funding to boost student outcomes under the Great Results Guarantee. The Fixing Our Schools and Advancing Our Schools Maintenance initiatives provided \$300 million to state schools in Queensland to catch up on the neglect of facilities by previous Labor administrations. Over the past two years, every state school in Townsville has received significant funding, totalling almost \$3 million.

This budget also invests in major infrastructure projects. More than \$140 million in funding has been allocated to Townsville's road network. In total, we are spending a record for a financial year of \$768 million for improvements to the Bruce Highway—our lifeline. I also welcome the \$10 million to improve local congestion issues in Townsville at the Woolcock and Pilkington streets roundabout.

Over the past two years we have invested in major road projects in Townsville. These were the three road network upgrades that made up our road contract with North Queenslanders before the election. The upgrade to the Woolcock and Mather streets intersection has been completed in record

time and under budget. Tick. Work is well underway on the perennial Blakeys Crossing project and it is due for completion at the end of this year. Tick. In last year's budget, we delivered \$13 million to realign traffic lanes, culvert works and signalisation of the Dalrymple Road-Banfield Drive intersection. This is the last of the three road promises made to North Queenslanders. Work started on that project last month and is expected to be completed by Christmas. Tick.

This budget carefully balances increases in health, education and community services without the need to introduce or raise any new taxes. Following on from 20 years of Labor mismanagement, this government in just two short years has delivered a better and more financially resilient state. The Newman government aims to return the budget to fiscal surplus by 2015-16, with debt stabilised and a clear plan to reduce it and its crippling interest payments that have constrained our state.

As part of getting this state back on track the Treasurer, during his handing down of the budget, released the government's draft plan of action to reduce the \$80 billion state debt and \$4 billion interest bill. North Queensland assets under consideration include the long-term lease of the integrated Port of Townsville and Mount Isa rail line. Unlike the previous Labor government, this is not a plan designed in secrecy and withheld from the Queensland public before going to a poll. This has been the result of a clear engagement with Queenslanders over a lengthy period of time and well before any election. It is a draft plan that will seek a mandate from Queenslanders. If Queenslanders give us the mandate to lease the Port of Townsville, 75 percent of the proceeds will go to pay down our debt. While I remain the member for Townsville, I make this undertaking to the people of Townsville: I will be fighting tooth and nail, inch by inch, for the remaining 25 per cent of proceeds to be invested in infrastructure in North Queensland. What I ask for in return, and will be calling on the Townsville community and its leaders to have, is a unified vision and plan on what that infrastructure should be. We need to be shovel ready to go for it, not if but when those dollars come to town.

I also welcome, on behalf of the 5,461 Townsville constituents who are or will be 65 and over during the next financial year, the Premier's ministerial announcement this morning in this House in relation to the extension of our government's commitment to pensioners to cover the \$54 million shortfall because of the federal government's unilateral withdrawal from the national partnership agreement in its budget this year.

In closing, the 2014-15 budget is another step forward in the Newman government's positive plan for the state, North Queensland and Townsville. We are delivering on our commitment to provide Queenslanders with better front-line services and a strong plan for a bright future.

 **Mr TROUT** (Barron River—LNP) (7.52 pm): I rise in support of this, our third state budget. This was a sound budget, a responsible budget, a budget that guarantees we move forward strongly towards our goal of bringing Queensland back on track. In my own electorate of Barron River, in the Cairns region the future is looking brighter and the mood is optimistic. The thinking person recognises that the state government needs to act responsibly and to rein in and reduce the outrageous debt that is the legacy of the Labor government. The thinking person understands that the government bears a huge responsibility to manage the state's finances. The thinking person also realises that to keep adding to the state's debt is akin to raising the limit on a credit card. There is no rule to say you have to keep spending beyond your means now you have a higher limit, but Labor kept raising the limit and continued to spend far beyond the state's means.

For this government it was time to make difficult decisions, to make strong choices and to establish a framework for responsible budgeting to remove barriers to economic growth and help create new jobs resulting from our building the economy on the four pillars of agriculture, tourism, resources and construction. Reducing the huge deficit will take hard work by all members of this government and resilient leadership. Political attacks will always be made against those making the tough decisions, but the thinking person understands why those tough decisions have to be made. It was a truly scandalous debt we inherited, but this government has bitten the bullet and said, 'No more.'

To get the state back on its feet these changes entailed reducing expenditure and prioritising expenses. Our expenses have to be less than our income. That is just common sense in reducing debt and moving forward. In last year's budget speech I said Rome wasn't built in a day and that we could not eradicate Labor's debt overnight, but we are well on track to achieve our goals and we are doing it with strong choices, responsible decision making and recognising priorities, which for this government are front-line services. There is no spin and there are no increased taxes. There is significant spending where it matters and formidable reductions in waste. There is recognition of what

really matters and identification of duplication, inefficiencies and misdirection of priorities. There is a real sense of clearing out the clutter, moving out of the murk and going forward and up. There is a bright future for Queensland and the clouds are clearing.

Labor's overused credit card is safely stowed in the freezer and we are spending only the money we are earning. It is working. It works for individuals, it works for families and organisations, and it will work for the state. At the same time, through responsible and sound management and recognition of opportunity, the people of Queensland are seeing improvements in every facet of life. The term 'tyranny of distance' is beginning to lose its significance in the Far North. I commend the members of our cabinet on their commitment to putting the Far North firmly back on the Queensland map. Never has this region seen such a consistent and welcome presence of our Premier and ministers. These visits do not just pay lip-service, as was the case with the previous government. Premier Newman and all of our ministers have met with the people of the Far North at the grass roots level and have taken issues on board and acted upon them.

We welcome the great news that health spending is up six per cent to \$13.6 billion; education is up seven per cent to \$11.8 billion; and Transport and Main Roads is up \$5.4 billion. The allocation of \$5 million from the Everyone's Environment grants program will be well received in my electorate with many very active environmental groups undertaking valuable conservation projects. Fred Morris, the President of the FNQ Regional Tenant Group, has already called my office to express gratitude to Minister Mander in respect of the allocation of \$250 million to public housing. This is truly an accolade.

In the Barron River electorate we will benefit from a huge \$81.4 million for the \$446.3 million Cairns Hospital redevelopment, with a very welcome addition of 168 beds. The amount of \$1.6 million has been allocated to Mareeba Hospital, which serves the Tablelands sector of my electorate, to allow the replacement of major mechanical systems.

Further, \$36.6 million will be spent on expanding and improving social housing; \$11.6 million will go into our energy network; \$1.6 million into the Cairns foreshore; \$12.3 million for a vital environmental impact statement for the dredging of the Cairns shipping channel; and \$1 million towards a new catamaran for the Queensland Police Service. In recognition of the vital importance of our iconic Great Barrier Reef, \$8.4 million is allocated to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Field Management Program and \$934,000 for the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan.

Local sporting groups will welcome nearly \$463,000 through the Get in the Game initiative. Our agricultural sector will be similarly happy to hear of the \$1.8 million allocated to the Wet Tropics and Cape York areas to address such issues as weed management, reef water quality and feral animal management. Funding in the coming year to Child Safety, Disability Services and Community Services in our region totals a huge \$8.85 million. Over half a million dollars will go to Barron Gorge power station for refurbishments.

Tourism is one of the staples of our local economy. This government has recognised the essential role of Tourism Tropical North Queensland as the backbone of our local tourism industry and \$300,000 has been allocated to TTNQ to support destination marketing. I commend our Premier and the Minister for Tourism, Jann Stuckey, on their commitment to seeing our far northern region given the recognition it deserves as an iconic destination and a drawcard for the rest of the state.

We have seen a record number of significant events hosted in Cairns in the past year, with new attractions planned into the future. An example of this is the forthcoming Professional Bull Riders Australia Invitational, an international event which is re-entering the Cairns market after 10 years. Events such as this attract visitors from all over the region, all over the country and followers of the event from overseas, injecting welcome income to our economy.

Over \$1.1 million is allocated to schools in my electorate to support the Great Results Guarantee aimed at improving student performance in Queensland state schools. At a recent school principals forum held in my electorate, delegates expressed their overwhelming support for this initiative to Minister John-Paul Langbroek. One of the principals summed it up by saying that the Great Results Guarantee had produced an enthusiasm through empowering the school to achieve results, allowing the school to be far more specific in the teaching of its kids. I am proud to be a part of this government that has displayed fortitude in adopting strong measures to reduce debt, while maintaining front-line services and building the economy through sound policies, red-tape reduction and attracting investment.

I commend our Premier and all members of the cabinet for strength in leadership, strength of conviction and the delivery of a sound and sustainable budget. I commend the Treasurer and his team for building a stronger state.

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (7.58 pm): In rising to contribute to the cognate debate on the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill 2014, the Appropriation Bill 2014 and the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, I commend our Treasurer and Minister for Trade, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, for bringing this responsible and balanced budget before the House. As the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and the very proud member for Currumbin, I am delighted to speak to the 2014-15 budget. It is a budget that demonstrates clearly that the Newman government has a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland and continues to recognise the importance of all aspects that fall within my portfolio.

Under the sound economic leadership of the Treasurer, the government has had to make strong choices to rectify the gross financial mismanagement of those opposite. Labor's \$80 billion debt left our state finances in a dire and unsustainable position, with a \$4 billion interest bill per annum. This is the LNP's third budget and it outlines our plan to further stabilise and reduce Labor's debt so that we can invest in schools, hospitals and infrastructure for the future.

Excitement is building across the state as we approach the biggest sporting event Australia has seen in a decade. I speak of the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games. Later this year, the flag will officially be handed over from Glasgow to the Gold Coast in an illuminating 10-minute ceremony featuring Jessica Mauboy and a lucky Gold Coast school student. This ceremony will be viewed by one billion people globally and it will showcase Queensland to the world in a truly quintessential Aussie way. By working closely in partnership with the Gold Coast City Council and the federal government, we are planning an outstanding and unforgettable games that Queenslanders and Australians can be mighty proud of.

The budget allocates \$160 million for the ongoing preparation and organisation of this prestigious event, including \$111 million provided to my department and GOLDOC to deliver these games in conjunction with the Australian Commonwealth Games Association and the Commonwealth Games Federation. An amount of \$49 million has been allocated to the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning to continue work on the games village. The budget also provides \$15 million for the redevelopment of the Queensland State Velodrome for track cycling, \$18.7 million for the new Carrara Sport and Leisure Centre and \$12.6 million for the new Coomera Sport and Leisure Centre. Finishing touches are being made on the redevelopment of the state-of-the-art Gold Coast Aquatic Centre, which is two years ahead of schedule and in time for the Gold Coast to host the 2014 Pan Pacific Swimming Championships later this year. The games village plans have been unveiled and work has commenced on the redevelopment of this site.

As one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy, our \$23 billion tourism industry plays a major role in creating jobs across regions and creating wealth that allows us to put more police on the street and more teachers in our schools. From my department's perspective, we aim to make Queensland an irresistible drawcard for tourists and investors, supported by a dynamic and profitable small business sector. This will be achieved through funding for Tourism and Events Queensland of \$98.7 million, continuing the momentum gained over the past two years towards our goal to double annual overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by 2020. For TEQ some \$49.5 million has been allocated across three years, which was not in the forward estimates when this government came to office.

Our DestinationQ strategy has flourished. The annual DestinationQ forums commenced in 2012 and have become Queensland's annual premier industry and government event. Forum outcomes have developed Destination Success, a 20-year plan for Queensland tourism. Our formal partnership with the Queensland Tourism Industry Council has enabled us to reinvigorate our tourism industry after years of neglect by Labor. Through our international tourism marketing efforts, we will be targeting growth markets to further promote Queensland as a destination of choice for visitors from China, India, South-East Asia and beyond. This budget sees ongoing provision for regional tourism via the \$7 million regional tourism organisation fund, which is double the amount allocated by Labor, so our 13 regional tourism organisations can market the uniqueness of their destinations. TEQ will be able to maintain its solid focus on attracting and supporting events that deliver benefits to regions across Queensland. In the past financial year, we invested in 44 major events that attracted almost 690,000 visitors, contributing some \$290 million into the economy, while our Regional Development Program supported a total of 85 events in towns spread across Queensland.

Attracting aviation and tourism investment remain high priorities. Our \$8 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund will continue to boost aviation route capacity into Queensland, while our highly successful Tourism Investment Attraction Unit remains the one-stop shop for tourism

investment in our state, working with international investors and domestic projects to facilitate new and revitalised tourism infrastructure, including eco opportunities. In 2013-14, 16 tourism investment attraction initiatives were delivered and case management assistance was provided to 48 tourism investment proponents.

Small business is the backbone of Queensland's four-pillar economy and this budget upholds our commitment to provide support for this crucial sector. In 2014-15, \$7.7 million will be allocated to support small business services, including enhancement of the popular Business and Industry Portal, or BIP as she is affectionately known, and the continuation of the highly successful Mentoring for Growth program. During 2013-14, the BIP received over 2.3 million unique visitors, which is more than double the previous year, saving small businesses more than \$250 million in time and money during the past two years.

Under the government's one-stop-shop initiative, business content on the BIP is set to double in 2014-15, incorporating information from nine state government departments. In September we will stage the popular Small Business Week, with a range of free and low-cost events and activities to give small business owners and operators the chance to hear new ideas, connect with other businesses and access information and services to help them grow and become more productive. To the year ending April 2014, our Mentoring for Growth program has provided assistance to over 370 businesses and more than 100 mentoring sessions. I take this opportunity to place on record my sincere gratitude for the 291 mentors who have so far contributed more than 1,300 hours of their time.

I also place on record my sincere thanks to my ministerial staff; my assistant minister, the honourable member for Cairns; my department; Tourism and Events Queensland and board members; and GOLDOC and board members. Without them, we would not have been able to achieve what we have these past 12 months so that we can look forward with confidence to the future.

I now turn to my wonderful electorate of Currumbin. The Newman government's commitment to addressing law and order problems has yielded significant results on the southern Gold Coast. An increase in police numbers and tough new laws have resulted in massive reductions in crime. Recent Gold Coast figures indicate that robbery is down by 18 per cent, unlawful entry has decreased by 30 per cent, assault has dropped by 15 per cent and theft is down by 12 per cent. The budget allocates \$3 million as part of an \$18 million commitment over four years for South-East Queensland police helicopters and \$795,000 for the Gold Coast police hub, which will provide a more visible and flexible police presence on our streets and in our neighbourhoods.

Another big winner in the Currumbin electorate is education, with huge benefits through the \$11.8 billion education budget. All nine schools will share in almost \$1.2 million through Great Results Guarantee funding. I see the minister in the House and I thank him for that. Currumbin Valley State School is set to benefit further with \$500,000 through the capital works education program for additional accommodation. Community groups in Currumbin are also big winners, with this budget allocating \$100,000 through Get in the Game funding for the Tweed Heads and Coolangatta Surf Life Saving Club and \$100,000 for the Palm Beach Currumbin Sports Club. It is good to see \$4.3 million allocated for improving access and safety on Gold Coast Waterways. The establishment of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority in 2012 and the continual investment in this authority has resulted in various safety benefits for the popular and busy Currumbin estuary.

The most vulnerable members of our society will be supported in this budget. In Currumbin alone \$7.61 million will be allocated for disability services funding to assist those with a disability and their families where necessary, \$70,000 is specifically dedicated to child services in the area and \$280,000 through community services funding will promote and support excellence in the delivery of human services. The Gold Coast South Home Assist Secure service, which is located in Tugun, will receive \$540,000 following the \$530,000 allocated last year and \$1.813 million has been allocated to allow non-government organisations in Currumbin to deliver specialist services that will assist in addressing the issue of homelessness in our communities.

Our beloved Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary is also set to benefit with \$100,000 allocated through the Koala Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. After unsuccessfully lobbying the former Labor government for so many years, I am proud to be part of a government that has provided a significant sum of money to enable the sanctuary to plant 15,000 fodder plants to feed injured koalas.

Considering the state of our finances, it is pleasing to see that there are no services cuts, no new taxes and a strong commitment to law and order and revitalising front-line services in Currumbin contained in this budget. What we have is a stronger plan for a brighter future for Currumbin and the rest of Queensland.

 **Ms D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (8.09 pm): I rise to speak to the appropriation bills 2014. This is the third budget for the LNP government and it is the last budget before the general election due early next year. This budget is a reflection of this LNP government. It lacks vision, it ignores the views of the people and it reflects arrogance.

The government claims that it is all about strong choices, tough choices. We recently heard similar views from the LNP federal government. It is true to say that governments have to make tough choices, but it is the choices they make that define them. Cutting jobs, cutting services, privatising and selling are choices that Liberal governments make. It is what they do. In contrast, Labor governments invest. They invest in jobs, in training and education, in health and disability services. Labor supports those most in need in our communities instead of abandoning them. Labor governments invest in human capital.

Budgets and policies must have vision. That vision cannot simply be sell and then spend. Unfortunately, we now have Liberal governments at a state and federal level. The people of Queensland are waking up to the reality that we have governments that are more focused on pursuing their ideologies than acting in the interests of the state and its people.

For 2½ years the people of Queensland have been subjected to the full force of the Newman LNP government. The fact is that the Newman LNP government has abandoned the battlers of Queensland. Many of the achievements that the LNP has sprouted over the past two years are projects or programs funded by the previous state and federal Labor governments.

What we see when we get state and federal LNP governments is cuts. All of the ribbon cutting and bragging about achievements in health and education and early childhood education are coming to an end for the LNP because this government is not investing new money. It is not investing in new infrastructure. We are now actually facing health and education cuts from their Liberal colleagues in Canberra.

Campbell Newman sought to rally his troops in February 2014, in the lead-up to the Redcliffe by-election, saying, 'This is the year that it all comes together.' In fact, it is the year that everything gets sold off. After the Redcliffe by-election the Premier claimed that they got the message and will be listening to the community unlike those on the other side. The LNP government then engaged in a \$6 million PR campaign in an attempt to convince the public that they genuinely want to hear the views on assets sales.

This week we have seen the Treasurer bring down the third budget of this LNP government. As part of that budget speech—

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Members, I am struggling to hear the member for Redcliffe.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER**: Order, members! The member for Redcliffe has the call.

**Ms D'ATH**: As part of the budget speech, the Treasurer, on behalf of the government, sought to push the LNP's asset sales agenda. The fact is that this was not a budget speech but a sales pitch. It lacked vision and fails to deliver for the people of Queensland.

The next election will give voters a clear choice. The LNP will sell state assets and Labor will not. Labor will have a plan to invest in our future—in jobs, infrastructure, innovation and education. In contrast, the LNP offers sales that will result in reduced services, increased costs and fewer jobs—a future Queensland cannot afford.

Education is one of the most important investments a government makes. It is important because ultimately it is about the future. It is about the future of our society. It is about the future of our economy. It is critical we as a state get it right and we do not cut corners.

The state delivery of education should be about getting the fundamentals right not glossing over it with slogans. The state government should not short-change our children's future. Again in this budget we have seen the state government underspending by another \$117 million in education this current financial year.

The Newman LNP government's slash and burn approach to public services has been replicated by their federal counterparts, already hurting Queensland families with the Abbott coalition federal government threatening to end the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to

Early Childhood Education. This threat to funding has adversely impacted on the state government's delivery of early childhood education and care with a fall in the budgeted amount for delivery in this service area of 15.9 per cent from the same figure in last year's budget.

This reduction in funding will hurt young children from disadvantaged families the most. Only 79.9 per cent of eligible Indigenous children are enrolled in an early childhood education program. Only 85.5 per cent of children in disadvantaged communities are enrolled in an early childhood education program. Cuts to funding for the early childhood education program will only increase the incidence of disadvantaged children missing out on vital early childhood education.

The Treasurer, in his budget speech, acknowledged that the previous Queensland and federal governments, both Labor, in 2008 provided universal access to kindergarten programs delivered by qualified teachers. These programs are delivered to approximately 60,000 children in kindergartens and day care centres.

We are told by the Treasurer that he is seeking urgent clarification from his federal coalition counterparts about the future of the National Partnership Agreement on Universal Access to Early Childhood Education. However, we all know the advice this government has given to its federal counterpart. Campbell Newman told Tony Abbott to 'copy us'. Tony Abbott and the federal coalition government took Newman's advice. The federal coalition government has cut education funding—

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Ms D'ATH:** You are not interested in the \$30 billion cut out of state education. I hope that those on the other side tell their constituents that they are not interested in the \$30 billion federal funding cut from the education budget.

The key education initiatives for 2014-15 announced in the budget are merely a continuation of existing programs. The key education announcement in the Treasurer's budget speech was the reannouncement of the \$64 million second tranche of the so-called Great Results Guarantee totalling \$131 million. The funds for this program are solely attributable to the federal funding and equates on average to an additional \$51,200 per school. This is only marginally larger than the current underspend by the department this year. But even with this fig leaf of an announcement, how much longer will it be before the LNP cuts and runs from this program?

The Newman government has made much self-congratulation on building new schools. We have been repeatedly fed recycled press releases about the new Queensland schools public-private partnership program that will build 10 new schools. The LNP government has promised these schools over four years, with two being delivered for the start of the 2015 school year. With money only flowing to these two schools in the 2014-15 budget, it will be very interesting to see if this government delivers.

Considering additional schools are also supposed to open at the start of the 2016 year, I fail to see how that could be achieved when no money is allocated in the 2014-15 budget for their construction. This means that construction will not start until after 1 July 2015. It is unrealistic to think that if money is not allocated until the 2015-16 year that these schools would be opening for the 2016 school year. Furthermore, the actual investment in the education department capital program has fallen by 26 per cent since the last financial year.

While the Newman government makes slow going in opening new schools, over the past two years it has closed schools and sold the land. The LNP has a secret hit list of 47 schools identified for closure.

**Mrs Frecklington** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Nanango, that is an unparliamentary term and I would ask you to withdraw.

**Mrs Frecklington:** I withdraw.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I call the member for Redcliffe.

**Ms D'ATH:** Minister Langbroek has refused to name those schools so parents and entire communities can only guess if their local schools will survive another LNP term in office. Next year the LNP government plans to push ahead with their extremely unpopular rankings, bonuses and contracts for teachers. I am struggling in my discussions with teachers and schools to find support for this scheme and call on the Minister for Education to start listening to the sector on this important issue.

We all acknowledge that we want to attract and retain great teachers, but it must be in a way that is fair and balanced and brings the education sector with us. The government needs to rethink this strategy before implementing it next year. A far more responsible course of action is to make sure that Queensland schools have enough teachers and teacher aides to meet the growing student population in Queensland schools.

The Treasurer has stated that there will be an allocation of 761 additional teachers and teacher aides in the 2014-15 budget. However, this allocation falls short of what is actually needed. The Queensland Teachers Union has stated that an extra 800 full-time equivalent teachers are needed in 2014-15 in addition to the reinstatement of the 272 resource teachers sacked in the 2013 budget. The Newman government is employing 311 teachers fewer than is required.

On the issue of funding maintenance in our schools, the government needs to be honest with the schools and the broader community about how this is actually being funded. The LNP went to the last election stating that they would not undertake any assets sales but promising extra money for school maintenance. What is clear from the government's own documents is that the maintenance funds are coming from disposal of lands owned by the department of education and that continued disposals and revenue are expected to be collected for forward estimates. So once again the opposition asks the minister to release the list of schools that they intend to wholly or partially dispose of. We know by the government's own admission that they have disposed of \$38 million of school assets in 2012-13 and have budgeted to raise \$30 million each year for the next four years and have a hit list of 47 schools for closure.

**Mr Watts** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Toowoomba North, I am struggling to hear the member for Redcliffe over your interjections. I call the member for Redcliffe.

**Ms D'ATH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. The government claims it is not in the public interest to release this list. However, the reality is that it is not in the government's interest to release this list.

This government heaps scorn on previous Labor governments, but when it comes to disabilities this government should be grateful for the historic decision by the federal Labor government to introduce the NDIS. This LNP government did everything to not sign up to the NDIS, consequently leaving Queensland without a pilot program. Sadly, this LNP state government is using the preparation for the NDIS now as an excuse to outsource vital tasks the state government performs in this sphere.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is being introduced across Australia to provide individuals with disability choice over what services they receive and through whom they receive these services. Somehow the Newman government has interpreted 'choice' under the NDIS to mean we need to privatise disability services in Queensland. This mode of thinking focuses solely on cutting costs and saving money, not on the provision of quality services by experienced and hardworking staff.

Another area in which the Newman government is short-changing Queensland is training. The Newman government is systematically dismantling our TAFEs by cutting staff, reducing courses and significantly increasing fees. The LNP's decision to turn our public VET providers into commercially focused organisations with fully contestable funding ensures the long-term demise of our TAFEs. This government has washed its hands of its community service obligations and no longer considers it important to deliver life skills to those most disadvantaged in our communities.

Labor will continue to oppose the stripping down and the sale of our TAFEs and strongly believes in the importance of TAFE being a public provider well into the future. With the gutting of the Queensland TAFE colleges and the scrapping of future trade training centre funding for our schools by the federal coalition government, the question must be asked: where are our people going to access the facilities to do their VET training and to give them the skills needed to gain employment?

During the previous two years under the Newman government, the LNP has an appalling record on science and innovation. The LNP's first budget cut more than \$21 million from grants designed to boost innovation in Queensland, including the Productivity Hubs program, PhD scholarships and fellowships, and the co-investment fund. On top of that, almost 250 jobs were cut from the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts. We know from briefing notes released under right to information last year that the government has not delivered any new science funding for Queensland.

This appalling record has continued in this year's budget. The Science Delivery Services budget has been cut by \$15 million or 13.3 per cent. Controlled grants are down from \$89 million last year to \$70 million this year. The CITEC budget has been cut by almost \$8 million this year, while the Queensland Shared Services budget has been cut by \$7 million this year. The choice not to invest in science and innovation is a choice to not invest in the future of our state.

One of the disturbing features of this budget that will have a significant impact on the local schools and community groups in my electorate is the funding source for part of the Safe Night Out Strategy. So not only has \$15.4 million for the Safe Night Out Strategy been found from internal reallocation within the Department of Education, Training and Employment, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland Health, the Queensland Police Service and Queensland Treasury and Trade—and there has been no explanation for what that \$15.4 million is currently paying for and what will be cut in those departments—but a further \$8.8 million will be reallocated—

**Government members** interjected.

**Ms D'ATH:** And those on the other side should tell their communities this—\$8.8 million will be reallocated from the Gambling Community Benefit Fund for local boards to implement effective management strategies and to access a one-off establishment payment for each new safe night out precinct. That is \$8.8 million that will not be available to kindergartens, local sporting organisations and many community groups. These groups struggle to raise funds for the purchase of equipment and to build facilities so essential for them to deliver services to their communities. But this government has ripped \$8.8 million out of our communities.

No project has more interest amongst the people of Redcliffe than the Moreton Bay Rail Link. During my time as the federal member for Petrie I fought hard for the Moreton Bay Rail Link. After decades of disappointment, finally Redcliffe will be linked with the Brisbane metropolitan rail network.

**Government members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members! Hansard do need to be able to hear the member for Redcliffe's contribution.

**Mr Bleijie** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Mr Attorney, the member for Redcliffe has the call.

**Ms D'ATH:** However, the people of Redcliffe must now be on guard that they will be short-changed on the Moreton Bay Rail Link project by the Newman and Abbott governments. It appears in the budget papers that, despite it being two years before completion is expected on the project, the government has revised down the total budget allocation for the project.

**Mr Gulley** interjected.

**Ms D'ATH:** No. This was not done during the tender. The tender was for \$1.147 billion. This was a project for \$1.147 billion—\$742 million from the federal government, \$300 million from the state government and \$105 million from the Moreton Bay Regional Council. However, the state government's budget papers now state that this project is a \$988 million project. The Treasurer should explain a reduction of \$159 million in the budget for this project.

It is reasonable to be cynical about the LNP government's agenda on this rail link, because I know that upon being elected the state government tried very hard to convince the federal government and council to downsize the project, to scrap one of the stations and to change it to a single line instead of a dual track line. Thankfully that proposal was not supported by either the federal Labor government or the council at the time.

**Mr Gulley** interjected.

**Ms D'ATH:** You should talk to the federal minister if you do not believe me, member for Murrumba.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order! Member for Redcliffe, I would ask that you direct your comments through the chair, please, not to individual members.

**Ms D'ATH:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. So when I see this year's budget and a substantial reduction in the total budget allocation, it is understandable that I hold concerns about what the state LNP government and the federal LNP government are up to. To reduce the overall

budget for this project before they even start laying rail line is an obvious signal that the totality of the project may not be delivered. So I ask the Treasurer where they are cutting corners and where they are cutting back on this project. It is not even possible in the budget papers to see the exact amount of state funding. There is the total figure, but not how much the state is actually putting in.

The budget acknowledges that this is a large infrastructure project involving complex design solutions. That being the case and the project being two years away from completion, why is the state and federal governments revising down the total budget? This reduces the scope of any unexpected costs arising from the most significant infrastructure project that the Moreton Bay region has seen in decades.

In asking questions to the Treasurer to explain this reduction, the Treasurer may want to further explain why the government cannot even get their own figures correct. I refer the Treasurer to the government's own glossy brochure for the Sunshine Coast in which they have redefined Redcliffe as part of the Sunshine Coast. In that brochure they state that the total project is \$998 million. So we have the Service Delivery Statements saying \$988 million; we have the Sunshine Coast glossy brochure saying \$998 million. I guess it is only \$10 million that the government is out in their figures, but I wonder how many other figures are wrong.

The Treasurer should tell the people across Redcliffe, Murrumba and Kallangur where cuts have been made or what cuts are planned for this project, considering they have just added a new road which should add extra cost to this project for access to the Rothwell station. The government should also provide the actual figures for the state government's financial contribution to this project for 2014-15.

Madam Deputy Speaker, this budget abandons Queensland and short-changes the people of Redcliffe. It is a budget that does nothing for education; it merely rebadges the strong work done by previous Labor governments that did have a strong commitment to education and squanders the opportunities that were placed before them with the Gonski funding model. It is a budget that liquidated the training sector in this state, turning TAFEs into wastelands with fewer courses costing students more. It is a budget that retreats from funding for science and innovation. Its only plan is to ignore the wishes of Queenslanders and sell assets, which will mean fewer jobs and worse services.

This is not a budget for battlers; it is a budget for bankers, because they are the only ones that will benefit from Campbell Newman's assets sales. The next election will give voters a clear choice: the LNP will sell state assets; Labor will not. This is Campbell Newman's third budget of arrogance and broken promises that will do nothing to create jobs and lower the cost of living. It is a budget that shows the LNP has never had a plan for managing our state economy. This is a budget that hurts, not helps, Queenslanders.

 **Dr FLEGG** (Moggill—LNP) (8.28 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise and respond to the budget—this is my 11th budget response speech—and, boy, do I mean that I am pleased to respond to this budget. I can well remember the days when the Labor Party treated the people of Moggill like they did not even exist, when they allowed schools to have asbestos blowing around in the classrooms. We fought the Labor Party for six months just to get the most basic safety measures. I will never forget dragging TV crews from estimates out to Chapel Hill State School where there were trip hazards, unfenced watercourses and flaking asbestos floors. We had to go to that level to get anything at all done.

It is a great pleasure to be able to respond to this budget. In just one term of our government, the residents of Moggill have received more of what they should be getting from a government than they received under the previous three terms of Labor governments that I have been here for. After I raised the issues around Moggill Road on many occasions, we have finally got our decaying surface repaired and we have got some additional money to upgrade the surface between Pinjarra Hills and Pullenvale.

I am very glad to see this government put forward an initiative such as the South-East Queensland Roads Fund. I look forward to us taking that policy to the next election because these issues have been neglected in a shameful way. I represent the largest electorate in Brisbane in area by far that does not have one metre of busway, that did not have a single park-and-ride facility and that does not have one set of lights with bus priority—this is the legacy of years of Labor neglect. The responsible management of this budget means we can take a policy like this and start to address that. It is no secret to any of my constituents or indeed anyone here that I have been a long-term advocate of a Kenmore bypass, but we had little or no chance of having that considered whilst the Western

Freeway was in the state that it was. Thanks to the Brisbane City Council and the LNP state government, we are now seeing the upgrade to the Western Freeway that will have serious benefits for the people of Moggill and give us a prospect of fixing our single biggest local issue into the future.

The Great Results Guarantee in education has been warmly welcomed in Moggill. I see the Minister for Education here, and I congratulate him on that initiative, as does everybody out in the schools. In Moggill alone, there is \$1.2 million in extra funding. I have spoken to my schools and I can report that several of my schools are using this for extra teacher aide hours specifically to support literacy and numeracy. Brookfield State School is engaging specialist educators in reading and writing. Moggill State School, which is an enormous state school, is engaging a literacy consultant and a speech language therapist. Kenmore South State School is purchasing a set of tablets and relevant apps. Kenmore State School is developing a targeted individual learning plan from prep to year 3. Mount Crosby State School, which is one of the largest state schools in Queensland, is engaging a specialist teacher/coach for those in the first years of their education. Kenmore State High School is developing a literacy toolkit and providing professional development for staff to be able to use it with classes.

In the area of capital works, when the Labor Party were in government they would have given Kenmore State High School a few scattered, second-rate demountables to welcome the year 7s when they move to high school next year, but that school now has a multimillion dollar state-of-the-art new block. Mount Crosby State School got a school hall with two of the walls missing under the debacle of the federal Labor government's BER school project—costing about \$3½ million—but that school actually now has the prospect of having their hall completed with four walls. That was a shameful waste of money that went on and I am so glad to see that being made good.

Another thing that is very important to the residents of Moggill is public transport. I look forward to working on some of the infrastructure issues. We are a fair distance out of the CBD, and local commuters who travel five zones each way to get to the CBD have been, in the first instance, spared Labor's shameful 15 per cent per annum fare rise that began back in 2009. The LNP government and Minister Emerson have initially halved those increases, and now we are delighted to see that any annual change to the fares will be kept down to the rate of inflation over the next three years. This is a huge issue for people who live in the outlying suburbs of Brisbane. I know from recent research that I have done in my electorate that the cost of living really hurts people in an electorate like Moggill where most people have families and children. One of the key issues for the people who live in the outer suburbs is transport. This change is a very significant achievement for this government after we were faced with that sort of financial constraint, and I congratulate the Treasurer and the transport minister on that.

There are other areas in the budget that I want to mention. My constituents, like all the other parents and families around Queensland, know that their children will grow up with their cohort and travel into the city—and they will have a lot of trouble getting home sometimes if they live out in parts of my electorate—and go to nightclubs when they turn 18, hopefully, and consume alcohol. We want them to come home safe, but all too many of them do not. I have worked for most of my adult life as a doctor—in fact for 3½ times longer than I have been in this place—and I have seen so many young people's lives trashed by violence. Members will recall that I recently spoke in this place in relation to my concerns not just about alcohol fuelled violence but about the toxic mix of drugs and alcohol that is fuelling this senseless aggression on our streets. The government has recognised that that is so important to the parents in Queensland and Brisbane and Moggill and it has devoted a very carefully thought out strategy and a large sum of money to trying to make sure we cut down this very insidious problem.

It has often been said that Child Safety is perhaps the toughest ministry to have in a cabinet because you tend to only be noticed when something goes wrong. This government—not those opposite who bleat on with the nonsense they carry on with—has recognised that we need to be a compassionate government on behalf of the people of Queensland. That means that you protect those people who are vulnerable and unable to protect themselves. The major additional funding to Child Safety might not be a very sexy area but it is a very important area because it means we can protect the most vulnerable people who in many cases do not have a family or parents who are able or willing to do that.

I have very strong and large environment groups and very, very passionate people who care for our environment. I am delighted to see that the state government is injecting a large sum of money into the reef water quality program. This comes on the back of a very strong track record on the

environment for the Newman government. We have seen the roll-back of that absurd amount of 300 million tonnes of dredging to enlarge Abbot Point and the crisscrossing maze of railways that the Labor Party wanted to build across the Galilee Basin. These are all things that will benefit.

**Mr Johnson** interjected.

**Dr FLEGG:** I will take that interjection. This is a budget that sets Queensland up to move forward. All Queenslanders are aware that the LNP government inherited a financial basket case, with huge government deficits every year which were funded by further debt and by having to pay the interest that accumulated on that debt.

We all know—at least anyone who is remotely honest with themselves—that that was unsustainable. Every year that we were in deficit meant we had to add further to borrowings to fund that deficit as well as borrow to pay the interest on previous debt and, alarmingly, borrow to provide virtually all of Queensland's much needed infrastructure and capital works. That cannot go on.

In order to fix the budget, some difficult and at times unpopular decisions were made to stall the rampant increase in recurrent expenditure. These decisions, unpopular or not, have worked and Queenslanders can now look forward to the benefits. As the budget comes into balance and finally comes into a position which will enable much needed capital works and infrastructure to be funded by tax revenue, not debt, as it should be, then the government has set the foundation to deliver what Queenslanders expect and deserve, particularly in relation to services and infrastructure. It is particularly impressive that the state budget does not contain the usual spin that we might see in such documents. In fact, the key points are simple and understandable: no new or increased taxes. This has never been more critical. In my lifetime, which is now getting to be a fairly lengthy period of time, like a few of my colleagues back here—

**Mr Johnson:** What are you looking at us for?

**Mr Malone** interjected.

**Dr FLEGG:** The members for Mirani and Gregory are in agreement. I doubt that I could recall a time when the cost of living has been such a burden and a concern to families. The problems relating to the cost of living in Queensland have been largely fuelled by poor policy of previous governments and they have built up a burden on Queenslanders.

Key services will still receive the extra funding that they need. This is by no means an austere budget. We find that health funding increases by six per cent to \$13.6 billion—double the rate of inflation. Education funding increases by even more—seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. It includes the construction of 10 new schools. I had a stint as shadow education minister and I watched schools being closed like nine pins. Over the course of a decade the Labor government reduced the number of schools in the state while the population went through the roof. It is a testament to the benefits that come from sound economic management that we now see that trend reversed and Queensland students across the state are able to move into new schools.

There is a substantial new investment in our entertainment precinct, which I mentioned previously. The budget has been a major achievement. I sent a message to the Treasurer to congratulate him on what I think is an outstanding effort. This was not a situation where we inherited rivers of gold—quite the opposite. I heard some of the ravings of the member for Nicklin earlier. I was astonished—in fact, disbelief would be a better expression—that anybody having even the most casual look at a state with a projected debt at the time of over \$80 billion, with debt per person rampantly ahead of every other state and an interest bill of \$4 billion per annum, could not see that that situation was unsustainable. I think they would be blinded by some sort of political bias.

I am delighted that the Premier and the Treasurer have had the courage to put forward to the people of Queensland a plan in relation to assets, getting debt under control and moving Queensland forward. I have listened to some dreadful presentations from the other side here tonight which all managed to ignore one thing: that the Labor government went to an election and said, 'Queensland Rail is not for sale—no asset sales,' when they knew within days they were going to do that.

This is a whole different ball game. Anybody who wants to try to pretend it is similar is kidding themselves and their constituents. In this case it is a very detailed plan. It is put forward ahead of elections. There has been extensive consultation with the community. The reasons why we have been left in this situation have been made clear to people. Let's be honest: no-one wants to make a hard decision. I do not think that this government or any other government wants to go out and make decisions which are going to be controversial or politically different. In actual fact, if honourable members look back they will see that the best governments that we have had, federal or state, are the

ones that have been willing to say there is a problem that has to be dealt with. We should never forget that someone like John Howard had the courage to take the GST to an election despite what happened in 1993. Not only did he take it to an election, but he actually got a mandate so that when he introduced the GST it was legitimate.

**Mr Wellington:** Bruce, he was a statesman. He was a man for the time.

**Dr FLEGG:** I am glad to hear the member for Nicklin praising former Prime Minister Howard.

**Mr Wellington:** He had respect and admiration.

**Dr FLEGG:** I do take that interjection because there is a good analogy here. A GST was never going to be popular, yet have a look at our tax system now and see where this country would be had they not had the courage to take that to the people. The analogy is very much the same here. If we have to deal with an \$80 billion debt we have to consider asset sales so that we are in a financial position to provide the new assets and the new services that Queenslanders need. We have to be prepared to take it to an election, prepared to be judged, prepared to cop some of the second-rate criticism that we have heard from the other side. That is what leadership is all about. I am very impressed with what the Premier, the Treasurer and the cabinet have put forward and with their courage to make sure that Queenslanders are given a full explanation of where we are going.

With that short contribution, I commend the Treasurer and the Premier for their budget. I commend it to everyone.

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (8.46 pm): The wrapping of the budget defies the poison within it. Once unwrapped, the true reality of the cruelty of the toxic undertones is revealed. It just proves that the LNP government cannot be trusted with running our state. Their unethical attack on the most vulnerable of our community just shows they lack compassion and respect for Queenslanders and they have compromised all standards of responsibility.

The budget ultimately fails, primarily because of a \$54 million decision rather than an \$80 billion one. Interestingly, this confirms the maxim that it is the little things that usually bring people down, not the larger ones. Here today the Premier poorly executed a critical backflip in parliament when he agreed to pay 100 per cent of those concessions on behalf of all Queenslanders. It was pensioner power that did that. This gloating LNP and Premier was brought down to earth by a fear of pensioners rallying in our streets against the miserable actions of the government and the hypocrisy of saying there were insufficient funds for full concessions for seniors and pensioners but there were ample funds to sell an unwanted asset sales plan for the state. In fact, John Howard was quoted multiple times yesterday—and he was right—as stating that the Australian public usually get it right and they have nothing but contempt for this Campbell Newman government. The day of reckoning of this government is coming.

The failings of this budget are far greater than the government seems to understand or is prepared to admit. First amongst these is the 400 per cent increase in the fiscal deficit to \$2.3 billion over their midyear estimates of \$665 million, the disappearing surplus. The Treasurer's original estimate in 2012-13 was a \$700 million surplus. The reasons given in support of the failure are hollow and weak. He used insufficient coal royalty income despite shipments of a record 200 million tonnes of coal and no settlement on the disasters from the Commonwealth. The Treasurer has to try harder because the numbers do not match.

If you go through the numbers, in the last year the LNP has committed \$1 billion in new spending measures and Public Service wages rose by 3.8 per cent, and that is what did it. Members, you have been misled. Worse still, these new spending initiatives were money that was wasted. That then implies that the projected 2015-16 surplus figure should be disregarded. I have heard all sorts of statements here tonight about the maintenance of existing and capital spending going forward, and it is because we have gone \$20 billion further into debt in the last two financial years.

Secondly, there was no recognition in this budget of market forces at present, including everything from rising unemployment from a base of 6.3 per cent and underemployment, to the 40 per cent decline in housing bills in Queensland in the last six months with a flattening of commercial demand across-the-board. There needed to be a ministimulus of sorts to provide much needed cash into circulation in the wider economy, because there is a cash shortage out there. It would have then provided the increased heavy lifting financial horsepower to maintain strong state revenue growth and the avoidance of a two-speed economy. The Treasurer completely fails to understand the impact of LNP exports of 75 million petajoules annually coming online to join our massive coal royalty income. Even if it is deliberate in part, it is a missed opportunity.

Thirdly is the LNP obsession with the 'debt-will-kill-us-all' mentality and by default the need for massive privatisation, whereas the LNP did not have the courage to make the tough decisions or cuts where they should and capably invest where they should in their final term budget. This is failure to do the hard yards. The assets clearly marked for sale or lease certainly are eagerly sought by infrastructure funds, but these assets, when in private hands, will potentially drive up cost-of-living increases that will be intolerable for the majority of Queenslanders. They will have enormous impacts on existing businesses large and small and to many everyday Queenslanders. Our current debt to GSP ratio is 160 per cent. If we maintain growth at an average four per cent and it compounds with expenditure at 2.5 or below, in 10 years we can halve that ratio and build our economy further just off this single balance sheet. We would have significantly reduced GOC debt at that time, which is currently 70 per cent of our debt. Remember that we still have the QIC as a second balance sheet. It is 100 per cent state owned; it has \$89 billion in assets; \$32 billion in cash; and \$17 billion in a combined superannuation liability.

**A government member** interjected.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** You do not understand it. We in the PUP will not sell these assets. We will harness their income to build on Queensland's future.

**A government member** interjected.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** You need to grow up a bit!

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Gaven, I would ask that you direct your comments through the chair, please.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Thank you for your direction, Madam Deputy Speaker. We will use it to give us a competitive advantage that all other states have lost after selling state assets and to encourage new players into the landscape. The PUP is pro-business and pro-citizen; it is a capitalist moderate movement. We will not abandon those who have been abandoned by the LNP like pensioners, seniors, young Queenslanders and those in middle age in transition and looking for opportunities wherever they are. We want to make our proud, capable Queensland Public Service as regionally diversified as it can be to make this happen, and we promise never to inflict such pain on them as Campbell Newman so callously did after his election for a net loss—no net gain—irrespective of how the LNP has attempted to rewrite history.

Fourthly, there was the complete loss of trust and defeat of a reasonable system of integrity. Its cost is too difficult to calculate, but it is a lot more than the \$33 billion that is proposed to be raised from this asset sale.

As a former Ethics Committee and PCMC member and chair, I cannot accept the descent into the current environment where the government has: destroyed the CMC; sacked the PCMC chair and the committee; introduced electoral laws that licence exactly the problem that the Fitzgerald inquiry warned of, the mates culture; fights the legal profession; fights doctors in our proud public hospitals; and introduces laws which make us the laughing stock of the first world. Ignorance is not bliss. Every one of these decisions has cost Queenslanders in the last two years, and it is a lot more than the \$33 billion that is going to be raised.

I said that this budget was just too cute, and for those that need it spelled out, I will explain. Premier Campbell Newman, Treasurer Tim Nicholls and Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney have driven a line that it is now all about impossible-to-manage debt. Are your collective memories really so short? These same individuals are the ones who bitterly opposed asset sales by the former Labor government. What those three did not like was where those assets went and how it occurred. The justification for this massive current sell-off was just conditioning for everyone to allow those assets to be transferred for low prices after almost corrupting price signalling in the market. The best example most recently was the Treasurer signalling that the Gladstone Port would probably achieve \$850 million on a sale. This is from an asset currently earning just under half that as net income. That is what being 'too cute' means. It is really about fraud, lies and deceit.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Gaven, you used an unparliamentary term and I would ask you to withdraw.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** I withdraw. It is really about fraud and deceit. Queensland's economic growth remains healthy and above the national average. The state should already be back in surplus. It is not because the Treasurer is a bad financial manager. He mentioned the projected population increase to seven million in his last speech. This is a natural advantage, as Queensland's population will, in all

likelihood, not be as disproportionately old as the southern states. Normal economic growth demands budget surpluses, but moderate ones, and when the economy contracts, budget deficits make sound economic sense. It is really the asset sale top-loading that is crucial to see that makes the budget 'too cute'.

There was no reform in 2013-14, and there is no reform in the year ahead. It is all 'steady as she goes' with no stated extra spending initiatives—other than those in health and education that have been previously stated—beyond child protection, which is just playing catch-up on our state's dreadful statistic of 8,000 plus children in foster care. There was complete ignorance of urgent transport initiatives for the 2018 Commonwealth Games such as stage 2 of the Gold Coast light rail to a new integrated metro light rail and improvements to the Nerang-Broadbeach Road, where most of the games events will be held.

The lights are going to be very dim indeed, and with a 13 per cent rise in electricity prices as currently gazetted and a 13 per cent increase again next year, many Queenslanders will have their lights out because they cannot afford those charges. Take, for example, an elderly gentleman who called my office yesterday. He lives in a neighbouring LNP electorate, so he called my office because he wanted someone to listen to his concerns. They did not want to hear him. He has had major medical issues and relies on two medical machines to keep him alive; he is dialysed. He is very worried about the huge power rises because he estimates that it will cost him \$1,200 more over a 12-month period. This will be detrimental to his health, given the government's change in heart over solar panelling and increase after increase. Or take the case of one of my constituents in Worongary, who is a disability pensioner who lives on less than \$14,000 a year. He phoned my office to issue a challenge to the Treasurer to live on his money for two years and face the same things that pensioners face with the high cost of living coupled with rates of \$3,000 a year where he lives. He asked if he had to sell his home to afford cuts or live like Scrooge McDuck on thin air.

From the outset this Campbell Newman LNP government has not made a valid case for asset sales in Queensland to the extent proposed. We in the Palmer United Party oppose these sales and will repossess any assets sold and pay no compensation for those assets sold. It is difficult to provide affordable solutions for infrastructure in Queensland, but it always has been and always will be. We in Queensland should not do all the heavy lifting in funding infrastructure that the Commonwealth bypassed to allow it to rebuild its own cash hoard. Yet here in the Queensland budget, this week the Treasurer and Premier are playing footsie with the federal coalition government and want Queensland to dump quality assets to a very willing bunch of corporate mates in the shadows. The Newman government is trying to fool the public that it is both deleveraging the market and simultaneously reinvesting in supposedly much needed infrastructure. That is the so-called \$25 billion debt repayment and an \$8.5 billion capital mix. We in Australia do not deleverage because of the structure of our economy. Everybody learns that at school there is no deleveraging.

**Mr Cox** interjected.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** You would not understand.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order, member for Thuringowa! Member for Gaven, I have already asked you to direct your comments through the chair. You have the call.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** There is a proposed transition of the \$80 billion debt to a \$55 billion debt, but this misguided plan involves selling our ports, our major energy generators, our schools and in all likelihood our hospitals ultimately as a deleveraging instrument when we do not deleverage. These asset sales are opposed by 86 per cent of all Queenslanders in a research survey done on 10,000 Queenslanders by our party.

**A government member** interjected.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Proper research. At a residents forum I called there was not one person in the room who supported the sale of assets. Members of the public oppose it because their cost of living will inevitably rise as a result of the loss of state control over these critical utilities. That is why the public is demanding other solutions. It need not be so distressed. Our balance sheet is not under the pressures being currently portrayed by the Treasurer, who may be a fair solicitor but he is no accountant and nor is he any sort of clairvoyant. He more pointedly is intolerant of what it has requested, which is that it does not want those assets sold. It said it wanted other things than these things done, but the Treasurer specifically rules out those changes to reduce state indebtedness. What sort of political representation and defiance is that? This is from a person who said that he has travelled 20,000 kilometres and spoken to 70,000 Queenslanders. Clearly he was not listening to them and now wants to implement a plan—

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Miss Barton): Order, member for Gaven! There are a number of conversations going on. If the member for Yeerongpilly and the member for Thuringowa would like to have a conversation, they can have it outside the chamber, not across the member for Gaven.

**Dr DOUGLAS:** Clearly he was not listening to them and now wants to implement a plan that it said it did not want. The government will lose over these asset sales at the next election and hopefully the Treasurer will lose his seat for merely the reasons of defying the public's wishes.

In my electorate of Gaven I have heard that there is an extra \$6.1 million on top of the \$12.5 million allocated for Commonwealth Games infrastructure at Carrara as stated by the member for Currumbin and Minister for Tourism. She said it is getting \$18.6 million—it does not seem to be in the accounts I saw—but nothing else despite relatively high unemployment and difficult social problems. We desperately need better bus services, especially in the midafternoon and weekends in the western part of my electorate. Residents will not forget the shabby treatment by the LNP government when the safety of schoolchildren is compromised and elderly people are left without transport. This is an unforgivable situation. The LNP government should be ashamed that it differentially revised bus routes in favour of its own members and ignores others. That is unfair, unjust and unacceptable.

More widely, the extra \$72 million for the Gold Coast Hospital is unlikely to allow it to open to the full 750 beds when currently 400 are open. The extra funds will most likely be used to provide for the massive cost shift that is going to occur from the federal government back on to the state from its budget. It is the biggest cost shift probably since World War II essentially where there is a \$7 GP co-payment whilst at the same time—and most people do not seem to realise—a five per cent reduction in the rebate paid to patients. It is estimated that there will be a 20 per cent increase in accident and emergency patients of general practice patients presenting to hospital at an average cost of \$270 per person with one in four admitted at a cost of \$4,700 for every person who is admitted. On the Gold Coast alone in the two major hospitals, the accident and emergency departments see just over 125,000 people. Members should do the numbers in most of their areas. This budget should have done a lot more for everyone and I have outlined what I believe are the significant weaknesses. I do not believe that it will sustain anyone into the future.

Tonight I listened to the member for Southern Downs. It was interesting to note some of the points that he was raising during his response to some of the other members. It was interesting in that I could almost have taken him back to the time when he was here in parliament—although I was outside but certainly a strong supporter of the party at that stage—when Russell Cooper, the then Premier of the day, brought in the CMC bill and he stated that it should be the enduring legacy—and I note the member for Hinchinbrook is listening—that the party would deliver for all people despite the Liberals absolutely opposing it tooth and nail effectively, as did the Labor Party. We brought that in and in fact it ultimately led to the government being in decline. I say to the member for Southern Downs that he is doubly condemned because he knew what happened then and he knows what the Campbell Newman government, of which he is a part, has subsequently done and what the true cost of this has been to the state.

We have heard all of the statements about how bad Labor has been, but this one issue has had such a momentous cost on the state and the member for Southern Downs, who was here at that time and was very close to then Premier Rob Borbidge in a subsequent government, was here stating things that he knew were wrong. I say to him that he needs to look at what just happened when he tried to negotiate over issues in the doctor contracts when he drove that forward. The ultimate cost—and members need to realise it—is that over the next 10 years what was done will cost more than the Health payroll dispute with interest than what it would have cost if they had renegotiated next year. That just goes to show when you make errors of judgement that are based on hubris and ego, which a lot of this is, and you try to massage it in and then try to condition the public the end result is disaster. The public will see this for what it is. The asset sales program is a sham and making it link to this budget is a sham as well. The government stands condemned for it.

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (9.06 pm): I rise in the House to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill 2014. The budget as delivered by the Treasurer on Tuesday cements our position as a government that is delivering upon the tasks and challenges that we were set just 27 months ago. Just over two years ago Queenslanders chose a can-do government that would deliver our promises and put our great state back on track towards economic prosperity. It was clear that to achieve this we needed to reverse the reckless desire to use credit and increase debt as those

opposite had become addicted to doing for the last decade. A contrast is evident when comparing those opposite who had embarked upon a habit of spending beyond their means with the sound and responsible measures the Newman government has undertaken.

During the period from 2005-06 to 2012-13 Queensland debt increased from \$18 billion to \$69 billion, with a forecasted debt of \$85 billion in 2014-15. Those opposite had chalked up an average annual expenditure growth over the decade to 2011-12 of 8.9 per cent. This budget shows that an increase of government expenditure last year of just 0.2 per cent and the very responsible forecast of 2.2 per cent increase this year are both well below the annual inflation figures. In essence, the difficult and tough decisions that have been made to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of government have contributed significantly to the stabilisation and reduction of debt. Our measures to reduce expenditure have stabilised our debt. However, under the current policy settings, there are no measures to reduce the debt levels. There are some who have commented that they are not convinced that the level of debt in Queensland is problematic, so I think it is important to draw a comparison to other Australian jurisdictions. Queensland's debt level is approximately \$15,000 per person, which is almost 80 per cent higher than the average of all other states. The Treasurer has also outlined the strong, smart choices we must make to ensure that the investments we need to make to secure our strong future can be undertaken. These strong choices are needed to ensure that we can continue to invest in schools where growth determines their need, in hospitals that will service our growing and ageing population, and in roads and infrastructure that will enhance our standard of living right across this great state.

Despite the importance of managing expenditure and the level of debt, our government also understands that investment across each of the stated sectors is required to grow our four-pillar economy, and this budget delivers in spades. There are a number of key projects being undertaken that are outlined in the capital statement, but one that I have great interest in is the government wireless network, which will deliver enhanced digital voice and narrowband data communications across Queensland's public safety agencies. There is also the new-generation rolling stock, which will deliver 75 six-car train sets—with seats—to cater for the increased passenger numbers across the network—

**A government member:** With seats?

**Mr SHUTTLEWORTH:** With seats. It should come as no surprise either that our government, having made a strong commitment to the revitalisation of front-line services, would invest heavily in health, education and police. Within police we have \$44.5 million invested into the delivery of the Safe Night Out Strategy, an additional 267 police officers as our third-year allocation as part of the 1,100 officers over four years commitment made during the campaign, and there is a \$3 million commitment to provide a second police helicopter for South-East Queensland.

Health sees an overall increase of six per cent in funding to \$13.6 billion. Among this funding will be allocations for 100 new ambulance officers and 155 new ambulance vehicles. An amount of \$18.9 million will be committed to the ongoing research program at QIMR and \$81.8 million is dedicated towards the backlog of maintenance programs for our hospitals, an all-too-frequent legacy of neglectful Labor administrations.

In education, an overall increase of seven per cent to \$11.8 billion will see the continuation of the much applauded Great Results Guarantee, which has seen over \$960,000 provided to the eight state schools throughout the Ferny Grove electorate. When coupled with the \$1.7 million of Advancing our Schools funding, which addresses the backlog of maintenance at those schools, we see that the state school sector of the Ferny Grove electorate has been well looked after. I also look forward with great interest in my role as a member of the Health and Community Services Committee to see the delivery of improved child and family services, as recommended by the Carmody report. These improvements will cost \$406 million.

Across every department there are areas of investment and allocations that provide a benefit to the residents of the Ferny Grove electorate. I will spend a few moments now to outline just a few. As we forecast last year, a project of great significance to the residents of the Ferny Grove electorate and to many other people who choose to visit this area every weekend is the Ferny Grove to Samford cycleway, which is located along the historical rail trail. An investment of \$3.34 million over the next two years will see significant headway made in the delivery of this infrastructure, which will provide benefits to commuters, residents and visiting tourists who will utilise this path to travel to the magnificent Samford Valley. There will be \$1.66 million invested towards the rehabilitation of road surfaces at Highvale, near the intersection of Mount Glorious Road and the Goat Track.

Within my electorate \$930 million will be invested in the disabilities sector to assist people with access to services and support throughout different stages of life and levels of need. My electorate will also share in funding of \$800,000 for the Koala Rescue and Rehabilitation Grants Program, \$1.69 million in support for local libraries and a further \$25,000 towards cycleway infrastructure around a local school.

The electorate of Ferny Grove has a strong community of artisans. Artists and performers in the Ferny Grove electorate will continue to benefit from the Newman government's contribution of \$2 million in 2014-15 to the Regional Arts Development Fund, ensuring that talented people such as Rachel Apelt from Arana Hills and Christina Youhanna from Jolly's Lookout continue to develop and take their talents to the world.

As a government, we are aware that there is a need to undertake measures that mitigate where possible the impact on household budgets that result from inflationary pressures and the cost of service delivery. That is why in this year's budget we continued to provide numerous concessions. Prior to this morning's announcement, the value of concessions in the Newman government's budget had increased by almost 10 per cent to approximately \$5.1 billion. This figure is around 3.7 times the value of concessions identified by Labor in its last budget. It is disappointing that those opposite have attempted to claim some sort of moral high ground, looking to score some cheap political points when the numbers indicate that they were indeed languishing well behind the concessions that our government is continuing to provide. If the members opposite were serious about the cost of living, they would contact their colleagues in Canberra and tell them to support the removal of the carbon tax, which would provide an immediate cost-of-living relief to all Queenslanders.

The concessions that we are providing are targeting areas that will ensure that, at this point in time, in comparison to the position and policies of those opposite, under our government the cost of living is lower than it could ever have been under Labor. We have halved the increases in transport fares and removed the stamp duty on the family home, saving Queenslanders an average of \$7,000. We have capped the registration on family cars and continued to provide other concessions such as over \$1.2 billion in general public transport subsidies, which will result in a free tenth trip and beyond on go cards in our ongoing commitment to halve the planned fare increases under Labor.

The National Rental Assistance Scheme—or NRAS—has been increased by \$8.4 million to \$27.3 million, which will ensure that the massive inroads made by our government in addressing the long-term homeless rate in Queensland can continue. We have increased the Pensioner Rate Subsidy Scheme to \$52 million, or a 20 per cent rate subsidy for pensioners up to a maximum of \$200 per annum. There is a \$21 million increase in the electricity rebate scheme to \$149 million, which equates to \$321 per annum, for eligible pensioners to assist with the costs of domestic electricity supply. Other concessions that are critical to ensuring that those who are disadvantaged are able to continue to access services are the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme, which has increased by \$8.1 million to \$81.1 million and the Emergency Management, Fire and Rescue Levy, which offers 20 per cent discounts for pensioners. All of those concessions provide cost-of-living relief to those who are the most needy across our state. Of course, there is also today's announcement that the \$50 million shortfall in Commonwealth funding will be made up by additional state funds.

Our government is a government that listens and acts to deliver the very best for all Queenslanders. This Newman-led government is continuing to make significant progress in restoring our finances, growing our four-pillar economy, revitalising front-line services and ensuring that strong jobs growth continues. In Queensland, last year we created 60,000 new jobs. To continue this strong growth, we must reduce our debt. I congratulate the Treasurer for highlighting to all Queenslanders the importance of the strongest and smartest choices that we are facing. I strongly support the passage of this Appropriation Bill through the House.

Interruption.

## DEPUTY SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

### Visitors to Public Gallery

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Before calling the member for Woodridge, I would like to acknowledge the presence in the gallery of the Hon. Santo Santoro, a former member of the Legislative Assembly and minister for training and industrial relations and also a former senator for Queensland and minister for ageing.

**Government members:** Hear, hear!

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL****APPROPRIATION BILL****REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL****Second Reading (Cognate Debate)**

Resumed from p 2177.

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (9.17 pm): To preface my contribution to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2014, I would like to relate a conversation that I had with a member opposite when I was feeling quite distressed about the axing of Skilling Queenslanders for Work very early following the 2012 election. This program had been such an effective program in my electorate and throughout the state, seeing thousands of people—refugees, young unemployed people, mums returning to the workforce, people requiring retraining—engaged in on-the-job training, usually for a period of 16 weeks, with a pay packet at the end of the week. The results of this program showed between an 80 per cent and 110 per cent success rate in getting people into permanent positions. And that program was suddenly gone. Career Keys lost over \$1 million in funding and 10 staff, to name just one organisation. The member had an answer to my question. His answer was, 'Wait until Tony Abbott is elected. Then we'll see all of this fixed.' That was a great fix, members, was it not? Queenslanders now have the double whammy: the LNP in Queensland and now in Canberra, both slashing jobs, axing services, closing facilities, causing higher unemployment, a downturn in the economy—

**Mr Johnson** interjected.

**Mrs SCOTT:** You are not in your seat, Vaughan—closing facilities, causing higher unemployment, a downturn in the economy, increases in the cost of living, more homelessness and a general gloom in our communities.

**Mr Davies:** Hang on, we reduced the homelessness.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Tony Abbott has followed the Campbell Newman blueprint, taking the harsh economic rationalist road without any thought of the disastrous effect on individuals and families.

**Mr Cox:** Make the apology. Make the apology first.

**Mr Davies:** Say sorry.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Come to Woodridge and see the realities, member. Should some of the measures in the federal budget pass the House of Representatives and the Senate—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! Member for Rockhampton. Order. Member for Woodridge has the call.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. Should some of the measures in the federal budget pass the House of Representatives and the Senate we will see an increase in not only the cost of living but an increase in the cost of everything that relies on transport due to the increase in fuel tax. That huge army of volunteers that are such a welcome and essential part of our communities will also struggle with fuel costs, for many travel to and from their place of volunteering either by car or public transport which, of course, will also have increases in fares. Then we have the federal Treasurer Joe Hockey telling us there will be a \$7 co-payment when attending a GP, co-payments when requiring x-ray and pathology services and increases in pharmaceutical payments. How tough can it be for people on low incomes to live in what used to be the lucky country.

For those in our communities who have worked hard for decades and deserve to be able to enjoy their retirement, they will instead be scrimping and saving just to pay their bills. When you have governments in charge who pander to the top end of town, the financial impost has been placed on those least able to bear it, while those on high incomes will have their accountants working to make sure they have hardly a blip on their vast financial resources. Should the six months support payments be suspended to those under 30 if they are not in education, training or have a job, an increase in homelessness and crime will occur should there not be family and friends there to offer support. And, of course, we have all seen the aftermath of the announcement of deregulation of university fees and the rise in interest rates for HECS payments. We have not seen students out

marching and raging against a government for many a year—maybe even back to the Vietnam War years. Then, of course, we had the cuts to the CSIRO and other research centres. That is enough to judge the thrust of the federal budget. I now turn to the state government.

**Mr Cox:** That would be handy.

**Mrs SCOTT:** You are both tarred with the same brush! I first of all want to take issue with the statement that there are no service cuts in this budget. That is because the Health minister got out the cuts to mental health services a few weeks ago. There are a number of terms used by this government, such as contestability, competitive tendering and so on—euphemisms for what are ostensibly cuts. I wish to refer to our fantastic Cane Fields Clubhouse which commenced in Beenleigh some 15 years ago. With just a handful of workers they have developed a very diverse program with hundreds of members, a very diverse range of employment opportunities, transition housing, life skills training, social outings and, most importantly, friendship and a place to belong. Now we find that this government has turned its back on the workers who have built this clubhouse through volunteer hours and there are now paid workers winning funding contracts and they are in a very functional centre at Meadowbrook with solar panels, their own bus and their own custom-built transition house. It is a widely known fact that people with mental health issues do not flourish with change. In their wisdom our Health department has decided Cane Fields will now be serviced by three large organisations. I hope our Cane Fields family will not cooperate and will find alternatives to this shocking decision. How can those who have developed this caring place be unceremoniously given their marching orders and others come in and take over? There are many out there who strongly support Cane Fields. That our community is not happy is an understatement.

Unemployment is a huge issue in my electorate of Woodridge, particularly among our young people. We all remember our Premier making a huge commitment to reaching four per cent unemployment. His first act was to start the slash and burn within the Public Service. With now up to 20,000 men and women sacked or, as the government likes to euphemistically say, having accepted redundancy, so many of our services are now gone or diminished in size. I would particularly like to again mention Skilling Queenslanders for Work for it was the most effective program in the nation. It was just dumped because it had the taint of being developed by Labor. I believe youth unemployment in Woodridge would be as high as 25 per cent. When this government came to power unemployment was at 5.5 per cent and it is now 6.3 per cent. That is a disgraceful figure given their four per cent goal.

It will come as a shock to our P&Cs and our sporting and community groups that our Attorney-General has stolen \$8.8 million from the Community Gambling Benefit Fund, which he promised would remain intact, to fund his Safe Night Out Strategy. This is an arrogant, cynical move and was never the purpose of the fund. It is another downgrade for the Attorney-General in a week in which he has been found dreadfully wanting. His fierce hatred of the Labor opposition and the union movement is obvious. Our unions have been responsible for so many of our workplace health and safety regulations, as well as fair pay for a fair days work and standing up for workers in a crisis and it is never recognised. The Attorney should be condemned.

The promises from the then candidate for Ashgrove were that when he became Premier he would ensure that electricity bills would come down, gas bills would be reduced, water bills would be reduced, rates would also decrease, as well as public transport costs. Today our constituents, and mine in particular, are groaning under the huge increases. Does the Premier now apologise? No. He continues to blame our Labor government whilst swanning around opening our hospitals, our busways and so much other infrastructure that has been developed by Labor. He is out there cutting the ribbons.

When it comes to my shadow portfolios, I note that the government is claiming a \$406 million budget increase for a new way of working with vulnerable families for early intervention, Indigenous families and the post 18 transition from care. We will be watching with interest as these processes are put in place. I well remember the Hon. Mike Reynolds launching a new program out in Springwood for the RAI program. Yes, it was called Referral for Active Intervention with a budget in excess of \$300 million. It was a collaborative approach with many of our service providers. It assisted many families. Sometimes new programs are not really new at all. The figures in the budget reveal that this may not all be new money, but the usual glossing over occurs.

Another of my shadow portfolio areas is that of seniors. After the Premier and Treasurer listened to what the Premier likes to call 'scary music' from our opposition and our seniors, as well as feedback from the backbench for two days about cuts to concessions, the government has at last decided that the pain on election day may be too heavy to bear. However, I can assure the Premier

and his ministers that many of our constituents have very keen memories and are recording each broken promise and additional hardship that they and their community are suffering. I came into this place in 2001. In that time there have been many highs and lows, I have listened to many budget speeches and I have seen many innovative programs. I have witnessed the fury following the sale of assets by Premier Bligh's government. This government needs to understand that its slick advertising campaign, wasting millions of dollars—that page in our daily paper—simply made readers infuriated at the terrible waste. Seeing it once was enough. The government very much underestimates the intelligence of our constituents.

**Mr Cripps:** Admit it. Take responsibility. But you've said nothing.

**Mrs SCOTT:** We have done that. At times, this parliament—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Krause): Order! The member for Woodridge has the call.

**Mrs SCOTT:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have only a couple more things to say. At times, this parliament is simply disgusting, devoid of any decency and terribly insensitive. However, today we did glimpse a little bit of humanity and kindness. I hope some in this chamber may reflect on the words of the member for Gympie.

 **Hon. JJ McVEIGH** (Toowoomba South—LNP) (Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) (9.32 pm): I rise in strong support of the Appropriation Bill 2014. The Newman government has a strong plan for agriculture, and, as the member for Toowoomba South, I know that the Newman government has a strong plan for my electorate as well. I take this opportunity to talk from both perspectives. In Queensland, we are investing over \$400 million in primary industries and we are delivering on our commitment to build a brighter future for one of our key economic pillars, agriculture. Unlike those opposite, this government is all about taking action. We are taking action to reduce debt, cut red tape and invest in front-line services so that we can then invest in Queensland's major industries such as agriculture, fisheries and forestry.

Whilst we are facing prolonged drought across 75 per cent of our state, our 2014-15 budget reaffirms our commitment to building a brighter future for agriculture beyond the drought. We are again providing and committing to significant drought assistance, which includes water and freight rebates, land rent relief, financial counselling, community resilience, building strategies and, of course, mental health support for producers and affected communities. This is on top of the \$31 million that the Newman government provided this current financial year to support those on the land who are doing it tough. That was and is a record spend and some \$5 million more than the previous record which was allocated in the 2007-08 period.

During this coming period, my department will tackle the spread of pests and weeds in drought affected areas through combined research and controlled management action. We will safeguard Queensland's substantial livestock industries in the longer term through a \$2.5 million investment over three years to boost Queensland's foot and mouth disease preparedness, focusing on surveillance, prevention and, of course, response if and when necessary.

We are looking at the future and, therefore, are focusing on a \$55 million investment in agricultural research, development and extension. That investment will help to increase the productivity, profitability and international competitiveness of Queensland's agricultural industries. Amongst other initiatives, it includes just over \$4 million in investment with Sugar Research Australia; \$6.9 million to the partnership with the University of Queensland in the Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation; and, amongst other things, \$2.7 million to the Queensland University of Technology's continuing research into agricultural robotics and, a particular favourite of the Treasurer of Queensland, tropical pulse research.

In partnership with the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, we have set aside \$15 million over five years for programs and services to assist producers across the reef catchments. We have also put in place a capital works program of more than \$18 million, with a focus on upgrading research and operational facilities across the state. There is the investment of \$4.5 million to continue various upgrades across the department's existing research facilities; \$2.5 million for the development of a new biosecurity information management system; \$1.1 million to continue the replacement of vessels and marine equipment for fisheries research and regulation; and, of course, some \$500,000 for upgrades and additional infrastructure at the Hermitage Research Facility near Warwick, in the seat of Southern Downs, to bring it up to current industry standards for the delivery of quality grain crops and research outcomes.

We are developing more on-line tools to allow industry and investors to take best advantage of the Queensland Agricultural Land Audit, our innovative program of research into and identification of agricultural opportunities across the state, which we undertook and implemented as soon as we were elected. It will identify land that is important for current and future agricultural production. We will also be helping to expand the proposed northern Australian collaborative research initiative in partnership with other jurisdictions, the CSIRO and various universities. We are investing in opportunities to maximise irrigated cropping and to support the growth of cropping activities in relation to high-value agriculture in the Flinders and Gilbert river catchments in North Queensland.

This is all evidence not only of the integrated nature of various departments across the Newman government and the working relationship between those departments, but also the integrated nature of this budget which has been put together by the Hon. Treasurer. I am very pleased to work on those initiatives with my good friend and colleague the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. As part of the \$9 million voluntary buyback of the commercial net fishing scheme in Queensland, in 2014-15 we will see further rounds of the fisheries symbols buyback involved. We will also be investing a total of \$1.4 million in a new forest and timber industry research and development program to drive innovation in the industry, in line with the Queensland timber industry plan that was brought down by the Newman government just six months after we were elected. We will continue to pursue overseas market opportunities by cutting red tape and maintaining necessary certifications for agricultural produce, native forest timbers and, of course, fisheries in order to ensure access to not only international markets but also interstate markets at the same time.

The next year will be an exciting period for the Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges with the launch of a flagship two-year training program at both Longreach Pastoral College and Emerald Agricultural College and infrastructure upgrades at both of those campuses in line with the needs of students, the staff and, most particularly, the demands of industry for such courses. All of this is part of the government's very strong plan for a brighter future in agriculture, fisheries and forestry—all of which we want to see retained, reinstated and continue to grow as one of the four pillars of the state's economy.

With all of that in mind, as a regional member of this House I would like to reflect on some of the initiatives that mean so much to the seat of Toowoomba South that I am proud to represent. As the Treasurer and other relevant ministers have outlined, there are many initiatives that mean a lot to my community as well as to those right across the state. From an education perspective, I am very pleased that this budget delivers for schools such as Centenary Heights State High School, Clifford Park Special School, Darling Heights State School, Gabbinbar State School, Glenvale State School, Harristown State High School, Harristown State School, Middle Ridge State School and Rangeville State School. They are all in my electorate of Toowoomba South.

From a tourism perspective, Toowoomba and the Downs is very pleased to see increased attention and funding in this budget for our regional tourism organisation. I can only mention briefly the various initiatives from a roads perspective, whether it is the Warrego and the New England highways that intersect in my electorate of Toowoomba South or the iconic Toowoomba second range crossing which is finally going to be delivered given the leadership of the Premier, the leadership of the Treasurer and the leadership of the Deputy Premier through their various portfolios.

In Toowoomba South we are very pleased to see the continued efforts of the Minister for Health, Lawrence Springborg, supported by this budget, in relation to the Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service. There are many initiatives there including \$500,000 for MRI services at Toowoomba Base Hospital, which is located in my electorate.

Of course I must highlight the initiative mentioned by the Treasurer in his budget speech earlier in the week—that service for families and youths—the Safe Night Out Strategy. I am pleased to see that the Newman government recognises through this budget that it means as much in the Toowoomba CBD as it does on the Gold Coast, in Brisbane, in Cairns or other popular nightspots throughout the state.

In conclusion, I reiterate the belief of the LNP Newman government and the proof that is now in place for all Queenslanders to see that Labor got us into the \$80 billion debt that means we face huge challenges going forward in affording all of the services, all of the infrastructure and all of the concessions that Queenslanders expect and deserve and the Newman government has recognised. Toowoomba South and rural Queensland can be confident the Newman government and this budget presents a very strong plan for a bright future for Queensland. I take this opportunity to, in particular, congratulate the Treasurer for his continuing leadership in terms of the finances of our great state and the development of this fine budget.

 **Mr SHORTEN** (Algeria—LNP) (9.43 pm): Can I begin by congratulating the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, on putting together a budget which I rise to support. I think it is important to put this budget in context. This budget is the third budget of the can-do Newman government. It is a solid, workmanlike document, building on our two previous budgets. Of course we all remember the circumstances around which our first budget was delivered. If I remember correctly, the advice from Treasury was that the budget situation was unsustainable and required immediate attention.

Well we acted. We made the hard decisions. We were upfront with Queenslanders. Hardworking Queenslanders expect their government to live within its means as they do. The former Labor government spent like drunken sailors. The former Labor government forgot that it was not their money they were spending, but the hard-earned taxes paid by Queenslanders to be used in good faith by their chosen government.

What did Labor do? They broke faith with Queenslanders. They did not plan; they panicked. Just look at the \$9.2 billion white elephant water grid and the desalination plant that is closed and rusting. The Labor government broke faith with Queenslanders at the 2009 election. Like a chameleon which changes its colours to hide, they told Queenslanders things that would get them through the election and then what did they do? They abolished the 8c fuel subsidy and they whacked a \$7,000 tax on the family home. But worst of all they had a fire sale of assets.

I have sat in this House this week and heard the eight Labor members rail against our strong and smartest choice to sell, lease or offer private sector investment in our assets. They bleat that Queenslanders will not accept it. They say that the Labor Party paid the price when they sold assets.

They are wrong. Unlike the Labor Party we have asked Queenslanders. We have consulted Queenslanders. Queenslanders have had the opportunity to be a part of the solution. Over four months more than 70,000 Queenslanders had their say. They had their say on the \$80 billion debt accumulated over the past 10 years. They had their say on how to reduce the \$4 billion interest bill every year. Queenslanders identified the issue. They had their say on possible solutions and now through the budget Queenslanders know the strongest choice, the smartest choice, the choice that secures Queensland's future. Again, compare that process to Labor's rushed fire sale.

If we listened to Labor's rubbish we would think that we have done what they did. We have been upfront with Queenslanders. We are keeping our word. We are taking these choices to Queenslanders for them to have the final say.

Queenslanders, like most people, just want to be treated with respect. Labor forgot that. This government respects Queenslanders. We treat them like adults. We know they understand the huge problem Labor left all of us. Queenslanders know that we have a plan. They know that we have a record of delivery. They know that we are governing for the best Queensland not for ourselves. Labor governed for itself.

As part of this budget Queenslanders know that we will pay down debt and create a number of future funds. There will be \$1.5 billion for the South-East Queensland Roads Fund, \$1 billion for a Public Transport Rail Infrastructure Fund, \$1 billion for a Bus and Train Project Fund, \$1 billion for a Future Schools Fund, \$500 million for a Local Government Co-investment Fund, \$300 million for a Community Hospitals Fund, to mention but a few.

I flag today that I will be urging my community to nominate the Salisbury to Beaudesert rail line as a priority for funding out of the Public Transport Rail Infrastructure Fund. I will also be urging my community—and I hope the members for Stretton and Logan will join me—in nominating the Beaudesert Road-Logan Motorway intersection to be funded for upgrade through the South-East Queensland Roads Fund. I note that there is \$1.3 million in this budget allocated to this interchange to undertake transport project planning. I also note \$600,000 has been allocated in the budget to improve the Beaudesert Road-Nottingham Road-Honeysuckle Way intersection over the following two years.

I am very proud to be a member of a can-do government which focuses on and invests in education. I have spoken on many occasions in this place about the significant investment schools in the Algeria electorate have received under our government. Some \$1.2 million has been allocated to deal with the backlog of maintenance left to us by Labor and \$1.1 million for the Great Results Guarantee to invest in our prep to year 2 students.

We have improved safety around local schools like Grand Avenue and Boronia Heights state schools with the installation of flashing school zone lights. In this budget \$55,000 has been allocated to construct cycle ways, footpaths and supporting infrastructure around Grand Avenue State School. As I said earlier, we are a government that plans and delivers. That is why a new school from prep to year 6 will be built in Pallara, one of 10 new schools, at a cost \$1.4 billion.

I would like to finish on a subject which is close to my heart. My mother will turn 80 soon and she lives on a pension so the recent announcement by the federal government to cut \$54 million out of concessions concerned me greatly. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Treasurer and the Premier for this morning's announcement that the can-do Newman government is stepping in to fill the void to support our pensioners and concession card holders. It needs to be remembered that this great step is only possible because of the hard work and fiscal discipline which our government has shown. The cost of living is still impacting Queensland families and, again, like I have before, I call on the opposition to be part of the solution to reduce the cost of living for Queenslanders immediately and to get on to their Labor mates in Canberra and get their mates in Canberra to support getting rid of Labor's carbon tax and save Queensland families up to \$120 a year. I again thank the Treasurer for laying out a plan for a strong future for a great state with great opportunities—our Queensland.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (9.50 pm): It is a pleasure to speak in support of the 2014-15 Queensland budget and to follow my colleague the member for Algester in his support of the budget. This is a budget with a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. We have not increased taxes. We have increased spending on health and education by significant percentage points—six per cent and seven per cent respectively. Through careful financial management, we are revitalising front-line services, emergency department performance and elective surgery waiting times, and we are putting more police on the beat across Queensland and that includes all throughout the Beaudesert electorate.

The 2014-15 state budget outlines a strong plan for Queensland but also a brighter future for the Beaudesert electorate. In the past two years the Treasurer in his budgets has made strong decisions to control government expenses. They have been contained to a small 0.2 per cent increase this year. This is to put Queensland's budget back on track. We have laid the framework to grow a four-pillar economy in Queensland and to revitalise front-line services across the state. As I said, significant additional police resources have gone into the Beaudesert electorate at Jimboomba station in the Beaudesert district, at Tamborine Mountain and at Canungra, as well as in the entire Ipswich district, which covers the other side of my electorate.

We have restored procedural maternity services at Beaudesert Hospital and we have put our public health system on track to being the best public health system in Australia. The number of category 1 patients waiting more than 30 days for surgery has been cut by 83 per cent and the number of long-wait dental patients has been reduced by a massive 98.5 per cent over the last 14 months—a terrific record. This careful financial management has enabled the increase in funding for health services across the state and for education across the state—more than six per cent in health and more than seven per cent in education. This includes significant funds to facilitate the transition of year 7 into high school and to implement the Great Results Guarantee.

There are a number of significant matters of benefit for my Beaudesert electorate in this budget. They include Main Roads funding of \$2 million to upgrade the intersection of Millstream Road and the Mount Lindesay Highway in Jimboomba. This matter has been brought to my attention many times over the last 18 months to two years because it is a very busy intersection. That part of Jimboomba is a growing section of the community and the growing residential area on Millstream Road has contributed to an increase in traffic at that intersection. So it is great that an upgrade of that intersection will take place to improve safety there.

There is also funding of \$1.8 million to make safety improvements to Tamborine Mountain Road at Tamborine, where tragically there was a fatal accident last year. So the improvements on the agenda for Transport and Main Roads will certainly work to improve safety on that section of road to make it safer for motorists in the future.

We have also included funding to plan for improvements and upgrades of the Mount Lindesay Highway between Chambers Flat and Jimboomba. This recognises that we have a lot of growth going on in the area. There are a lot of residential developments going on in Beaudesert and Jimboomba and in areas in between. So putting in place funding in this budget for planning the expansion and upgrade of that section of highway is very important.

I have spoken in this House before about the services at Beaudesert Hospital including the recommencement of maternity services which happened just in March this year. This budget, I am happy to say, includes funding to secure the future of that service as part of the budget for the Metro South Hospital and Health Service. Its overall funding has increased by 17.8 per cent since Labor's budget in 2011-12—17.8 per cent. It is great that the increased services at Beaudesert Hospital are a part of that increased funding.

Over \$400 million has been provided—this is new funding—for child protection to fully implement the recommendations of the Carmody inquiry into child protection. Unlike those members opposite who had inquiries into child protection and did not follow the recommendations, we are implementing the recommendations of Carmody. It is the strong disciplined decisions we have made in previous budgets that have enabled funding to be set aside to implement those recommendations in full. I commend the Treasurer for that initiative and thank him for that commitment to child safety across the state. It is focused on early intervention. I know from feedback from people in my electorate who work in the community sector in places like Beaucare and Centacare and also officers of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services that a focus on early intervention is something they see as key to keeping people out of the child protection system, which of course is the optimum outcome in all of these situations.

The budget also includes \$2.4 million to repair and rehabilitate parts of Camp Cable Road at Jimboomba—a road which I share with my colleague and friend the member for Logan, Michael Pucci. I congratulate him on his advocacy for all parts of the electorate of Logan, including Camp Cable Road. The budget includes \$880,000 for additional facilities at Tamborine Mountain State High School—a very fast growing community which has a—

**Mr Pucci:** A strong team working together.

**Mr KRAUSE:** We have a strong team working together. That is exactly right, member for Logan. Thank you. We have a very fast growing community at Tamborine Mountain State High School, and it is great to see additional funds going there as well.

We have funding for an additional 267 police officers across Queensland in this budget. This reinforces our commitment as a government to putting more police on the beat. As I said previously, we have more police on the beat at Jimboomba and Beaudesert and all across the electorate. Additional funding in this budget confirms that this government will continue with that commitment to keep our communities safe and to put more police on the beat to keep people safe.

Locally, we have \$8 million in funding for the One-Stop Shop initiative, which is designed to enhance Queensland government service delivery across the whole state. The member for Lockyer and I are sharing the piloting of that scheme in the Scenic Rim region and the Lockyer Valley region. It is great to see \$8 million for that scheme. I congratulate the Minister for Information Technology for his commitment to that program.

We have \$5 million in funding for Everyone's Environment program, which is fantastic. That is \$1 million more than last year, Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection. I have some great and very enthusiastic community groups in my electorate who will lap up the opportunity to apply for more grants in the Everyone's Environment initiative. We have \$1.45 million in funding for mental health support for communities affected by drought, \$3.1 million for upgrades to Moogerah Dam and several million dollars for upgrades to Maroon Dam; and \$19.7 million for the construction of the Loganlea to Jimboomba 110-kilovolt powerline. This is about securing the electricity supply for people in Jimboomba and Beaudesert and suburbs in between. The Scenic Rim is a growing area and this is about providing infrastructure for that growing region and ensuring they have a reliable electricity supply into the future.

There is \$340,000 for improvement works to the intersection of Running Creek Road and Innisplain Road, and there is \$10 million to complete the upgrade of the Browns Plains bus station. This is important for the people of Beaudesert because we recently introduced through TransLink a regular hourly bus service between Beaudesert and Browns Plains which connects Beaudesert and the Scenic Rim with the wider South-East Queensland community. This has been welcomed with acclaim. Previously we had three buses a day; now there are about a dozen buses a day. This is really connecting my communities with the broader South-East Queensland community.

We are capping the emergency management fund contributions for rural landholders and exempting community organisations in rural areas. I thank the Minister for Police and Community Safety for heeding my representations in relation to those matters and putting a cap on that and exempting certain community organisations from that levy. That was a burden on some of those community organisations to be able to pay that levy.

There is \$140,000 for irrigation and on-farm management. I think the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines had something to do with approving that funding which has been organised between the Queensland Dairy Farmers organisation, Growcom and other agricultural groups to

improve farm water management for irrigators. There is \$1.3 million for the Scenic Rim and Logan City libraries, there is \$219,000 for Home Assist Secure services in Beaudesert, and there is \$1.8 million in funding for Beaudesert child safety services.

Importantly, and I would like to congratulate the Treasurer for this, we have extended transfer duty concessions for the transfer of farms between family members. I thank him for this because there are a number of primary producers in my electorate that are family operations and I know that the ability to transfer those operations between not just children and grandchildren but wider family members as well will be beneficial. I know it still needs to be a gift—and that is understood—but there are a lot of nieces and nephews who are involved in these operations and the ability to do that without paying a duty to the government will be most welcomed.

This government has got government spending under control. It is now time to make the strongest and smartest choice to secure Queensland's future. The draft plan to reduce debt by \$25 billion to \$55 billion will save a lot of interest for Queensland each year—over \$1 billion—and it will also make available that \$8.6 billion for investment in infrastructure. There is a lot of infrastructure in my electorate that needs to be invested in. It is only because we have taken strong decisions and a disciplined approach over the last two years that we are able to keep revitalising front-line services. That is the only reason we can put \$406 million into Child Safety to implement what came out of the Carmody commission of inquiry. It is the only reason we can continue to provide support services for people affected by drought, provide fee and rent relief, and provide community and mental health support programs.

This budget is focused on front-line services but this government understands that, if we want to keep funding those services as our state grows, we need to take action to reduce our debt. We cannot leave an ongoing debt legacy for our children and grandchildren. I congratulate the Treasurer for the work he has undertaken in implementing the Strong Choices campaign. The people of Queensland had the opportunity to have their say on how they would deal with the legacy of Labor's \$80 billion cumulated debt. Putting aside the \$8.6 billion for infrastructure is important, but reducing our debt burden and reducing the impact of the interest payments on our community is more important because that \$1.3 billion that is saved through increased interest payments is money that is dead money and it is money that could be better spent on community services and infrastructure—and there is a lot of infrastructure in my electorate that needs to be built because it is a growing part of South-East Queensland.

Accordingly, I would like to commend this budget to the House. I congratulate the Treasurer and all members of the government and the cabinet for their approach over the last two years which is bringing Queensland into a position of fiscal balance where the budget is on its way to being in the black and we are well on the way to being able to balance the balance sheet side of the equation as well. I commend this budget to the House.

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (10.05 pm): I am delighted tonight to speak on the Appropriation Bill and, in doing so, I would like to give a well-deserved pat on the back to our hardworking Treasurer for delivering his third budget, a very responsible budget. For the third year in a row, we have seen an increase in spending in the key areas of both health and education. The Newman government, put simply, has certainly delivered on our pre-election commitment of getting the state's finances back on track but at the same time ensuring that we live up to our pre-election commitment of revitalising front-line services. In the 2014-15 budget, there is more money for health, more money for education, more money for community services and, what is music to my ears and no doubt to many regional MPs up and down the coast, more money for that highway that is the lifeblood of the north, the lifeblood of communities far and wide, the Bruce Highway.

In health, in Mackay and the Whitsundays, the budget provides for more than \$29 million to complete the new Mackay Base Hospital, which is a showpiece regional hospital in today's world with just about all the trimmings one would expect—state-of-the-art emergency and inpatients departments, delivery suites, an intensive care unit, the coronary care unit and the new cardiac catheter laboratory which was recently opened by the Premier. This will save about 700 people around our region every year—those living from Bowen to Broad Sound, Cannonvale to Clermont—from having to make trips to the various hospitals in Townsville and Brisbane.

Labor often claim credit for the new base, but how did we get it? We only got it because Labor sold off the Mackay Airport. That is right, they sold off the airport—as noted by the Minister for Health earlier in this debate this evening—and the airport, I might add, is going gang busters now. They have got a hide to come in here and condemn this government for selling or leasing some assets to pay off their monster debt.

In education, the budget provides for \$8.5 million for the next stage of the Mackay Northern Beaches State High School—a school that the Newman LNP government opened last year, 10 years after it was promised by a deceptive government which took the people of our community, particularly the Beaches, for granted. In fact I should tell honourable members that my predecessor stood up in this place in 2001 and made a promise to open that school in 2003—and it never happened. To think that one of her former staffers is actually now gunning for my job after being rejected at the ballot box at last year's federal election.

In community services, the budget provides for \$4 million to improve and expand social housing in the Mackay-Whitsunday region. Having grown up in housing commission myself on Mackay's north side in the 1980s, I know full well that this funding will be well received throughout Mackay and the Whitsundays.

As for the Bruce Highway, I am thrilled to see \$768 million allocated for upgrades to various sections of the Bruce because the highway is everything to the good people of Central, North and Far North Queensland. These upgrades will save lives, something that people like Graeme Ransley from Mackay's Road Accident Action Group is very passionate about, and I commend him in that regard. These upgrades will also deliver substantial economic benefits with increased productivity, and I am sure the flow-on effects for tourism will be positive, remembering the importance of the drive market for tourism in places like Airlie Beach and the Whitsundays. I am also sure that the \$21 million in upgrades for the Peak Downs Highway will be welcomed, as will the \$6.5 million upgrade to the Bowen Developmental Road, remembering these roads to our coalfields are used by many of my constituents who work in the resources sector. I note the nodding of the member for Gregory who is no stranger to that space.

There are many other highlights in this budget for our region, like the \$250,000 for new infrastructure to enhance the experience of people going to view the platypus in Eungella National Park, and I note that most of the park happens to fall in my electorate. If members know anything about the platypus, they will know that Eungella is the perfect place to see this iconic native species.

I see the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection watching on with avid interest tonight as we comment and speak on the budget. It would be remiss of me not to note the \$55 million commitment in relation to the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan, of course noting in more ways than one the importance of the Great Barrier Reef to the people of Queensland and, indeed, to the people of the world.

Speaking of tourism, particularly regional tourism, I am pleased to see \$7 million allocated to our state's regional tourism organisations—our RTOs—with Whitsundays Marketing and Development and Mackay Tourism to get their share of the spoils. Other highlights include \$44½ million for our state-wide Safe Night Out Strategy and, with our Safe Night precincts in both Mackay and Airlie Beach, we will be getting our share. It is the same with those extra 267 police officers coming online. Who knows, one of them could end up on that brand-new police boat that the Minister for Police was speaking of earlier that we will be getting soon at Airlie Beach after this budget included \$1 million for that much-needed replacement vessel.

In conclusion, this budget sets Queensland up for a return to the glory days. However, that cannot happen unless we bring the state's \$80 billion debt under control and, specifically—and let's not kid ourselves here—chop \$25 billion off that debt that we inherited from the former Labor government. The meter still runs hot: \$4 billion a year in interest alone. It is enough to build a new highway from Mackay to the Sunshine Coast.

There is a better way, the LNP way. Strong choices have to be made so all Queenslanders can have a brighter future. This budget outlines our plan for secure finances by making the strongest and smartest choice to reduce debt and invest in our schools, hospitals and infrastructure for the future. I hope that one day that infrastructure includes big ticket projects like the Urannah dam which, if built, would be one of the biggest dams in the state—almost as big as the Burdekin. It would go a long way to helping build our four-pillar economy. As I say, it cannot happen—it will not happen—unless we get the state's finances back in order, and that means making those strongest and smartest choices in cutting that \$80 billion debt.

From the Strong Choices Investment Program to the \$1.5 billion Rural and Regional Roads Fund and the \$700 million Rural and Regional Economic Development Fund, the mind boggles as to what we can do for our state and for our regional communities in particular, including the wonderful region that I am proud to represent in this place, which is home to the north's biggest economy.

I again commend the Treasurer tonight on his outstanding work, a hat trick of which he should be proud of. Suffice to say we certainly have safe hands at the wheel as Queensland continues to head in the right direction. I support the bill.

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (10.11 pm): Tonight I have the pleasure of sharing with the people of Glass House the benefits of having a government with a strong plan for a brighter future; a government committed to better infrastructure through better planning, reducing the cost of living and restoring front-line services; and a government that listens to the people of Queensland and the people of Glass House. Whilst I have a number of budget wins for the wonderful people of Glass House and for the broader Sunshine Coast and Moreton Bay regions, two sum up those benefits most. In the south of the electorate residents of Wamuran, D'Aguilar, Delaney's Creek, Mount Mee, Woodford and areas further west live daily with the challenges of the D'Aguilar Highway. Those challenges are nearly at an end. Tomorrow morning I will be beside the highway with my good friend and federal member for Longman, Wyatt Roy, to announce a program of upgrades to this notorious highway.

At the outset please let me thank profusely the federal government, especially Wyatt and the Deputy Prime Minister, Warren Truss, for their investment of \$16 million in these projects. Without that funding, this simply would not be possible. Through the value add of our state Department of Transport and Main Roads, through innovative alignment of project and maintenance funding, our communities will gain so much more than they would have under Labor governments. That is what comes from better planning: better infrastructure. Tomorrow, Wyatt and I will be announcing upgrades to the intersections with J Lindsay Road and Gamgee Road, partly funded by the state and partly funded by the federal government; upgrades to the intersections with R Williams Road and Gamgee Road, again, partly funded by both governments; and, thanks to Wyatt and the federal government, upgrades to the D'Aguilar Highway between the Gamgee Road intersections that will see a widening and rehabilitation of the road surface and, if detailed design work goes according to plan, most importantly, the addition of an overtaking lane heading east to Wamuran.

On top of this, we will also be announcing an intersection upgrade at Canando Street, Woodford and a visibility and safety improvement project along the length of the highway to Kilcoy. Detailed design work will commence immediately, tenders let around November and works to start soon after. To the fantastic families who live and work alongside the D'Aguilar Highway I say thank you for your patience and for your support; the wait is nearly over.

The other example I wanted to highlight is in the north of the electorate. Residents of the Blackall Range would well be acquainted with our fight to keep the Hinterland Connect bus service, a service that brings together Maleny, Montville, Flaxton, Mapleton and Nambour. We had 12 months to prove it was being used to the standards required by TransLink. We were close—tantalisingly close—but not close enough. But because Minister Emerson, the transport minister, has listened to the community through my representations, he has given us a further 12 months to demonstrate Hinterland Connects' viability. Importantly, he has given us the chance to offer alterations to the timetable—not more services, but better use of the existing services. We do need the Sunshine Coast Regional Council to continue their 50-50 contribution to the route but, given the passionate advocacy and support of Division 5 Councillor, Jenny McKay, I am confident of this outcome. So I say to the people of the Blackall Range: get in contact with my electorate office to make your suggestions for timetable improvements. We have one more opportunity over the next 12 months to prove the pricelessness of this Hinterland Connect service. Again, I pass on my thanks to Minister Emerson and Councillor McKay.

All of this is ultimately only possible because of the efforts of the Treasurer and Minister for Trade, the Hon. Tim Nicholls. Under his stewardship, we have demonstrated that government can be fiscally responsible, can live within its means and yet continue to expand the services that Queenslanders want and need whilst not raising the taxes Queenslanders do not want. As a result, we have been able to stretch our funding to cover the shortfall created by the federal government unilaterally pulling out of the national partnership agreement on seniors' and pensioners' concessions. We have been able to put nearly \$370 million towards the construction of the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital. We have been able to increase overall health funding by six per cent to \$13.6 billion, funding that will see even more improvements to the already staggering improvements in emergency department performances, surgery waiting lists and public dental waiting lists—down 98 per cent since coming to government. We have been able to increase the Education budget by

seven per cent to \$11.8 billion, thanks in part again to our federal colleagues, including \$920,000 in additional funding to Glass House electorate schools and a new school at Pumicestone Road, Caboolture.

We have been able to provide another 267 front-line police officers in the coming financial year on top of the 750 already on the beat and, importantly, two new officers at Palmwoods Police Station. We have been able to put \$1.1 million towards upgrading the Charlie Moreland Camping Ground. Again, alongside our grown-up federal government, we have put some \$3.3 billion towards Bruce Highway improvements between the Pine River and Gympie, mostly in my electorate, including finalising the intersection upgrades at Pumicestone Road, Bells Creek/Roys Road, Caloundra Road, Sunshine Coast Motorway and working towards six-laning alongside Ettamogah Pub and the Cooroy to Curra stage A.

Before turning to my portfolio, I do just want to share my excitement for our bright future as mapped out in the budget document *The Strongest and Smartest Choice*. There is more to do in Glass House. We want to see the north coast rail duplication, an intersection upgrade at Reed Street and Steve Irwin Way, Glass House Mountains and improvements to the Maleny-Kenilworth Road. To the people of Glass House I say: we can do this; with your support of our strong plan we will be able to reinvest some \$8.6 billion over the coming years in infrastructure projects such as these. I look forward to discussing these options with you over the coming months.

The Newman government is also continuing its commitment to protecting Queensland's environment in this year's state budget. Over the next 12 months, we will build on the success of the past two years. During this time, the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection has delivered a significant number of conservation and sustainability programs and implemented important regulatory reforms. In 2014-15, the department's operating budget of \$175 million and capital budget of \$29.9 million will ensure that this important work will continue. With a commitment of over \$78 million, almost half of EHP's total budget for the department's conservation programs, we will ensure that Queensland's unique biodiversity remains a priority for my department and the Newman government.

The Newman government is delivering practical environmentalism. Unlike Labor, we are focused on delivering green outcomes, not Greens preferences. Queensland's Great Barrier Reef remains one of the best managed marine ecosystems in the world and we are committed to ensuring that it is conserved to international standards for today, tomorrow and future generations to come. The Newman government continues this commitment, with a \$55 million injection for the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan over the next five years. Already this government has made significant gains to improve water quality by reducing run-off into reef catchments and we will do more to improve water quality for the Great Barrier Reef.

Through this budget's funding commitments, we will further develop and implement best management practice systems for graziers, canegrowers and other priority agricultural sectors. The Newman government works with farmers, not against them. It is this cooperative relationship that is producing productive outcomes. Already more than 800 farmers have joined our best management practice programs, with more landholders soon to sign up and play their part in protecting our Great Barrier Reef. We will also continue our commitment to the Gladstone Healthy Harbour Partnership with further funding of \$1.5 million in 2014-15 to ensure open, honest and accountable management of the harbour through an annual report card. We will continue to repair Labor's mismanagement of Gladstone harbour by ensuring that information and open data on the health of the harbour—of water quality—is proactively made available to better reassure Gladstone and the wider community.

Before the last election we unveiled our Everyone's Environment grants program. Over the last two years we have awarded grants of \$7 million. Queenslanders understand the value of this program, and this year we have put \$5 million on the table to support grassroots projects that improve our local communities. We are about practical, tangible outcomes for this great state. The program provides funding opportunities for projects such as community and school gardens, wildlife habitat protection for threatened species, clean-up and weed control activities and restoration of degraded landscapes. Grants will also go to heritage projects that engage the community in conserving, understanding and appreciating Queensland's built heritage.

As we continue to encourage and support Queenslanders who want to improve their local environment, the Newman government is also helping to restore our state's most environmentally diverse areas. In the last two years, 41 nature refuges have been declared across an area of more

than 986,000 hectares under our \$107 million Investing in Our Environment for the Future commitment. Very soon I will be able to announce the one millionth hectare of nature refuge that will be gazetted under the watch of this government—no small achievement indeed.

These initiatives will be further complemented by the introduction of Queensland's new environmental offsets legislation, which will establish a simplified and integrated environmental offsets framework. This government will deliver more strategic land corridors for habitat protection, unlike the random and patchwork-quilt approach of the Labor government. The Newman government is working smarter and harder to deliver strong outcomes for our environment and real benefits for our communities. At the same time, my department has been working to facilitate economic development. That's right: the environment and the economy can not only co-exist; they can complement each other. Long gone are the shackles of the former DERM. Officers from my department now ask 'How can we help you?', not 'How can we stop you?' We have adopted an innovative, outcomes based approach to regulation.

We have succeeded in cutting green tape without lowering environmental standards. Key reforms have included the green-tape reduction act reforms, the development of outcomes focused model conditions and the introduction of standard conditions for low-risk petroleum and gas operations. In the year ahead my department will continue to reduce the administrative and regulatory burdens on business and find further cost savings.

We take our role as an environmental regulator seriously, and we are constantly adopting new technologies and increasing our inspection rates to ensure we monitor the activities of industry. In particular, our innovative, outcomes based approach to regulation will receive a boost with a \$5.2 million commitment to coal seam gas industry regulation, the implementation of more cost-effective compliance monitoring programs and the further streamlining of assessment and approvals processes. We will also examine our financial assurance system to consider whether a risk based model could reduce costs for industry and free up balance sheets to enable further investment. We will continue to implement our regulatory strategy, further improving application processes to deliver outcomes focused conditions, giving businesses the flexibility to design their operations in cost effective and innovative ways.

In North Queensland we are providing a further \$2.3 million over two years to complete the three-year pilot crocodile management plans as well as \$9.1 million for the Queensland Indigenous Land and Sea Ranger program, which provides activities to protect local species, land and waterways.

In summary, this budget is proof that we are delivering what we promised. We are going from strength to strength. Sustainable economic development and protecting Queensland's precious environment are not mutually exclusive, but can go hand in glove and we, the Newman government, have a strong plan for a brighter future.

 **Hon. IB WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (10.23 pm): I rise in the House to commend this budget not only to the House, but indeed to my constituents of Mansfield and to the stakeholders in the areas which I represent: the areas of science, IT, innovation and the arts. If I can speak firstly about what this delivers to the people of Mansfield.

There is some tremendous news in respect of the Great Results Guarantee money which flows through to the various schools in my electorate. I spoke in some detail about this earlier in the week, so I will not run through that again now. But it is great to see that money secured through this budget for the benefit of the students in my electorate and their results in numeracy and literacy, which will no doubt be accentuated and improved by that great funding.

There is some good Get in the Game funding which is again confirmed in this budget. For the Mount Gravatt Hawks, the team that plays at Dittmer Park, the funding coming through for their change rooms and amenities at Dittmer Park will be welcomed by the numerous players and their parents who use that great facility. Similarly, facilities have been confirmed at Yandina Park at Mansfield down on Wecker Road for the St Pauls cricket team. David Valentine and his team have been working hard for those facilities in conjunction with soccer, which shares that facility. It will be great news for the boys and girls who use those facilities on Wecker Road. Bruce Wilson and his team at the Mount Gravatt Youth and Recreation Centre have had the pleasure this year of opening that centre and to see money come through under the Get in the Game program for the lighting upgrade at FR Caterson Park. It will certainly be good news for all of those that use both the indoor and outdoor facilities that are related to the Mount Gravatt youth and rec facility there.

There is good news also for those who have the benefit of the Home Assist Secure program to assist them at home, which is for those who have difficulty with repairs and maintenance and safety in their homes. Both Anglicare and the good people at the Mount Gravatt Community Centre, Cassandra Rowland and her team, will see that money come through under this budget. Just in passing I want to knowledge the great work that Lynn Rose did in running the Mount Gravatt Community Centre. She has recently retired, but the Home Assist Secure program was established and secured by Lynn after she had done earlier work at BABI on the bayside, and she was a tremendous worker for my local community. They are the specific things that I did want to speak about in relation to those things that have been delivered to my electorate of Mansfield.

I spoke this morning in the House about the arts provisions in this budget, so I will not go through those again. But I did want to dwell just a little bit on the area of science and innovation within my portfolio because in her response to the budget today, the Leader of the Opposition gave us some platitudes—unbacked by anything else other than mere words—about what the opposition plan to do in this area. That was probably an excessive use of the word 'plan', but it was certainly an attempt at canvassing this issue. It is this government which has a clear and strong plan to invest in science and innovation, creating a brighter future for all Queenslanders.

It is a challenging fiscal environment. I am sure all of the ministers on this side of the House did not wish to be operating under a system in which our AAA credit rating had gone and we had \$85 billion worth of debt to deal with. But that is what we have to deal with, and we have to practically operate within that environment. The government now has to do the heavy, fiscally responsible lifting to get the budget back on track. It has meant that strong choices have had to be made and, unlike those opposite, we have made those choices and we do have a strong plan for a brighter future.

As part of the strong plan, the government will play to our strengths by recognising the valuable contribution that is made by the science sector in this state, and we are committed to using science and innovation for economic success. Our science and innovation action plan provides the clear strategic direction, principles and actions that will harness the power of science and innovation to drive economic prosperity and enhance the wellbeing of all Queenslanders. In contrast, the opposition has no policy on science and innovation—no strategy, no plan, no actions. The best that the Leader of the Opposition could come up with in her budget reply speech was to have a talkfest; Labor's Advance Queensland policy on science and innovation. That is about having a talkfest to talk about stimulating and fostering our reputation as Australia's most comprehensively knowledge based state.

Adding to their lack of any policy, in her budget reply speech the opposition leader seemed determined to run a scare campaign to talk down Queensland as a place for our best and brightest minds to work. Labor has the policy to have a talkfest and to talk down Queensland as a place to work, and this government is acting responsibly to deliver real and tangible outcomes in science and innovation and is putting in place programs to retain our best and brightest minds. I will give a number of examples later where investment in science and innovation is part of this plan for a brighter future, but what I wanted to move on to now is the specific issue of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine.

Queensland has invested significantly in constructing world-class research facilities which support cutting-edge collaborative research projects, attracting and retaining skilled researchers and beginning to diversify the state's economic base through support for knowledge-intensive industries. As we have mentioned a number of times in this House, we are building on this strength through a commitment of \$42.12 million towards the establishment of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine. This fulfils a key government election commitment and I am pleased to say that the federal government has also confirmed its commitment to add an additional \$42 million to our commitment. That means that an investment totalling more than \$84 million will be spent in North Queensland and Far North Queensland which is a big boost to those communities. There will be three locations for the facility in tropical North Queensland—Townsville, Cairns and the Torres Strait. There will be great jobs during construction and ongoing jobs for our scientists in the important tropical health and medical research field. Researchers at James Cook University are making important research breakthroughs all of the time, and in recent weeks I have been up there to look at some exciting breakthroughs they have made in relation to dengue fever.

I therefore read with disbelief the hypocritical comments made by Senator Kim Carr at a Senate committee hearing today that the investment being made in the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine amounted to pork-barrelling and that James Cook University was below world standards for medical research and suggested there were more appropriate candidates for the cash.

**A government member:** What a thing to say!

**Mr WALKER:** The hypocrisy of Senator Carr's comments—and this man is a galah; 'Carr the galah'—is brought to light when less than 12 months ago on 17 July 2013 he and his fellow Labor Senator Jan McLucas announced the opening of the \$25 million Cairns Institute at James Cook University where Senator Carr said that the building will attract leading academics. Presumably those leading academics were in other research institutions, so applying Senator Carr's logic the investment would have been better spent elsewhere. Further, Senator McLucas said that the new building consolidated JCU's expertise in all matters tropical and that it is a wellspring of great ideas about how we as a nation should go about tackling issues specific to the tropics in the areas of marine and climate science and public health. If Senator McLucas is right, then JCU's expertise in all matters tropical would qualify it well to be the recipient of the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine funding, as it is indeed of course. We are glad to be supporting that. We are glad that the federal government is matching that and it is an embarrassment to the Labor Party and to the Leader of the Opposition to see her own team talking down James Cook University, talking down North Queensland, talking down Far North Queensland and talking down Queensland's expertise in this area. It is cheap political points by Senator Carr at the expense of communities in North and Far North Queensland. What Senator Carr fails to understand is that the Newman and Abbott governments are about building jobs, infrastructure, capacity and excellence in regional Queensland.

I also want to speak briefly about ICT. There are significant announcements in the budget in respect of IT. Some \$8.1 million is going towards the One-Stop Shop initiative, \$72.4 million is going towards the government wireless network which will allow our emergency services—police and firemen—to talk to each other securely, and there is \$3.1 million to make tactical improvements in cyber security and awareness within Queensland government departments. Across the electorate of Mansfield and across the areas covered by my portfolio this budget delivers. It delivers, as has been said before in this debate, in a strong, solid and workmanlike way. I am sure that the Treasurer has been careful to deliver these and other solid achievements throughout this budget. I congratulate him for the budget that he has introduced and I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr JOHNSON** (Gregory—LNP) (10.33 pm): It is with much pleasure that I rise to make a contribution to the Appropriation Bill 2014. As I have already said to the Treasurer, this is the budget giving notice to the rest of Australia and the international scene that Queensland is back in business. I have been in this House for a little bit over 24 years and I have never seen a budget that has so much vision and so much intellectual capacity behind it and going for it than this budget has. It is a visionary budget in more ways than one. One small aspect of this budget is the \$321 million this coming year for the second range crossing out of a possible \$1.2 billion. What people do not understand is what an impediment not having that second range crossing has been, not only to Toowoomba, the Downs and the Lockyer Valley but Western Queensland and north-west Queensland. Not having it has been the greatest commerce impediment that this state has ever witnessed. I congratulate the Treasurer, the Main Roads minister and the federal government, for that matter—I do not know whether we will congratulate it too much, but I will talk more about that later. It takes about an hour and a half for every truck to come through Toowoomba. As I interjected on the Treasurer yesterday, I do not know how many gearboxes have worn out going through those 16 sets of lights in Toowoomba. We will be able to get different types of configurations down that Toowoomba range. What sort of a reception will that get from places like JBS Swift at Ipswich and Teys Bros meatworks? These are the biggest manufacturing industries in this state. If JBS at Ipswich could have 12 chains working instead of nine chains, we would be creating more productivity, more employment and more processing of the beef product not only from Queensland but from the southern states that feed into that processing plant at Ipswich and also the one at Beenleigh run by Teys. These are visionary projects that are going to create employment and productivity for this state. That is why this government is making these hard decisions now and over the last two years so that we could forge ahead and give the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren of this state something to work for.

I cannot believe for the life of me the contribution that was made by the Leader of the Opposition earlier today and some other members of the opposition. The member for Redcliffe never ceases to amaze me. She was driven out of the federal parliament by the voters of that part of Queensland. She and the Labor federal government were rejected because of their irresponsible and negative policies that drove Queensland and Australia into political economic oblivion. I hope the media is listening to this because it has a contribution to make here, and that contribution is to stop being negative and tell the people of Queensland and Australia just how good this budget is and what it is going to do. The Labor Party talks about education and health all of the time. We have a record

budget here in terms of Education, up another seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. What a wonderful job John-Paul Langbroek is doing. Health spending is up six per cent to \$13.8 billion, and look at the monstrosity that Laurie Springborg inherited two years ago—nurses not being paid and people dying in the back of ambulances. It was an absolute shambles for a First World country. That is something you would expect in a Third World country. The Labor Party and many in the media can say that the LNP has it wrong. They all want to sit in their side-street cafes and drink coffee while the rest of the working people that we represent are out there trying to make a quid and get productivity going in this state.

It is an unfortunate situation, but I am going to try to limit the time I take here tonight. I wish I had about two hours because I would give you the real breeding of those opposite. The fact is when we talk about getting productivity going and some of the visionary projects we have, they are not about selling assets. The Treasurer has gone around this state, and I have been at two of those meetings with him, and he was upfront with the people and said to the people what our visionary plan was. The Premier has organised the Strongest and Smartest Choice sessions in Mackay and Brisbane and people have made over 400,000 hits on the website to say what they think about it. Has the ALP ever done that? No! I can recall sitting on the opposition benches when Minister Nolan sat on the government benches and asking her if the then government was going to sell Queensland Rail. She said that, no, it is not for sale, and the next week it was damn well sold! What a pack of deceitful people they were! They are now accusing us of selling off Queensland's assets. It is not about selling off Queensland's assets; it is about providing a future for the kids of this state.

**Mrs Miller** interjected.

**Mr JOHNSON:** The member for Bundamba should sit there and listen for one half of one minute, because I am going to tell her a few more home truths. There is still \$70-odd million in the \$110 million racing program. That is something that puts the heart and soul back into the bush and right across Queensland. Racing provides recreation for hardworking people at places such as Eagle Farm or Doomben in Brisbane. I see the minister sitting over there. We got the Alpha races going last year for the first time in 11 years. There were 2,300 people there. I bet you there will be the same number of people again this year. That was a marvellous outcome, all because of a visionary government that is trying to give something back to the people who are really hurting.

I will touch on the portfolio of the Minister for Agriculture. There is \$62 million in this budget for country people—for fodder and water transport, for paying fees and other issues that they have to confront. I say here today that the one great killer in this state at the moment is mental health. In that \$62 million there is going to be a contribution made towards trying to help those people who are affected. It is not just the men and women on the land who are affected; it is the men and women who are running small businesses right across this state and across this nation who have been driven to the bones of their backside because of the poor policies of that crew over here for over 20 years and by their brothers and sisters in Canberra, who should be in jail for the big job they did down there. There are better men and women in jail than some of those people. They are in there for less. Some of those armed robbers did nothing compared to what that mob did. They have robbed the nation, they have robbed our kids, they have robbed the future of our kids.

This Treasurer is making these hard decisions where we have to pay these dollars back. But we cannot do that overnight. We will do that through a very well managed, visionary process. We are going to inject the dollars back into our communities by way of education, by way of health, by way of law and order, by putting in recreation facilities, by giving people quality of life. Today, the Premier and the Treasurer had to make the hard decision to come in here and find another \$50-odd million because the federal government fell over in its responsibilities to this state. That is what it is all about. We have a heart. We have compassion. We are not going to send people to the wall.

Another very good aspect of this budget is the recognition of the Treasurer of the representations made by many rural people in relation to succession planning. What a wonderful initiative that is! People can now hand down their farms or businesses to their sons or daughters or nieces or nephews and do that in a fair and equitable way. That is a fantastic initiative and one that we never, ever, ever, ever saw come from the Labor Party. At the end of the day, what do we have? We have a government that is listening to the wider community of Queensland.

I can talk about many issues here tonight. My time is running out, because we are trying to condense this debate a bit. If you want me to stop, I will not. If you want me to stop, I will keep going. The real issue here is honesty in the delivery of policy. If we are going to have honesty in the delivery of policy, we have to be able to tell the people of Queensland—all of those businesspeople out there,

the people who are fair dinkum—about it. The coal area of my area of Gregory, the Mirani area and other areas are riven by the resource industries. Over 8,000 jobs have gone. We have 500 empty homes in Emerald and 200 in Blackwater. I heard somebody say a few hundred—

**Mrs Miller:** It's the mining companies that are doing that.

**Mr JOHNSON:** Hang on a second. I will take that interjection. Yes, some of the mining companies are. I can talk about this all day and the honourable member for Bundamba knows that. The real fact of the matter here is who created this monster? It was the Labor Party that created it. It was the Labor Party that put this in place. It was the Labor Party that destroyed the fabric of these people's lives and their jobs, because all they thought about was the big dollars that they were all getting. We had the unions in their wrapping them up and pushing them through. I am not anti-union, but I will say this: there are some very good people in the CFME, but at the same time there are a few out there who have no comprehension at all of decency or an understanding of the issue. Yesterday, I stood outside this House here talking to a couple of people on the promenade. The next minute a taxi pulls up. My colleague the member for Cook was there, too, but unfortunately he is not here tonight. The next minute a couple of louts got out of a cab waving placards and they said, 'Vaughan, you're going to have blood on your hands.' I have had hands that have been broken. I have had blood on my hands all right through hard work. Those sorts of curs should go to work. They should get beside the blokes who are out there working. They do not have mates. They are evil fiends of life. They are people who want to stand on picket lines and shut down business.

I will tell members here now that I am proud to be a part of this government that is standing up for the rights of ordinary Queenslanders. The members over on that side can say what they like. When I was the opposition spokesman for transport all of those years ago under Rob Borbidge I remember going into those Townsville railway workshops. The people there would jostle you and push you and want to punch you. I said, 'You're pulling the wrong bloke into gear here because I will stand up all day.' At the end of the day, they found out that it was the people on our side of politics who were out there protecting their jobs. It was us. It was the people on this side who saved their jobs. Wayne Goss and his team and all of his Labor mates and his union mates, what did they do? They pushed them into oblivion. I will tell members now that I am the only minister for transport ever in the history of this state to address the shop stewards and the workers on the floor of every railway workshop in this state. I will tell members that I was proud to do it, because I am a working man myself. There are a lot of working people on this side—from white collar to blue collar. I can tell those people who think that the union movement has the right mix that they have driven the federal government into a debt of \$500 billion and they have driven this state government in a debt pushing \$85 billion. Now it is the conservatives, through good, responsible economic management who have to get us out of the mire, and get us out of the mire we will by making these hard decisions.

There is one other thing that members have to remember. This state is on its knees for more reasons than one. We are experiencing the worst drought probably in living memory. We have the lowest commodity prices in living memory. But at the same time this is one of those budgets where there are not going to be any increases in taxes, there are not going to be any increases in charges and there are not going to be any cutbacks in other areas. I say that that shows that this budget has been truly planned and truly pushed through the channels of economic maturity by a Treasurer and by Treasury staff who have done the hard yards. I say to Timmy Nicholls here tonight that if he can keep going this way we are going to drive the agenda of this state that far forward where, instead of the days of Joh Bjelke-Petersen and former coalition governments in this state where everybody came from the south wanting to live here, we will have everybody wanting to live here.

The government that we have at the moment is making those hard decisions. I see the Police minister sitting here tonight. In relation to law and order issues, we had thugs down on the Gold Coast crippling our tourist strip. We had thugs everywhere who just wanted to run their own agenda—armed robberies, the violation of people's lives, snatching old ladies' handbags, disrupting peoples' parties in restaurants and on the streets of the Gold Coast. We do not condone that sort of behaviour. I can tell members now that the people of Queensland know that we have made a difference. Yes, we have made some hard decisions and I know that, at the end of the day, we might cop a bit of pain, but we are going to have a lot of gain. The people of Queensland are going to thank us for that, because we made those hard decisions. We are talking now and working with the productive sector on how we can turn things around.

As that great American president Abraham Lincoln said, when you see grass growing in the streets of the city, it is only then that we are going to see that removed by a successful productive agriculture sector. Under the leadership of John McVeigh and the work he is doing to build the

economy of agriculture in this state that will happen. There are ways and means by which we can redeem the problems in the wool industry and he is working on that. All those primary industries bring about dollars. I made mention a while ago of the meat processing industry here in the south-east. Two-thirds of Queensland's cattle are processed here in the south-east corner. That is why we must have that railway back in full operation instead of having more trucks on the road. When I was a minister 20 per cent of Queensland's cattle were coming here by train. Now it is less than nine per cent. At the end of the day why is that? Because all that infrastructure was allowed to run down so that we could sell off all the profit making areas on the coal and mineral lines, that 2,300 kilometres, so our friends could sell off to the big companies that wanted it and then they could make a profit out of it. That is exactly what happened. I have overstayed my time, but one thing I will say: thank God Queensland has Tim Nicholls for a Treasurer and thank God Queensland has an LNP government that is making the hard decisions and forging this state forward. Sit back and watch for the next four or five years, because this is going to be the Utopia of Australia.

 **Mr KING** (Cairns—LNP) (10.51 pm): I am so glad that I drew the short straw to follow the member for Gregory. I commend the member for Gregory. What a passionate speech. The reason that us newbies in this House enter politics is because of people like the member for Gregory. I say that with all sincerity. I remember visiting Longreach late last year. I spent a bit of time with the member for Gregory. We discovered that I was born two days after his own son—same year, same month. It is only because of the passion and the dedication and the true grit and the heart of people like the member for Gregory. He has been through the hard times. He has been in opposition. He has watched the Labor Party run this state down. Now the passion is shining through because he can see the bright future that he is a part of in this great government.

Having said that, I fully support the 2014-15 budget handed down by the Treasurer in this House on Tuesday. This is a budget that continues to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future. It will do that by balancing increases in education, health and community services spending at the same time as not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. There are many fantastic state-wide initiatives contained in this budget, most particularly I think the \$406 million package to protect our most vulnerable children and implement the recommendations of the Carmody review under the stewardship of the disabilities minister here in the House tonight.

Today I will quickly focus on the benefits for my great electorate of Cairns. The centrepiece of this budget for Cairns is no doubt the significant increase in health and hospital funding. To highlight the significance of that health spending in Cairns, I first have to look at where we have come from. Under Labor the people of Cairns were treated like second-class citizens, but do not just take my word for it. On 27 September 2011 the *Cairns Post* reported about the dire state of affairs at our hospital under the previous government. The headline was, 'Ailing Cairns Base Hospital system cries out for lifeline.' The article reported that Cairns Base Hospital was facing a shortage in almost every service it provides, with doctors and, yes, union leaders blaming a lack of staff and resources in at least 16 departments. This article, published in the dying days of the former Labor government's reign of ignorance and neglect, is just one of many similar articles prior to the March 2012 election. What a difference a state election and three budgets has made to Cairns Base Hospital. In Tuesday's budget \$667.27 million was allocated for our health and hospital service in 2014-15. That is an increase of \$47 million from the previous year and \$87.27 million since this LNP Newman government was elected. That is a 17.1 per cent funding increase since Labor's last budget for Cairns Base Hospital in 2011. Thanks to the dedication of staff, management, the local hospital board, as well as the responsive action by the Health minister, Cairns Base Hospital is now achieving remarkable results. Waiting lists are being reduced, more specialists are being hired and ambulance ramping is a thing of the past. There is still much more work to do into the future and I will continue to fight for better front-line services and more funding for our hospital.

The other key highlight for Cairns and the Far North in this budget is the record funding to fix the Bruce Highway. The Bruce is the lifeline of Queensland. It feeds every electorate along the east coast of this great state and after so many years of talk and hot air under the previous Labor state and Labor federal governments, I am very proud to be part of a can-do government that has allocated \$768 million for Bruce Highway upgrades in partnership with the federal government. Other measures to benefit Cairns and the Far North include funding for more police, the continuation of environmental studies into the dredging of Trinity Inlet and nearly \$500 million in capital works. In the short time I have left—

**Mr Rickuss** interjected.

**Mr KING:** I have another 12 minutes. I take that interjection. Thank you very much, member for Lockyer. I cannot conclude this contribution without paying a quick visit to the parallel universe inhabited by the member for Mulgrave in his budget reply speech. I just want to take a quick tiptoe through the tulips that the member for Mulgrave engaged in. In fact, I will use a quote from one of my mentors in this House, the great member for Warrego, who followed the member for Mulgrave's speech earlier today. The member for Warrego said to the member for Mulgrave, 'Get a grip!' The member for Mulgrave was a former Labor government minister when it systematically decimated the Cairns economy. And he has the hide to come into this place and talk about jobs. He sat there when the former Treasurer, Andrew Fraser, killed off shipbuilder NQEA. And he has the gall to talk about jobs. The member for Mulgrave was sitting in cabinet when tourism was routinely ignored and underfunded. He sat there and did nothing to work with the private sector to encourage new investment. And he comes in here and wants to talk about jobs. He even has the hide, the absolute hide, to cast doubt and talk down our integrated resort developments such as Aquis. He says one thing here on Brisbane radio thinking that no-one back home is listening and he comes back to the Far North and says something else entirely. It is also instructive that the member for Mulgrave did not mention—made not one single mention of—the massive rise in funding for Cairns Base Hospital that I have just talked about. He did not mention, of course, the record funding for the Bruce Highway. Why is that? Why did he choose to completely ignore those fantastic initiatives in health and the Bruce Highway?

**Mr Costigan:** Labornomics! He thought it was a waste.

**Mr KING:** I will take that interjection from the member for Whitsundays. He thought it was a waste. I will tell you why he did not mention it. He did not mention it because he is embarrassed. The member for Mulgrave is completely embarrassed by the turnaround in confidence and front-line services in Cairns and Far North Queensland. The member for mythbusters did not want to know about the great results we are getting in schools, the great results we are getting in the hospital, reducing crime or the great results we are getting in the local community.

Clearly the member for Mulgrave is embarrassed at the total lack of a plan to reduce the debt that his former government created. Most people understand that strong choices must be made so a brighter future can be ours. As the proud father of two young kids, I do not want our children to be paying off the debt that Labor created. We need to reduce the state's \$80 billion of debt and the \$4 billion annual interest bill that Labor created. This budget outlines how we will reduce that debt, how we will secure our finances and how we will be able to sustainably invest in the schools, the health services and the infrastructure that we need to build our future. This budget is another strong step that we are forging to restore our finances, grow a four-pillar economy, revitalise front-line services and fund those infrastructure projects to create jobs. I commend the Treasurer and cabinet for the discipline and the foresight they have displayed in forming this great budget and I commend it to the House.

 **Hon. TL MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works) (11.00 pm): Tonight I rise to support the Newman government's state budget for 2014-15. Like all my colleagues, I congratulate the Treasurer and Minister for Trade for forming a budget that is appropriate for our times. Over the past 2½ years, the Treasurer has methodically and systematically taken Queensland finances, which were an absolute basket case, to a place where we can have great confidence in the future. With the rest of the cabinet, he has finally got government spending under control. In the decade leading up to 2012, each year there was an average increase in government spending of 8.9 per cent; in 2012-13, that was brought under control to 0.2 per cent and next year it is forecast to be 2.2 per cent. With this Treasurer in control of the finances, this government has a plan to bring us back to a fiscal surplus and a plan to reduce the \$80 billion debt that is a millstone around this great state's neck. This government is a responsible financial manager; the Labor Party is a reckless spender that promises the world and delivers nothing.

It is amazing that the Treasurer has done all of that and, at the same time, found the funding that is necessary for some incredibly important initiatives for all Queenslanders. I congratulate him for that. He has managed to find \$406 million over the next five years to implement the Carmody report which, of course, centres on the child protection system. That is an incredibly important initiative to protect the most vulnerable in society and to get right to the core of the issue, which is to help families and to provide the foundations that are necessary for children. I congratulate the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, who is very passionate about this as well.

I congratulate the Treasurer for finding \$44.5 million over the next four years to bring in the Safe Night Out Strategy. That strategy is a comprehensive package—I emphasise that: it is a comprehensive package—of initiatives to address violence, antisocial behaviour and safety issues around licensed venues. It is about patrons, venues, communities and the government coming together to create a safe, cooperative and vibrant culture for Queensland's nightlife, as opposed to our Labor opposition which has one idea, and it is not a good idea, with regards to dealing with alcohol fuelled violence. It will be very interesting to see how the candidate for Stafford goes when debating this, as he is a one-issue candidate and it is an issue that they have absolutely no understanding about. I congratulate the Attorney-General for putting together a policy that is holistic, that is comprehensive and that will work. I also congratulate the Treasurer for finding the necessary funding for it.

I congratulate the Treasurer for funding 267 extra police and, of course, the necessary funds, \$132 million over the next four years, for extra correctional centres. Again, the Treasurer has managed to get the balance right between bringing expenditure under control and cutting the waste, while at the same time finding the funding for those very essential initiatives that we have committed to over the next four or five years.

In my Department of Housing and Public Works, we are enthusiastically going about implementing the Housing 2020 and Homeless-to-Housing strategies. Over the next year, \$160 million has been set aside specifically for social housing commencements as we continue to push the social housing waiting lists down, from 30,000 over two years ago to around 19,500 now. We have also committed \$62 million to the National Partnership Agreement on Remote and Indigenous Housing, which is a fantastic initiative to reduce the overcrowding in Indigenous communities. It is encouraging to go to those communities and see the excitement of the locals as they move into a new house. Many of them come from houses where a dozen to 16 people lived, and they are very enthusiastic and absolutely excited about receiving keys to a new home.

I am delighted to confirm funding for the 40-bed supported accommodation facility in Cairns and the 40-bed facility in Townsville. Of course, in Redcliffe work is already underway on 20-bed supported accommodation facility. Homelessness services will be funded, with around \$107 million allocated in the next financial year. This will help a whole range of initiatives, including bond loans and RentConnect programs, which will help 38,000 low-income households to either find or obtain a place in the private rental market. We are very committed to expanding the Street to Home program, which gets rough sleepers off the streets and into houses. It is an incredibly effective program. We are also establishing a housing assistance triage system to rapidly provide people with support. I am very pleased to note that there is funding for homelessness services across the state, including two services that operate in my own electorate. INCH, or the Inner North Community Housing organisation provides a great service. Home Assist Secure operates out of Stafford but services a lot of the north-west suburbs and, of course, North West Youth Accommodation Service does a fantastic job in providing accommodation for young people in my electorate and surrounding electorates.

Turning specifically to my electorate of Everton, like all the electorates in this state we are benefitting from this budget. It is very difficult to go past the funding that has been made available for schools. Already, \$200 million has been allocated to the school maintenance backlog program and schools in my electorate have benefited greatly from that. Another \$101 million has been allocated to that program and my schools will be lining up to make sure that we can get the backlog of maintenance out of the way once and for all. The Greats Results Guarantee funding is probably one of the most exciting initiatives that schools have seen in decades and it has been very warmly embraced. One of my school principals has called this funding the 'if only' funding. It is the funding that for years they wished they could have, if only they could get the extra money. Now they do and they have total control of it. Albany Creek State High School, Everton Park State High School, Albany Creek State School, Albany Hills State School, Eatons Hill State School, Everton Park State School and McDowall State School have all received generous amounts of money. They are very excited about their funding for this year and the years to come, and they will have absolute control over that money.

I am very pleased to announce that, for 2014-15 to 2015-16, \$400,000 has been set aside from the Safer Roads Sooner program to fund the safety upgrade of the intersection of Eatons Crossing Road and Lilley Road at Eatons Hill, as well as Warner Road in Cashmere, in the neighbouring electorate of Pine Rivers. That is very exciting. It is important that our roads are safe. It is great to see that at the moment Old Northern Road is being resurfaced, which has been riddled with potholes for quite some time now, not helped by the bad weather that we have had in recent years. My electorate is very excited about the repairs that are taking place, which will be finished by the end of this month.

We have a fantastic facility in the middle of my electorate—the Bunyaville State Forest Park. There is an education centre there. Some \$690,000 has been allocated to replace three of the existing toilet blocks with one modern facility and upgrade the water supply to the toilet block as well. This facility is used by schools on a regular basis. Students learn about environmental issues and the local fauna and flora. I call it our metaphorical lung in the middle of my electorate. It is wonderful to have a picnic in Bunyaville State Forest Park.

Finally, I am very excited about the funding in the budget for the Get in the Game program—a program introduced by my colleague the Minister for Sport. What a wonderful initiative this has been to encourage young people to join a club and to become involved in sport. Being involved in competitive sport meets so many different needs for individuals—for example, health and social needs.

A number of clubs in my electorate have already benefited from the program. The Albany Creek Football Club has received \$100,000. The Mitchelton Soccer Club has received \$100,000. The Pine Hills Baseball Club has received nearly \$90,000. The Pine Hills Soccer Club has received \$100,000. We are looking forward to the next round of funding that I think is going to be announced tomorrow.

**Mr Dickson** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** Sorry, I am not allowed to say that. Stay tuned tomorrow as something might be happening. I am looking forward to being involved in that program once again. My clubs have benefitted from that.

**Government members** interjected.

**Mr MANDER:** Don't worry; nobody will see this until tomorrow morning so it will be fresh news then. I thank the minister for that initiative. I am looking forward to seeing some of that funding in my electorate. This is a budget that is responsible. It is a budget that is appropriate for the times. It is a budget that shows that we have a strong plan for a brighter future.

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (11.12 pm): It is a great pleasure to rise and join the great group of people who have spoken so eloquently in the House about this budget. It is a real pleasure to address the 2014-15 budget—the third budget of the Campbell Newman government in Queensland. I certainly congratulate the Treasurer on delivering a balanced budget—a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. The 2014-15 state budget carefully balances the increases in education, and community service spending without introducing any new taxes, increasing taxes or reducing service provision.

Quite frankly, when we look back over the years of Labor governments in this place we see that huge amounts of money were being spent without gaining any great asset value. We have a budget that continues to grow the state while reducing our government expenses to 2.2 per cent growth. There are major increases in funding of six per cent for health and seven per cent for education. I believe these are the most important areas for our community.

Contrary to speculation, as of this morning we are able to fulfil our duty in terms of concessions for pensioners—those people who rely on funding from our government. This extra \$50 million cancels out the lack of funds coming from the federal government, which is a real shame. We have a caring government in Queensland. It is quite heartening to realise that we were able to do that.

I turn to some of the highlights in this budget for my patch. There is \$14.5 million allocated to the \$560 million stage 1 Mackay Ring Road project being undertaken in partnership with the federal government. That is a very important infrastructure component for Mackay. We are certainly heading in the right direction.

The state schools in my electorate will receive Great Results Guarantee funding of \$1.5 million. As every other speaker has said in the House today, that is great incentive funding for all of our schools. It is a great fund for all of the things that need to be done around schools. Schools pretty much have the option to do whatever they want with that funding. It could be used for an extra teacher or for a program that the school is keen to conduct. It will help schools fulfil their obligation to teach our kids and make sure they come out of school better citizens.

Some \$4.4 million has been allocated for extra education facilities at Mirani High School. Contrary to what has happened over many years with the previous government, there was real and proper consultation with schools in terms of the infrastructure required. In one instance there was a need for a break-out area for teachers—somewhere they could meet and discuss issues. That was able to be built in. Under the previous government, schools basically got what the government decided they should get. There was very little consultation with the community.

Some \$3.6 million has been allocated in my area for specialist homeless services. Some \$900,000 has been allocated across Queensland to target pests and weeds. Coming from a farming background, that is a huge issue in my community. We have a lot of exotic pests. Pests such as giant rats tail and sickle pod are becoming a real problem. When we talk about environmental outcomes, giant rats tail is a pest that can actually destroy the productivity of any farm very quickly.

Some \$29.4 million has been allocated to complete the \$408 million Mackay Hospital redevelopment. I heard my partner in crime, the member for Whitsunday, talk about this wonderful facility we have in Mackay. It is a showcase for hospitals. I congratulate the health minister on the work he has done. More importantly, I point out that the health board in Mackay, led by Col Meng, is doing a wonderful job with a great group of people. They are making that hospital one of the best hospitals in Queensland, and possibly Australia.

I note the work that Lawrence Springborg has done as health minister during the short time we have been in government. Prior to that we had the absolute debacle where nurses were not being paid. The real cost to government was \$1.2 billion—that is, \$1,200 million. We also had the fake Tahitian prince issue which involved \$18 million—the Labor Party stooge who was able to knock off that sort of money. Lawrence has had to sort that out. I believe that Health is now on a firm and strong path to a wonderful future. The most important part is that we have people in Queensland who absolutely need the hospital system and they are actually receiving good health services in spades. It is important to note that in the Mackay area an extra \$60 million is being spent on front-line hospital and health services compared to the Labor government's last budget. That is a pertinent point.

One of the iconic attractions we have in the Mackay district is the platypus in the Eungella National Park. My good friend the minister was up there only a few weeks ago and we made some real decisions about making sure that we can create an iconic place at Eungella. When my family were young, we used to camp at Eungella. A thousand people, if not more, would camp there over the weekend at Christmas.

**Mr Dickson** interjected.

**Mr MALONE:** I take the interjection of the minister, who is holding up a photograph of a platypus. What wonderful little creatures—designed by a committee, I believe! A real decision was made to make the Eungella National Park and the display of the platypus something unique possibly in Australia and even in the world. As I said, when I had a young family, we used to camp at Eungella National Park. It would not be unusual to see 1,000 or 1,500 people camping at the national park. Labor took over and you would be lucky to park about four cars there now. There are about four parks that you can camp at in the Eungella National Park. We would hope, Minister, that over a period of time we could turn that around and get people coming back to the national park, making sure that they have the enjoyment of being able to not only swim in Broken River but also camp in the national park in an idyllic setting.

**Mr Costigan** interjected.

**Mr MALONE:** I have to say to the member for Whitsunday: keep your cotton-picking fingers off that bit of my electorate. That is something to look forward to. I am really encouraged by the minister's enthusiasm to make that happen.

In my role as the Assistant Minister for Emergency Volunteers we are moving forward with the 91 recommendations from the Malone review across-the-board, working to enable those emergency volunteers to do cross-training and to support each other when there is a disaster or an emergency in their community. So at the end of the day when the chips are down all of the emergency organisations will be firmly engaged in partnerships so they all know what each other is capable of, and they will have the opportunity to support their local communities when things go wrong. With those few words, I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (11.22 pm): On 21 August 1929 the first woman ever elected to this place gave her maiden speech. That woman was Irene Maud Longman. In her maiden speech she said the following—

For 14 years Queensland had wandered in the wilderness of Socialist-Labor rule, lured at first by bright promises of lands of ease and vistas of idyllic fields where we would obtain the maximum of comfort and prosperity by the minimum of effort. But it was a mirage leading to the morass of debt and to the sloth of unemployment.

It seems there is nothing new. Labor bring out shiny policies and lure people toward a hypnotic plethora of promises of an easier life with less effort and little accountability. Unfortunately those who are the architects of Labor's policies concoct them in the back rooms of the union's headquarters. These faceless men escape any public accountability. It is our communities that suffer the consequences of the decisions of these false prophets, not the faceless men.

At this time in history it is the Newman government standing in the way of the moribund philosophy of union Labor. It is this Newman government that is planning and following through with strong decisions. It is this government that has a strong, transparent plan, well considered with the input of thousands of everyday Queenslanders. We will be held accountable for our plan because we are taking this plan to the people for their approval, just like we said we would.

In my community the unions hung the former member out to dry and that meant the former government treated my community with absolute contempt. For more than 20 years they ignored us—in a time when population growth increased many times, schools were full, hospitals were overflowing, police were stretched, transport infrastructure was neglected and, to rub salt in the wound, when we lost one of only two bridges over the North Pine Rive during the 2011 floods, they took over a year before they started work to rebuild it, to the detriment of many of our businesses.

Over the last two years many things have been accomplished and my community is starting to see a difference. The steady-as-she-goes determination of last year's budget means getting to a surplus position is a real accomplishment this year. This year's budget holds the line, maintaining the discipline and building on the plans that were started with strong decisions. Our careful planning and attention to detail are hallmarks of the methodical and workmanlike way that we are going about slowly and surely getting Queensland positioned for a brighter future. We have more to do and we must stay the course.

I spend a lot of time listening to the people I represent and I am confident we are finally starting to get our share. Here are some of the things that have been delivered in my community in the last two years: \$2.2 million to address the maintenance backlog in schools; approximately \$3.5 million in maintenance for Dakabin State High School, which was left by Labor to rot; approximately \$3 million in Great Results funding for schools which are upskilling teachers, employing extra staff and providing specialist tuition help—new money thanks to our federal counterparts; extra prep teacher aides at Narangba State School; and approximately \$500,000 for community groups across the electorate.

Five hundred metres of sound barriers on the Bruce Highway at Kallangur have been built, with more being installed right now at a cost of approximately \$2 million. I will continue to fight for sound barriers at Murrumba Downs. There have been substantial repairs on Anzac Avenue between Petrie and the highway, costing approximately \$600,000. A slipway will be constructed from Narangba Road to Anzac Avenue, at a cost of about \$500,000, where a little boy was killed late last year. The Boundary Road Bridge over the railway line was replaced at a cost of over \$1 million. Dakabin train station has had over \$500,000 spent on it so far. I will continue to fight for this station to be fully upgraded with disability access and regular public bus services. Digital flashing lights have been installed at Petrie and Undurba state schools and Dakabin State High School at a cost of approximately \$120,000. I will continue to fight for them and for other schools.

There were 429 Get in the Game vouchers issued for kids to play sport this year. Approximately \$30,000 has been given to sporting clubs to run membership drives. The new Burpengary State High School is now under construction, to open early next year. An extra kindergarten has been built at Jinibara State School with another to open at Undurba State School, worth about \$1.7 million, and a double stream one to open at Living Faith Lutheran Primary School in January with \$800,000 from this government. There is \$500,000 for design work to rebuild Petrie Fire Station, with \$6.6 million allocated in next year's budget to build it. There is \$406,000 for the Home Assist Secure program in Petrie. Following my advocating for it, \$300,000 is being spent on a study of traffic and roads around Petrie with an eye on an East Petrie Bypass. There is \$18 million to continue the upgrades of the North Pine Water Treatment Plant—not sexy but necessary. There are 10 new police officers at Petrie, 36 at Burpengary and five at North Lakes. The Petrie SES got a new boat that they did not even have to fundraise for.

Of course there is the Morton Bay Rail Link and, before Labor claim responsibility for this, it was the pressure that Madam Speaker and I brought to bear on this project in 2009, along with several community groups and the council, that forced federal and state Labor into action. This next year \$374 million will be spent on the project—more than \$1 million a day. I want to say thank you to the families living along the emerging corridor. There is a lot of dust and noise and disturbance right

now because of the dirt being moved. I am sorry for this interruption to your families but thank you for your understanding. It will be over soon and we will be using this fantastic new train. The member for Murrumba and I went in to bat and had the car-parking allocation increased by 40 per cent, with approximately 1,500 new car parks at train stations in my electorate to be built. There is \$28 million to continue to build the Petrie to Lawnton line.

There is much more that is being delivered by the government that my community benefits from. For example, in the Metro North HHS, there is extra breast screening—30,950 in the Metro North region alone this year to 31 March. Mum and Bubs visits are being conducted from Jinibara State School—a great initiative. When elected, approximately 16,000 people were waiting for more than two years for dental procedures; there are now none. Over \$40 million has been spent building or refurbishing facilities at Caboolture Hospital. Approximately \$12 million is being spent refurbishing the Redcliffe Hospital. A new ambulance station was opened at North Lakes. Ambulance ramping is gone and response times have improved. Emergency waiting times are vastly improved, and I know firsthand how fantastic they are. Elective surgery waiting times are the best in Australia.

There are many things I have not spoken about here that my community benefits from—things like the homeless men's shelter being built in Redcliffe for the Moreton region, or the funding for SCOPE which provides respite care for the carers of disabled people, or the funding for the Marsden Youth Centre which provides family intervention services for our region, or the \$409 million allocated to implement the recommendations in the Carmody report, or the 30 per cent reduction in the public housing waiting list, or the tough anti-hooring laws, or the successful criminal gang laws, or the \$15,000 construction grant for first home owners, or the reinstatement of the stamp duty concession on the family home saving them up to \$7,000.

The contrast is clear. The former government took my community for granted. For 20 years, we were all but ignored, and when we needed help most following the 2011 floods we were ignored yet again for another 12 months waiting for the rebuild of the bridge. Contrast that with what can be accomplished with strong local representation that starts with weekly mobile offices, doorknocking, telephone calls and an open-door policy as I actively seek the views of the people I represent. I do not take them for granted. I do not treat them with contempt. I work very hard for the people who trust me to represent them and I am tenacious in my efforts to ensure the ministers know what my community needs. Unlike the Labor union candidate, I am free to represent them without the fear of being disendorsed. My community is finally getting its fair share. In my community, kids are getting a better education, they are more likely to get a job, they live in a safer environment, they will get better treatment at hospitals and they will travel on better roads and trains than they did just two years ago.

This budget is a responsible budget that is the result of strong decisions and careful planning. It sets a plan for a bright future, a plan that includes my community. I feel very privileged to be working for the people in my community, and I will continue to do my best to listen to them and represent them. We live in a most satisfactory place indeed.

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Albert—LNP) (11.32 pm): I rise here today to make a contribution to the Appropriation Bill 2014. Queensland is a great state with great opportunities but we can never forget the burden of the crippling deficit that the previous Labor government left us. This legacy is one that strangles the future infrastructure which our state desperately needs. It is a burden that is around the neck of each and every Queenslanders. This equates to \$16,209 for every man, woman and child in Queensland, and that is not to mention the interest bill which is \$4 billion each year.

Governments must live within their means. Expenditure cannot continue to outgrow revenue. The days of runaway spending have left us with very little to show for our money. I must say that as I go around the electorate people always ask me what actually happened and what did we get for the \$80 billion. The only thing I can say to them is that we got dams without pipes, pipes without dams and trains without seats. On a local level, I can also remind them of the appalling state our schools were left in. I will always remember the boys toilet block at the Gaven State School where the ceiling was actually caving in and the children could not use the toilet block. Due to the foresight of this government in previous budgets where we allocated \$300 million to fix the maintenance backlog, I can simply say that our schools are looking brand spanking new again. They are sparkling and this brings me a massive sense of pride. This government gave a firm commitment to ensure that expenses do not exceed revenue growth and that we do not pass Labor's debt onto our next generation, our children.

I can certainly say that the proudest moments for members of parliament come from visiting our schools and seeing the next generations on assembly. We see all of these young minds and all we want is the very best for these individuals. It is our moral obligation to protect their future and not

leave them with a massive debt legacy. The third LNP budget continues our commitment to responsible fiscal management and lays the foundation for sustainable economic growth. Building the economy of tomorrow certainly takes action now through better educational outcomes. The Great Results Guarantee empowers our schools to make a real difference at the grassroots level. It gives our principals and our school communities the ability to spend money on initiatives that they feel are unique to their situation for best outcomes for them.

The schools of Albert welcome the \$2.1 million in funding—from Mount Warren Park State School, Windaroo and Windaroo Valley State High School in the north, to Norfolk Village, Cedar Creek and Pimpama State School in the centre, and to Coomera Springs, Upper Coomera State College, Highland Reserve, Oxenford and Gaven State School in the south. Albert schools are putting these funds to good use to help the next generation to learn the fundamentals of reading, writing and arithmetic. It certainly brings me great pride when I hear from the parents who are seeing these real educational outcomes and how they are affecting their students. These students are now grasping education and they are actually finding it interesting. They love taking a book home to read to their parents to show off their newfound skills. I can certainly say that the P&Cs are very, very grateful. Most importantly, though, it is giving these young students the hope that they can achieve.

The budget also focuses on delivering an extra 267 front-line police officers. Combined with tougher legislation dealing with criminal gangs, this has made dramatic inroads into crime on the Gold Coast. I want to quote some figures from the *Gold Coast Bulletin* from 12 December 2013. They said—

From September to November 6, assaults dropped 38 per cent a week ... The number of robberies slumped from a weekly rate of 14 to just five—a reduction of 64 per cent. Break and enters fell from 87 to 66, a 24 per cent cut ...

This is proof that our tough stance on crime is making our electorates safer.

This government has developed a strong plan to change the culture of alcohol fuelled violence through the Safe Night Out Strategy. This strategy includes a range of initiatives, including additional liquor licensing inspectors, support services, awareness campaigns and the establishment of 15 safe night out precincts. This is about allowing Queenslanders to get out there and enjoy their nights out in our busy nightclub precincts. Let us not forget that these precincts provide employment to bar staff and people who work in transportation services, cleaning services and property management, just to highlight a few jobs.

Residents of Albert have been vocal when it comes to those who commit a crime. Many residents believe in the motto that if you do the crime you do the time. This LNP government is listening and is serious about tackling crime and keeping serious criminals off the streets. This is confirmed in the commitment of \$61 million to recommission, refurbish and expand existing correctional facilities to deliver 650 new beds.

This government is also committed to health services. This is seen with the Gold Coast hospital and health services receiving over a billion dollars to deliver increased health care to the Gold Coast region, which certainly includes those residents in Albert. This will allow local residents to be treated locally for radiation oncology. This will bring a lot of comfort to my local residents because their families will be close by.

I would like to follow the Treasurer in informing Albert residents of the fantastic inroads the LNP government has made in Health: the number of category 1 patients waiting more than 30 days for surgery has been cut by 83 per cent, the number of category 2 patients waiting more than 90 days for surgery has been cut by 69 per cent, the average time between ambulance dispatch and being available for the next job has been reduced by 18.75 per cent, and the number of long wait dental patients has been reduced by 98.5 per cent in the last 14 months. These achievements have come through prudent management procedures and our hardworking medical staff. This creates peace of mind for residents because they know that they are going to get the appropriate care for themselves and their loved ones.

Returning to the budget highlights, this budget delivers \$13.6 billion for Health, up six per cent; \$11.8 billion for Education, up seven per cent; and \$406 million for Child and Family Services. With strong choices, there is certainly a lot more to be done. In the Albert electorate and the Coomera electorate we will be fighting for our share of infrastructure—essential infrastructure—such as exit—

**Mr Hart:** Exit 54.

**Mr BOOTHMAN:** Exit 54 at Upper Coomera. This is a crucial exit for our area. The budget is about building a brighter future for Queensland and taking control of Labor's debt legacy.

 **Mr YOUNG** (Keppel—LNP) (11.39 pm): I rise to support the Appropriation Bill 2014 and now acknowledge the Treasurer, who has continued to provide the financial stability and management to bring this great state forward. I want to applaud the Treasurer for the Strong Choices campaign to address Queensland's debt and deficit problem left by Labor. The budget delivers an ongoing strong plan for a brighter future. In the key area of Health, the Health budget has increased six per cent to \$13.6 billion. Education is up seven per cent to \$11.8 billion and Transport and Main Roads is \$5.4 billion.

In his budget speech in September 2012, the Treasurer outlined a road map to implement a methodical and measured approach to address the massive debt left by Labor and revitalise front-line services for the benefit of Queenslanders. The hard decisions we made then are producing results. Queensland saw years of financial mismanagement under Labor, who had no concept of financial management. They used the credit card to buy popularity with disastrous results for the Queensland economy. Community services will benefit from the \$406 million for child and family services in response to the Carmody inquiry. Our western graziers will receive \$62 million in drought assistance, and I applaud the Minister for Agriculture.

As Rockhampton was nominated as a Safe Night Out precinct, the precinct board will be able to apply for grants for a range of initiatives to stamp out alcohol and drug related violence. The package across the state is \$44.5 million.

Out of my 21 schools in Keppel, 14 will receive funding through the Great Results Guarantee. Through the Early Intervention Youth Boot Camp Program, youth justice will receive \$435,000 to support young people at risk of long-term involvement in the criminal justice system. Homelessness funding for non-government organisations that deliver specialist homelessness services will be able to apply for \$300,000 in funding.

I am particularly excited about the funding for the additional medical oncology, chemical haematology and radiation oncology for the new Rockhampton regional cancer centre. When this centre is established, patients will no longer have to travel away from the region for radiation oncology. Historically, patients had to travel to the southern oncology services, predominantly Brisbane.

We will see 267 new police officers across the state. The Rockhampton watch-house will benefit from \$700,000 to complete an upgrade to the CCTV to assist in the management of people being held there. Whilst talking about policing, I want to acknowledge the force in Rockhampton and the coast. Our regional crime figures are showing great results to tackling crime, with robbery offences down by 44 per cent, break and enter down by 23 per cent, sex offences down by 31 per cent and unlawful use of motor vehicles down by 12 per cent. The 267 new officers are part of our commitment of 1,100 new officers in our first term of office. I say that I have never seen the police officers in the central region more positive.

Since taking office in March 2012, the Treasurer and his team have worked diligently and consistently with a range of measures to repair the budget. The 2015-16 budget is on track to return to surplus. However, these measures are not enough to reduce the \$80 billion of debt left by the previous Labor government. Even with a one per cent surplus after a balanced budget, it would take 50 years to pay off the debt. I commend the Treasurer for his Strong Choices campaign using a mix of community leader round tables, community forums, information booths, virtual town halls and the people's budget interactive tool to engage with more than 70,000 Queenslanders so that they could understand the debt challenge. The \$4 billion interest bill per year is unsustainable and has to be dealt with.

I draw an analogy with many property owners I know who, because of drought and natural events, have had to sell properties they did not want to sell. However, hard decisions to rectify unsustainable situations are part of successful businesses, and I have been in this situation. But through successful management, businesses survive and grow. I still consider Queensland the last frontier and a state of opportunity. Queensland has a bright future but only under a successful management team. The Premier and Treasurer are providing that management. I support the passage of the bill.

 **Hon. SL DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing) (11.44 pm): The Newman LNP government has a strong plan and is working hard to achieve a bright future for Queensland. Through my portfolio of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, we are helping to grow the four-pillar economy through tourism by opening up our national parks,

investing in sport and recreation and getting racing back on track. As a government, we remain cohesive and focused. We are delivering on our election promises for the people of Queensland and we will continue to do so. We are lowering the cost of living through the successful Get in the Game initiatives and we are making it easier for people to get into international parks. We are using fewer resources to deliver better and more efficient services.

The new government's flagship Get in the Game program lowers the cost of living for Queensland parents and helps young people who can least afford it with the cost of membership and participation fees at registered clubs. As a part of this budget, there is \$21.5 million on the table for Get in Game programs this year to help get more Queenslanders active and help ease the cost of living and the burden on those Queensland families. After two years of investment in grassroots sport, the Get in the Game program has so far delivered some truly outstanding results. We received an overwhelming response to the first three rounds of the Get Started program, with approximately 54,000 vouchers of up to \$150 issued to help young people who can least afford it with the cost of membership and participation fees at registered clubs. To date, clubs have redeemed approximately 43,500 vouchers.

Through the Get Going initiative, 961 sport and recreation organisations ranging from cricket, AFL through to tennis and dirt bike clubs have received grants of up to \$10,000 for equipment and activities to increase and sustain membership. To date, the total funding of \$6.87 million has been distributed through two rounds.

Through the Get Playing initiative, 220 sport and recreation organisations, ranging from rugby league and hockey through to BMX and pony clubs, were approved grants of up to \$100,000 to improve their infrastructure and facilities. To date, total funding of \$14.2 million has been paid through two rounds. Get in the Game is kicking a goal for kids, parents and sports clubs across the state. There are kids getting outside and active from Buderim to Birdsville and beyond as a result.

The funding of major sporting infrastructure supports our plan to grow tourism as one of the four pillars of our economy. Our \$13.4 million investment towards stadium and community sports related infrastructure helps to attract major events, assist in the development of elite sport, creates jobs and stimulates local economies around the venues.

My department manages more than eight million hectares of national park, almost three million hectares of state forest, which includes five World Heritage areas, and three marine parks. This is an area larger than 60 per cent of the world's countries and includes more than 30,000 kilometres of roads and fire control lines, 2,000 kilometres of walking tracks, 470 camping areas, 340 administrative buildings, 200 day use facilities and 150 work bases. National parks, forests and marine parks play an important part in building strong communities by providing recreational activities and helping build the economy through sustainable ecotourism ventures. That is why I am pleased to announce that this year we will invest \$22.7 million in our National Parks capital works program as this government continues to provide greater access opportunities for all Queensland residents and visitors alike. Unlike those opposite, who wanted to lock up our national parks, we want people to get fit and active and we encourage them to enjoy spectacular landscapes that we are so fortunate to have in this great country. We are committed to ensuring that our state is appropriately managed to ensure Queensland's parks, forests and marine parks are protected and available for the enjoyment by all Queenslanders now and into the future. This year we are providing funding of \$7 million over the next four years to reduce the threat to marine turtle nests from feral pigs as part of the shared funding arrangement with the Commonwealth.

In April Tropical Cyclone Ida hit the Far North Queensland coast, causing significant damage to Cooktown and surrounding areas. Some 165 national parks and other protected areas were closed as a result of the gale force winds and intense rainfall. Queensland's protected area estate sustained damage to natural and built assets including roads, trails, walking tracks and recreational facilities. QPWS staff and all available resources focused recovery efforts on re-opening popular high visitation parks, roads, camping and visitor facilities and clearing and repairing roads, 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 numbers and significant commercial tour operator value, in our effort to support local businesses, communities and the tourist industry on the road to recovery.

Every year our rangers give 110 per cent to ensure that our protected estate is properly managed and accessible for all Queenslanders and visitors alike. They are dedicated men and women who look after our parks every day and put them back together after they are devastated by natural disasters. That is why I am pleased to inform the House that one of our rangers, Mr Fred

Conway, has been honoured for his tireless efforts in protecting Indigenous cultural sites and has been named as one of this year's Queensland Greats. I know Fred very well and he is a top bloke. When you go out to Carnarvon, say g'day to him!

We all know that racing was the plaything of the Labor government. There was no leadership; Labor mates ruled the boards; racing was stuck in the starter's gate. We reviewed Racing Queensland and made the strong choices needed to get racing back on track in this state. The Queensland Racing Commission of Inquiry unsurprisingly found that the industry was plagued with serious mismanagement failures and has recommended that a number of former board members and senior racing executives be investigated by ASIC.

From day one this government has worked hard to re-establish confidence and integrity in an industry that has been brought to its knees under a Labor government effectively asleep at the wheel. The industry provides jobs for 30,000 people and contributes \$855 million annually, bringing communities together and providing tourism opportunities. This financial year the Newman government will continue to implement its plan for a bright future in racing. We will continue to fund major racing industry infrastructure projects across Queensland to meet the industry's requirements through the Queensland government's \$110 million Racing Industry Capital Development Scheme. We are giving new life to the Queensland racing industry through funding for racing infrastructure projects, support for country race meetings and the provision of integrity services to the industry such as scientific research and drug-testing services.

This government has a plan to deliver a bright future for Queensland. This budget continues our investment in grassroots sport and recreation, continues our plan to rejuvenate racing across the state and delivers on our commitment to invest in national parks infrastructure, making these locations more accessible for the enjoyment of all Queenslanders and tourists alike.

I would be remiss not to mention my electorate of Buderim. It is a wonderful place, and I am delighted to see that this place is providing: \$1.035 million for schools in the Buderim electorate under the Great Results Guarantee for the 2014 calendar year; \$0.58 million for Child Safety services, dedicated to protecting children and young people from harm who are most at risk; \$6 million for Disability Services committed to assisting people with disabilities and their families to access the support and services they need; and \$0.79 million for Home Assist Secure, Maroochy Home Assist Secure and Maroochy Home Maintenance and Care Association.

This budget demonstrates the tough choices that this government has had to make to get Queensland back on track. I have to thank the Queensland Treasurer and every member of this House on the LNP side of government for delivering what is a strong budget which will lead Queensland into a bright future and deliver the outcomes that Queenslanders could only dream of under a government on our side of politics. If we ever let those opposite get back into power, they will decimate this state as they have decimated our country, leaving debt and deficit. God help me if Andrew Fraser ever comes back into this parliament!

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (11.54 pm): Over the last few days I have had a chance to look at this budget, and I must say that as far as I can see this is a pretty steady-as-you-go type of budget. I think in a couple of my speeches last year, and maybe during my budget speech, I used the analogy of this state being like a massive ship that was heading—

**Mr Dillaway** interjected.

**Mr HART:** I will take that interjection: like the *Titanic*. When we took over two years ago, it was like the *Titanic* heading to an iceberg. That iceberg was what the Treasurer has described as an aeroplane flying into an abyss, and the Queensland economy was flying into an abyss. Over the last two years we have pulled back on the throttles of the ship and turned the rudder. Everybody knows that it takes quite a while to slow down a massive ship and turn it around, but I think over the last two years everyone in Queensland can see that we have managed to turn that ship around and we are finally heading away from the iceberg that was going to do so much damage. That is why I say that this is a steady-as-you-go type of budget. The throttles are set to 'idle' and we are just cruising away from that iceberg. The next step would be to slam the throttles open and head for where this great state needs to be: the land of milk and honey. We are going to do that in the future, and I look forward to helping the Treasurer push those throttles forward to get this state right back where it needs to be.

In my contribution last year during the appropriations debate, I did comment over and over again about the fact that the Labor Party did not have a plan. For 12 months since the last contribution I have been waiting and listening for that plan, and I have not heard it. I am not sure whether any other members here have heard that plan, but I have not heard it. We even had a cup of

tea while we were patiently waiting, but that plan has not been forthcoming. When I listened to the Leader of the Opposition this morning I thought: here comes the plan! We are going to see the plan! But there was no plan. Of course the appropriate person to get up and give us the plan as to how the Labor Party can get the state going again would be the shadow Treasurer; but again there was no plan. He said that the Labor Party were the only ones that had a policy and a plan to get Queensland back into jobs and he talked about a plan—but there was no plan.

He did say something about something called Building Queensland, I think it was. That is some sort of independent body for infrastructure. 'Independent' for the Labor Party I guess means that it is stacked with the CFMEU, the ETU, the AWU and all those other union entities and maybe a few of the friends of the member for South Brisbane and some of those greenie groups. Just stack them up and they can be completely independent of everybody. And they are completely independent thinkers as well.

I think something that will hang around the neck of the Manager of Opposition Business and shadow Treasurer for quite some time will be the statement that he made that if there is a project that the Labor Party put up that did not stack up, it would not proceed. If the project does not stack up, it will not proceed. They have a massive history of that, don't they? Maybe we should talk about some of these things. The desalination plant is one. The \$1.2 billion desalination plant on the Gold Coast did not stack up, but it did not happen!

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr HART:** The Wyaralong dam, there's another one.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr HART:** There we go, it is all coming out now. The western corridor recycled water plant was \$9 billion worth of stacked up process. Yes, that really worked well for us, didn't it?

**Mr Minnikin** interjected.

**Mr HART:** The Traveston dam might not be a good example, because we know it did not stack up and it was cancelled, but hundreds of millions of dollars were wasted in the process. What about the Solar Bonus Scheme; there is another great idea. Genius!

**Mr Crandon** interjected.

**Mr HART:** We will get to exit 54 later, member for Coomera. Has anybody heard of ZeroGen? That was \$150 million down the gurgler. There is another thing that did not stack up. But did it proceed? Yes, it did until it fell over.

**A government member:** Tell them about the water recycling plant.

**Mr HART:** We have covered the water recycling plant.

**A government member:** Did we?

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Members, if you want to interject, you need to be in your correct seats. The member for Burleigh has the call.

**Mr HART:** What about the dams with no pipes and the pipes with no dams? What about the trains that were too high to go through the tunnels? They did not stack up. Actually, they could have stacked up, couldn't they? When they ran into those tunnels, they could have stacked up quite nicely I think! What about the trains with no seats? There is another wonderful idea! These projects do not stack up but have proceeded anyway. So members can see that the Labor Party has a fantastic history—

**Mr Dillaway:** Track record.

**Mr HART:** A fantastic track record, thank you. That is probably a better word to use. It has a fantastic track record of suggesting projects that really do not stack up but it proceeds anyway because, after all, it is Labor money that it is wasting here. Oh, no; hang on! It is not Labor money; it is the money that belongs to the Queensland public that it is wasting. It is the money that it has gone out and borrowed and the Queensland public has to pay back the interest. This is something that should be added to the mythbusters mystique that the shadow Treasurer keeps fondly mentioning to us.

I turn now briefly to the contribution from the member for Gaven. This is all I will say about that—Clive-onomics. It is Clive-onomics. I do not think I will go any further with that.

This is a great budget. Health spending is up six per cent to \$13.6 million and Education spending is up seven per cent. In my electorate alone there is \$5.69 million worth of Child Safety grants, and we all fully support that, and \$6 million worth of disability service grants. We are going to get an extra 267 police. That is fantastic. That is exactly what we need. Law and order was a major issue in my electorate during the last election campaign and has been for the last couple of years, and more police on the beat will do something about that. I congratulate the police minister and the Treasurer for finding the money to give us an extra 267 police officers. There is \$3 million to operate the police helicopter for another year. That helicopter on the Gold Coast is just an absolute boon for policing. It is doing some fantastic things. It is really assisting our police officers.

Specifically in my electorate there is \$200,000 of a \$1 million refurbishment of the Burleigh fire station. Our fires—it is very close to where I live—are going to be very happy to have new tiles on the ground and a better looking fire station. There will be 10 extra public housing dwellings in my electorate and extra accommodation at Varsity College Junior School. There is also about \$1 million worth of Great Results funding spread over all of the schools in the electorate. I also thank the Minister for Sport and Recreation for the master plan for the Fleays fauna centre in my electorate. We are moving ahead via the Minister for Transport, who is in the chamber, and the Gold Coast Waterways to put in a pontoon so we can link Fleays and the Tallebudgera recreation centre in order to get kids exercising between those two places in canoes and maybe having a walk. These are all great things. Queensland is a great state with great opportunities, but we need to make the strongest and smartest choices, and that is what an LNP government will do.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (12.03 am): With the indulgence of my colleagues I will take a moment to reflect on Queensland Day, 6 June. Some 27 years ago, it was a proud day for me and my wife to be married on this day. It is a very happy day. I am glad I stayed up to share that with you.

Over the last three years I have travelled from one end of my electorate to the other having regular meetings and I have heard loud and clear that people wanted this government to deal with the waste and to stop taxpayers' money being wasted. I always take these many opportunities to remind Queenslanders of the facts that were the state's finances just two short years ago—the unsustainable debt position and debt levels being at unprecedented levels. Most Queenslanders acknowledge the Labor government's \$80 billion worth of debt and certainly understand the ramifications of paying \$4 billion every year in debt interest. I also take the opportunity to challenge anyone to provide one policy solution or one idea from either Labor or the minor parties that does not involve more spending and debt. Labor had no plan to repair the budget when it was in government. Labor has no plan now. It offers no alternatives, just rhetoric and scaremongering.

If any electorate was going to be critical of this budget, I thought it would have been the Burnett electorate. So it is with great pleasure that I can report strong support for this third strong budget under this state LNP government. The community is happy that we are on track to deliver an operating surplus of \$188 million in 2014-15. The community is happy that we will deliver a fiscal surplus in 2015-16, the first time in a decade. A little known fact is that all major projects are now reviewed to prevent the all-too familiar waste and irresponsible spending sprees that existed under the previous Labor government. At the 2012 election we promised to get the budget under control and grow the economy, and that is exactly what we are doing. There is no doubt this budget is the strongest and smartest budget to date and it keeps our promises to get Queensland back on track. Governments, like households and businesses, must live within their means—something that the people in my electorate now understand as a result of the Strong Choices campaign.

This budget commits to the funding and implementation of the Carmody inquiry, dealing with the important and difficult issues of child safety. The Burnett electorate welcomes the budget investment for those in the community needing support with social inclusion and disability services. With my electorate still in the grips of drought, I welcome the investment in drought assistance including fodder and water subsidies, fee and rent relief and community and mental health support programs. With the wonders of the southern Great Barrier Reef being in the Burnett electorate like Lady Elliot and Lady Musgrave islands and the many reefs, I welcome the funding for reef protection of a further \$11 million for 2014-15, bringing total reef protection funding to \$55 million over the next five years.

We continue to deliver on our election promises, and we will. We promised to deliver 1,100 new police officers. This budget sees funding for 267 new police officers as we deliver our promises. The significant and important initiative of the Safe Night Out Strategy needs to receive investment to deal with alcohol and drug related violence in entertainment precincts. My community welcomes this commitment. My region is particularly pleased with the investment in education. Principals and school

communities are now empowered to decide on their funding allocations. We acknowledge that every school is unique and we acknowledge the importance of the Great Results Guarantee. The funding to remove the maintenance backlog now ensures that students and teachers have the facilities they expect and they deserve.

I take great pleasure in talking about the Health budget that will increase by six per cent. We on this side of the House have introduced strong reforms and understand that improvements are not always about spending more money but about results. Since we were elected the number of category 1 patients waiting more than 30 days has been cut by 83 per cent. The number of category 2 patients waiting more than 90 days has been cut by 69 per cent. There has been a 19 per cent reduction in the average time for an ambulance dispatch and the number of long wait dental patients has been reduced by 98.5 per cent. Locally, I congratulate all of the health service delivery professionals and the local health boards. I make special note of the work done by staff in the Agnes Water-Discovery Coast primary health care services. We welcome the announcement that we have been successful in receiving funding for a new ambulance station in Miriam Vale. Thanks Terence Shelly and staff and the community for supporting the call for this legacy project to be delivered.

This budget delivers on every one of my commitments to the people of Burnett. This LNP government understands that well planned infrastructure delivered in a timely manner is vital for our economy and facilitates service delivery to regional Queensland and provides long-term employment and opportunities for training and development. Jobs are sorely needed in the Burnett. Unemployment is our single biggest issue. I welcome the continued strong record in growing the state's four-pillar economy, particularly over the last two years. In construction the government has simplified planning processes and reformed assistance for homebuyers, and dwelling approvals are up by 35 per cent. The resources sector has seen significant reforms to drive investment. Tourism is booming. Locally we have had tremendous results with visitor expenditure. The support for our local tourism enterprises has intensified with access to national parks, ecotourism expansion, money in this budget for the Mon Repos Visitor Centre revitalisation and more funding for the important tourism events. Regional tourism organisations can continue to support the regional communities that rely heavily on tourism.

We welcome the many reforms in agriculture. Vegetation management in particular has given farmers more control over land management that boosts production. On-farm productivity and riparian recovery on affected farms as a result of ex-Tropical Cyclone Oswald are funded in the budget. Employment gives people the ability to pay their own way and provide for their families. The people of this great state should be able to depend on their elected representatives, but this does not mean that we should be building a nation of dependence.

The significant work that has been achieved already in my electorate on road infrastructure continues, with major investments to ensure that we have the roads that we all need. After years of neglect my constituents are happy that this government is finally showing respect to regional Queensland. Another project that was never going to be delivered under the previous government is the major boat ramp at Fairymead. This project was promised for years. I take every opportunity to advocate on behalf of the people of the Burnett electorate. Support for this budget and the benefits it will deliver for the region will be no different. I support the progress of the bills through the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.09 am): I rise to provide a brief response to the budget on behalf of the people of Southport. I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Treasurer on his hard work in preparing what is an outstanding budget. He has taken us on an incredible journey over the past two years and two months since coming to government. I can only begin to imagine some of the challenges that he has had in working with his colleagues in cabinet to deliver the outcomes and this positive future for Queensland.

I also especially want to congratulate and thank the Minister for Health, because I know that the people of the Southport electorate and the people of the Gold Coast are incredibly appreciative of the major reforms that have come to their health system and the significant reductions in waiting lists and waiting times. I will go into more detail in just a moment. Congratulations should also go to the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services because of the extra police that we have seen put into the Southport electorate—the special operations task force that has been installed on the Gold Coast to deal with criminal gangs and the other challenges that we face on the Gold Coast. There is also the implementation and the ongoing commitment to a dedicated police chopper for the Gold Coast, which I know has also been very welcome.

In addition, it would be remiss not to acknowledge the great work of the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services in working with the Treasurer to bring forward a whole suite of changes to our child protection system and that extra \$400-odd million that has been committed this year and in the forward years to support the major reforms out of the Carmody inquiry.

I know that this sounds like a mutual admiration evening, but I want to acknowledge the work that the Minister for Education has done. I particularly want to acknowledge the incredible work that has been done with Southport State High School, our first independent public school, and the hard work of principal Steve McLuckie and his team in taking that school from a school that was struggling, a school that was quite dilapidated and run-down looking, with enrolments down to as low as 700. This year is the school's largest ever enrolment year, with some 1,800 students. Southport State High School is without a doubt one of the most outstanding public high schools in our state. So I want to acknowledge Minister Langbroek for his ongoing support as the member for the electorate of Surfers Paradise, which adjoins my electorate, and for the work that he has done in reforming our education system and the many other reforms that I will go into in a little more detail in just a moment.

The Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games has done a great job in revitalising one of the most important pillars of our economy, our tourism industry. Today, I read in one of the latest reports that there were an extra 57,000 international visitors to the Gold Coast, taking that total up to record numbers that we have never seen before. We have come off just an absolute bumper season for the Gold Coast. In terms of tourism and in terms of the minister's achievements, it is absolutely everything that the Gold Coast has needed to bring it out of what has been a really difficult couple of years.

I hope that I do not upset my colleagues this evening, but I doubt that there is another electorate in Queensland that has so much to be pleased about—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr MOLHOEK:** I knew that I was going to get those interjections. Aside from the funding that has been committed for the Commonwealth Games village and the jobs that that will create, there is also the money that has gone into the new aquatic centre at Southport, which we will see opening within a matter of months. There is further funding for other Commonwealth Games facilities in my electorate, with an upgrade of the Gold Coast Hockey Centre at Labrador. On top of all of that, we are seeing record spending going into the Gold Coast health district. Of course, the Gold Coast University Hospital is located right in the middle of my electorate. I am just so pleased to see that we have added almost another \$100 million of spending into health services in support of that hospital and also a further \$57 million for additional equipment, fit-out and completion of that hospital. How amazing has that hospital been for the Gold Coast!

In addition, there is also some \$50-odd million that has been committed for the widening of Smith Street and, more importantly, a brand-new interchange between Smith Street and Olsen Avenue just to the west of Griffith University, which is going to significantly free up traffic flows in the area, support access into the hospital and the university and also provide better access through Smith Street into Southport which, as I am sure members are all sick of me talking about, has recently been declared a priority development area. We are seeing just some fantastic things happening in Southport.

The other day the local councillor for my electorate told me that just in the last few months there have been 17 approvals for buildings in excess of eight storeys, including two 70-storey buildings and a 30-storey tower. She even told me just two days ago that an application is about to be lodged for another significant tower on the site at Ferry Road and Meron Street in Southport just adjacent to the old hospital site.

I am also particularly pleased that the Southport electorate will receive a further \$4.4 million in funding for the renovation of the Gold Coast campus of TAFE in the main street of Southport. I am pleased to note that \$9 million has been allocated for child safety services in the area, a further \$19 million for local disability service providers, many of whom are based in the main CBD area of Southport, and a further \$4 million for local community service providers.

On top of that there is a budget commitment towards the demolition of the old hospital site, clearing the way for some really exciting development opportunities as we continue to see Southport and the CBD regenerate and new buildings and new opportunities coming to provide jobs and opportunities for people on the Gold Coast.

I note also that the Gold Coast Turf Club will benefit from \$11 million for some redevelopment and the relocation of the Gold Coast show, which is pleasing. Also, some money has been allocated for planning the duplication of the Gold Coast line from Coomera to Helensvale. Although that line is just outside my electorate, many people from Crestwood, Arundel and Parkwood rely on that rail service to commute for jobs in the north of the city and to Brisbane. I know that they will be particularly excited to hear about our government's future plans for the duplication of that service from Coomera to Helensvale. I understand that some \$160 million to \$170 million has been allocated in future estimates for the provision and expansion of those services.

This budget continues to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future. I am particularly proud to stand in this House tonight as a member of the Newman government that is driving real change for Queenslanders. It is bringing about real change on the Gold Coast particularly, because this budget carefully balances increases in education, health and community services spending while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. That is important.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the Premier and the Treasurer for their leadership in working through the challenge in respect of the gap in concessions funding that was passed on to us as a result of cuts by the federal government. I know just from feedback to my office today that a lot of pensioners and concession cardholders out there are particularly pleased about that news.

I have to take a moment to brag about our government's achievements. It is incredibly pleasing to see that robberies are down 18 per cent on the Gold Coast as a result of our tough stance on law and order. Break and enters are down 30 per cent as a result of more police and the new legislation that was introduced by this government. Assaults are down 15 per cent. Theft is down 12 per cent. Just in the last few months we have seen an extra 19 police added to the Southport Police Station. That is all part of our government's commitment to making Queensland the safest place to raise a family. It is particularly exciting to see the statistics in regard to the Gold Coast health district.

We have seen 75 per cent of all emergency department visits seen in under four hours, which is a significant improvement, up from 60 per cent. We are now enjoying the best elective surgery wait times in Australia, down to 27 days, and long wait surgery wait times are down from 185 days to 51 days. Again I have to congratulate the health minister on the great outcomes that we saw with the recent negotiation of SMO contracts. It was particularly pleasing to receive an email from the head of the emergency department at the Gold Coast Hospital, not only congratulating us on the compromises we made and the final outcome, but also advising that all of his colleagues had, in fact, signed their contracts and they were really looking forward to inviting me down for a tour and to actually get to know them a little better. They are just so pleased with the reforms that have come.

I could go on because there are just so many great things happening in Southport: the money that has been allocated for school maintenance, another \$1.13 million, for Arundel, Musgrave, Southport State High School, Southport State Primary School and also Southport Special School. I know that the principals and the P&Cs of those schools are absolutely delighted with the level of that support. I particularly want to thank the Minister for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing for the incredible contribution through the Get Started initiative. Some \$76,000 worth of vouchers have been allocated to individuals throughout my electorate over the last 12 months. As that program continues it is particularly exciting to think that there are many children now that can participate in sport as a result of our government's commitment to getting kids involved in local sport. This is a government that will continue to take action to reduce red tape and initiate reforms. We are committed to supporting our communities with better front-line services and it is with great pleasure that I support this bill.

 **Mr DOWLING** (Redlands—LNP) (12.21 am): This morning I rise in support of the budget bills before the House. I begin my contribution by commending the Treasurer and his team on the good work they have been doing to get Queensland back on track. This is a strong plan for a bright future. It is a blueprint for the future of Queensland. It is worth reflecting on how we got to this point. We had a plan. We went to the people of Queensland with that plan in 2012 and we mapped it out. We made a commitment to Queenslanders. It was a five-point pledge. Point 1 was a commitment to lowering the cost of living. We have delivered on that with the freeze of car registration for the full term, reducing transport costs, reduction of red tape and removing the waste tax. All of those assisted in lowering the cost of living. Point 2 was to deliver better infrastructure and planning. We have done that through the PDA process. I am privileged to have a PDA at Weinam Creek in my electorate. Then there is the resilience strategy about flood proofing our infrastructure, not putting the same road back in the flood plain to have it wash away the next time there is a downpour.

**Mr Johnson** interjected.

**Mr DOWLING:** Road and rail. I take the interjection from the member for Gregory. The third point was to revitalise front-line services. There are 267 extra police on the beat. Our commitment to the people of Queensland was to have 1,100 new police in four years and we are well on track to achieve that number. That is being borne out through crime rates being much reduced. I have some statistics for my area. Some areas are down by as much 25 per cent in relation to unlawful entry. Unlawful use of a motor car is down 25 per cent. Fraud is down 29 per cent. This is all about making Queensland the best and safest place to live. Hospital wait lists are almost a thing of the past. Under Labor all we had was ramping. It is all but gone. In relation to education we made a commitment to Great Results. We delivered a school maintenance program to deal with the backlog of our schools that were falling to bits. I think there is a fair sort of a tick for that one. Pledge No. 4 was to restore accountability in government. No longer can you lie in parliament. It is now an offence. That gets a tick. Pledge No. 5 was to deliver on a four-pillar economy: agriculture, construction, mining and resources and tourism. I think it is fair to say we are delivering on all those fronts.

I heard members opposite talking about pillars. I think they were thinking about the relax mode and it was pillows, not pillars. We were building an economy, they were laying down relaxing with their pillows. By contrast, Labor left a legacy of debt after a boom. There was mismanagement of our great state. Queenslanders will not forget the desalination plant at Tugun. They will not forget about Traveston. They will not forget about ramping. They will not forget about the Health payroll debacle. They will not forget about the Tahitian prince. They will not forget about train carriages without seats. And they will not forget about the \$80 billion worth of debt that Labor left us.

Compare that to our strong plan for a brighter future. We have a strong plan for all of Queensland. The budget for Education is up \$11.8 billion—up by 7 per cent; \$24.4 million of it to continue to deliver on the Australian government's Trade Training Centres in Schools Program. In my electorate of Redlands there is a \$1.25 million program to get through the backlog of maintenance. All of my schools are getting a lick of paint. They are getting some makeovers in the classrooms, landscaping, footpaths, you name it, and they are all stoked about it. There will be \$890,000 for Great Results distributed across all my schools. There will be \$550,000 for Victoria Point State High School to accommodate the year 7s. In relation to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, \$15 million will be allocated to increase habitat through acquisition. I am hoping that some of that money will be invested in my electorate of Redlands to help sustain the koala population. The Health budget is \$13.6 billion, up by six per cent. Locally I will enjoy the investment of \$1.8 million for the upgrade of the Russell Island Ambulance Station and new accommodation. In the area of national parks, recreation, sport and racing, \$15.2 million towards Get in the Game to Get Playing. That is straight to a healthy young community. There will be a \$10 million sport and infrastructure development program through Sport and Recreation. In relation to the police in my electorate, I will enjoy seeing the new pontoon down at Redland Bay at Weinam Creek for the Water Police at a cost of \$300,000. The 267 new police on the beat this year is making Queensland the safest and most prosperous state to live in. In the area of Transport and Main Roads there is more gold: \$5.4 billion. What a great news story.

I would like to thank the minister, Scott Emerson, and his assistant minister, Steve Minnikin. Compare and contrast that to what those opposite delivered. Those opposite could not roll out TransLink to the Southern Moreton Bay islands. We did. It gets better. Instead of 15 per cent fare increases year on year we were able to halve that to 7.5 per cent for the last two years. It gets better. This budget reduces that even further to 2.5 per cent—an amazing delivery for Queenslanders. It gets better still: 75 new six-car trains. But guess what? They will have seats. They will fit through the tunnels. Locally in my electorate there will be \$3.3 million to build a new jetty at Victoria Point and \$3.5 million for a new bus station again at Victoria Point on the main road. But there is more: just under \$3 million of roadworks along Mount Cotton Road at notorious hot spots at the intersections of Woodland Drive, Double Jump Road and the entrance to Sirromet. It gets better: \$38 million to widen Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road which will help relieve congestion for my constituents who live in Redlands and work in Brisbane.

**Mr Davies:** And mine!

**Mr DOWLING:** And the member for Capalaba's constituents. I take the interjection. When one compares and contrasts that the choice is clear. The LNP has a strong plan, Labor has no plan. A brighter future or a debt-ridden mismanagement future under Labor. A government that listens by reinstating the pension concessions ripped out by the federal government in its budget, or Labor insisting and clinging onto a carbon tax which drives up electricity bills for everyone. Let us compare and contrast that with our strong plan for a bright future.

I have heard plenty about the sale of assets. Unlike those opposite, we are upfront with people. We have a plan. We will go to the people of Queensland and they will know the vision for the future. They will know the plan that we have and they will decide whether they want the LNP's brighter future and stronger choices or whether they want the no-plan version. I am really pleased to be part of a government that delivers. In Queensland, 60,000 jobs have been created, which is more than double our next nearest state competitor. If you want to prosper, live and work in Queensland; live, work and enjoy the prosperity that an LNP government delivers.

 **Mr STEWART** (Sunnybank—LNP) (12.30 am): Along with the member for Burnett, I would like to wish everyone a happy Queensland Day. I also take this opportunity to recognise my wife, as I too was married on this day five years ago. Not only do we share a love for all products from the Burnett and Bundaberg regions, but also we were married on a similar day, which is great. Today I rise to briefly contribute to the discussion on the state budget 2014-15. This budget is a testament to our commitment to stimulate economic growth in Queensland, to continue to rebuild Queensland after a series of natural disasters and to deliver on our pre-election commitments to the people of Queensland.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Member for Sunnybank, please hang on. Member for Coomera, I ask you to please take your seat or go outside. Thank you, sir.

**Mr STEWART:** This budget is a strong plan for a brighter future for Queenslanders and it will go a long way to getting Queensland back on track. This budget will enable us to strive towards a stronger economic position and the restoration of our AAA credit rating. Best of all, we will do this without introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. This is a big win for the residents in my electorate of Sunnybank and, indeed, for all Queenslanders.

I am very pleased that Sunnybank will benefit from a number of initiatives outlined in this year's budget. First and foremost, this budget will deliver \$7.7 million for the Warrigal Road Greenlink project. Since last year, I have been campaigning hard in the local electorate to draw attention to the need for improvements to the Logan Road, Miles Platting Road and Padstow Road intersection. With nearly 50,000 cars travelling through the intersection each day, as well as numerous buses and heavy vehicles, the existing infrastructure is simply inadequate to deal with the volume of traffic. The budget allocation will provide for the extension of Warrigal Road, allowing buses to connect with Logan Road and the South East Busway without using the problem intersection. Not only will this improve bus efficiency along Warrigal Road by five minutes, but also it will go a long way to easing traffic congestion at the intersection. I know that this announcement will come as welcome news to Mr Graham Shardlow, Mr Lionel Kellett, Mr Bill Whittaker, Mr Kevin Key, Mr Colin Sheppard, Mr Wayne Wakeham and Mr Gregory Turner, who have been most vocal in support of this initiative. Wayne Wakeham has lived in the Eight Mile Plains area for 26 years and has a strong appreciation of the traffic conditions negatively impacting on the residents in Eight Mile Plains. In the past he has taken on an active advocacy role to have this issue and others addressed. I am sure he will consider this project to be a big win for our local community.

Also in the transport portfolio, this budget allocates \$2 million for upgrading and constructing bus stations on Mains Road in the heart of Sunnybank. There is no doubt that my electorate is a transport hub. It is in close proximity to Griffith University and has a direct bus route to the University of Queensland and QUT, which has made our local area a popular spot for domestic and international students alike. While Sunnybank is well served by a number of high-frequency bus routes, the upgrades to bus shelters will be great for the many commuters who travel along Mains Road on a daily basis.

Another beneficiary of the 2014-15 budget will be the 13 mainstream state schools in my local area. Those schools will share in \$3.6 million to deliver on the Great Results Guarantee in the next financial year. That is a wonderful initiative designed to raise literacy and numeracy outcomes for our children. The program recognises that it is the principals and the teachers who are in the best position to make important decisions regarding the management of their school and it ensures that money is invested where it is needed most. Mr Mike Ennis, the principal of MacGregor State School, and Mr Waikay Lau and Ms Leanne Hill of the MacGregor State School P&C are delighted that this budget allocates \$856,000 to their school. I understand that this money will be used to rectify stormwater drainage issues, as well as to commence the upgrade of classroom facilities and other refurbishment works. The upgrade to the learning areas is much needed. As one of the largest state schools in Queensland and as a school that will be maintaining its enrolment numbers even after the transition from year 7 to high school, it is important that the school has the facilities to match its commitment to excellence in academic, cultural and sporting pursuits.

Further, results returned from each of the local surveys that I have conducted since being elected to represent the community of Sunnybank have consistently shown crime and community safety to be the No. 1 issue of most concern to residents. That is why it is terrific news that \$35 million will be given to a police helicopter to be based at Archerfield Airport in the Sunnybank electorate. This visible increased police presence in the local area will be well received by the community, and I am sure that it will also allow for improved police responsiveness and mobility in the south-east corner of our great state. I understand that this is part of our commitment to providing \$18 million over four years to establish a permanent police helicopter wing in South-East Queensland.

Electricity prices have consistently been a vexed issue for this government and we have done what we can to put downward pressure on electricity prices by scrapping Labor's wasteful and inadequate solar rebate scheme and we have consistently championed the removal of the federal carbon tax. Another way that we can put downward pressure on the cost of electricity is to improve network efficiency. That is one of the reasons I am extremely pleased that this budget will provide \$9.6 million for Energex to upgrade the Archerfield substation in my electorate. This will improve network reliability, capacity and performance. It follows the announcement in March of this year that the substation on Ashover Road, Rocklea will also be upgraded. This is part of a \$2.7 billion project across Queensland to improve and maintain our electricity networks.

Finally, I will touch briefly on the federal government's decision to end the national partnership agreement which cut \$54.2 million from pensioner concessions for 2014-15. Since this surprising announcement, I have been contacted by a number of distressed residents in my electorate, including Mr Bob Boniface, Mr Lawrence Walsh, Mr John Drew, Ms Ailsa Everson, Ms Robyn Frizzell, Mr Terry Limpus, Mrs Dell Mallcott, Mrs Sonia Cardell, Mr Michael Ingall and many more. In each case, I have heard a similar story. Each of those residents has worked hard over a number of years, paying their taxes and saving for their retirement in order to enjoy their future and utilise a number of government concessions upon leaving the workforce. It is disappointing that the federal government made this decision. As the Treasurer has shown through the Strong Choices campaign, there are other cost-saving choices available to the government, apart from reducing services. Nevertheless, we have shown again and again that we are a government that listens to Queenslanders and a government that acts quickly and decisively when there is a problem. That is why it will come as welcome news to pensioners and older Queenslanders that we have acted, within the space of two days, to reinstate the full level of pensioner and senior concessions. We are not a government that simply passes the buck. Certainly it should not be pensioners who bear the brunt of the federal government's decision to terminate the national partnership agreement.

**A government member** interjected.

**Mr STEWART:** They certainly do. The Treasurer and this government should be commended for the 2014-15 budget. It has provided increases in the key portfolios of Health and education, without raising or introducing any new taxes or reducing services. This budget will continue to deliver on our commitments to the people of Queensland. The residents in Sunnybank will be some of the many beneficiaries. There is little doubt that under this government's financial management the Queensland economy remains strong and continues to grow. This budget is a framework for a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. I support the bills.

 **Mr CHOAT** (Ipswich West—LNP) (12.39 am): I rise to make a contribution in the debate on appropriation bills 2014 and ultimately the Newman government's third budget. I am pleased to be able to outline the measures from within the budget which are going to make a significant difference to my people in Ipswich West in terms of their wellbeing and lifestyle. Two years ago the government embarked on a mission of fiscal repair after the state was left in a really dreadful financial position by the Beattie and Bligh governments which sent the state bust in a boom, wasting billions of dollars of taxpayers' money on dud programs and projects. Indeed, I have heard members of the opposition talking about all of this so-called Labor money. This is the fundamental problem. It is taxpayers' money, not the property of any political party. It is the Queensland people's money and it should be managed with due care.

I despise negativity; however, there is one matter I wish to discuss. This week the federal Labor member for Blair is claiming the state government is preventing the final upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway from being delivered. Let me put it on the record that the Labor member for Blair, Mr Shayne Neumann, promised, along with Kevin Rudd, back in 2007 that if he were elected he would build the full—I repeat, the full—upgrade of the Ipswich Motorway. That is a documented fact and he either lied or failed to stand up to Rudd, Gillard and Swan, who did not honour their promise. So Mr Neumann can take a running jump and explain why he failed to live up to his empty promises and why it took him two years to hand over the money for the Blacksoil interchange.

The member for South Brisbane and the Labor councillor for Somerset, Jim Madden, also have some explaining to do when on 30 January 2013 they were caught out by the *Queensland Times* lying about the Blacksoil interchange and its funding, which has been fully funded by this LNP government. Indeed, it is yet another example of the tricks and untruths these people try to push. On a positive note, I am proud to have secured the naming of the overpass in honour of the late great Mr Tommy Fountain.

Indeed there is much to be pleased about in terms of the infrastructure this budget will deliver my people. The Blacksoil interchange will be completed on time and on budget. There will be an upgrade of the Warrego Highway at Haigslea where there has been numerous serious accidents dating back many years. Likewise, we will see additional overtaking lanes and upgrades along the Brisbane Valley Highway which serves the Somerset region and the growing town of Fernvale.

The longstanding issues at North Ipswich at the Pine and Delacy streets intersection will have its temporary solution finalised. I am proud to say that this initiative stopped over 20 years of constant accidents and put to an end never-ending excuses and arguments over fixing the problem.

Law and order gets a boost with the Ipswich safe night out precinct being established. This will address the problems of alcohol fuelled violence in the city centre. Indeed, law and order is truly an area for improvement with the benefits of past LNP budgets delivering significant reductions in crime levels in my local police district. Two examples are that robbery is down by 33 per cent and unlawful entries are down 20 per cent. This is amazing and I give full credit to every police officer in the district. The resources of LNP budget allocations have assisted. I am really looking forward to the new police helicopter which will be made available in our region to fight crime and catch criminals.

It has been pleasing to see my schools benefit from the government's backlog maintenance programs. This year we will see additional Great Results Guarantee funds really make a difference at my local schools. In fact we will see funding for education increased by seven per cent this year.

In Health we see record funding for our hospitals increased by six per cent, taking it to record levels. I am so proud of our great clinicians and staff in the West Moreton health and ambulance services as they have delivered the most outstanding results in the state. I look forward to seeing them deliver even better results with increased resources this year.

It gave me great pleasure to see the Premier and Treasurer stand up in this place yesterday to ensure our pensioners retain their concessions which will ensure affordability of electricity, water, rates and other services. Like many Queenslanders, I was disappointed at the cuts made to the national partnerships concessions by the federal government. I understand their situation as indeed the debt and financial mess left by federal Labor after just six years was even worse than we inherited in Queensland. I believe more consideration could have seen the federal government continue to provide these concessions.

Instead, and quite rightly, this government will extend its 10 per cent increases to make up for the federal cuts and deliver a continuation of the much-needed concessions. I know there are many relieved pensioners in my community. These are the people who need and deserve our support. I am so glad the government has shown it will listen and do what it can to support the community.

There are many other budget initiatives which will benefit my community in the areas of local government, disaster management, disability care and child safety, just to name a few. I represent a grateful community and look forward to even more initiatives as the year continues. On behalf of my community, I thank the Treasurer, the Premier and the cabinet for this budget which represents a strong plan for a brighter future in Ipswich West.

Debate, on motion of Mr Choat, adjourned.

## PRIVILEGE

### Correction of the Record

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (12.46 am): I rise on a matter of privilege suddenly arising. This morning during my budget reply speech I made comments about the Cross River Rail project. I have reviewed the parliamentary broadcast and note that in describing the project I used the term 'fully costed' as well as 'full funded'. I wish to clarify to the House that my intended meaning was that the project was fully costed. If this has misled the House, I advise that this was done inadvertently and unintentionally and for that I apologise.

## SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (12.47 am): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Friday, 6 June 2014.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

## ADJOURNMENT

**Mr STEVENS** (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (12.47 am): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

### Highfields State School, Anzac Ceremony

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (12.47 am): I would very much like to bring to the attention of the House the highlight of a really great day I had at one of my state schools—Highfields State School. It was an Anzac Day ceremony—

**Dr Douglas** interjected.

**Mr WATTS:** Thank you, member for Gaven.

**Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Mr Ruthenberg): Order! Member for Gaven, that is right in front of the speaker. I know it is late. Member for Toowoomba North, you have the call.

**Mr WATTS:** Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. There was a presentation made by Mr Al Taylor, who is the secretary of the RSL branch, at the Highfields subbranch. He spoke to the children about different things to do with Anzac ceremonies. It was also attended by Carla Clutterbuck, who is the Defence school transition aide. She was trying to support the families as some of the children have their dads and their mums away. She does a great job in the school trying to make sure the Defence Force families are looked after.

Close to the school is Borneo Barracks, the barracks that have served the community and Australia very well historically. Al spoke about bullying, leadership, mateship and cooperation—things that were all displayed by the Anzacs. I had the privilege of being presented with what they call a little Anzac moment, which is a packet of biscuits and a tea bag. This is an initiative by the Highfields subbranch. Brooklyn Ruddy, the year 7 captain, presented me with that. The idea is that you take it home, you sit down with your family, you make a cup of tea and you get your Anzac biscuits out and share them with the family and talk about Anzac and what it means to your family and how different your family would be if it had not been for the Anzacs. It was a great day to see the children interested in Anzac and to hear the different stories. I would like to thank the year 6 teachers—Mrs White, Mrs Carswell, Mrs King, Miss Butler, Miss Scott and Mr Mathewson—and the year 7 teachers—Peter Thornton, who taught my kids how to play chess very well, Mrs Keating and Mrs Cooper.

Highfields is a great school. They hold firm to the traditions of Anzac. Every year the children march. It was great to be there that day and hear from the children how excited they are to be taking their trip to Canberra and the study they have done both on the state parliament and the federal parliament and how interested they are in government. While the children were all very respectful towards the Anzacs, I would encourage people next year to have an Anzac moment: sit down and have a cup of tea and discuss what the Anzacs might mean to them and their families.

*(Time expired)*

### Junction Park State School; Vinnies CEO Sleepout

 **Ms TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (12.50 am): Last Friday I participated in Pyjama Day at the Junction Park State School. Pyjama Day was organised on School Chaplaincy Day by Mr Grant from Junction Park State School. It was a great expression of generosity and support by the school for those families in our local community who are doing it tough. The pyjamas were collected—some were second hand, some were new—from Junction Park State School families and they were given to Micah Projects, which is an excellent service in my electorate of South Brisbane that looks after people who find themselves doing it tough, people who might find themselves homeless, people who are suffering from social isolation.

I am pleased to say that there was a very, very tall box filled to overflowing. The school was incredibly generous in its donations to Micah Projects. In fact, Mr Grant suggested that perhaps they should empty half the box because some of the children had forgotten to tell their parents that it was Pyjama Day on Friday and they wanted to come back with pyjamas this week. I commend the school on their efforts and their generosity. I know that this winter there will be many local families who will be a little warmer at night because of the very big heart that Junction Park State School has.

I also take this opportunity to reflect on the fact that in less than two weeks the Vinnies CEO Sleepout will be conducted at South Bank, which is also in my electorate. This is a fantastic annual event that raises millions of dollars every year for St Vinnies right across Australia. This will be the third time I have participated in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout. It is a very humbling experience and one that I am very conscious is not the lived experience of those people who find themselves homeless. We are very well looked after with thick sheets of cardboard and we can bring our own sleeping bags, and we do have catering on site. But it is something that many people find themselves confronting at some stage in their lives, and it is on the rise. In a couple of weeks time if you know people who are participating in the Vinnies CEO Sleepout, I would advise that you give generously and help them support St Vinnies do the very good work they do supporting those who find themselves homeless.

### Rural Fire Service Day

 **Mr MALONE** (Mirani—LNP) (12.53 am): This Saturday, 7 June, will be the second annual Rural Fire Service Day. What a great group of people they are—those rural firefighters right across Queensland, volunteers all, working hand to hand to make our communities safer. They work hand in hand with all the other volunteers we have in our communities—the VMR, the SES, the coastguard and surf-lifesavers—to make our communities safe. When the chips are down, they turn out in their uniforms—the orange, the yellow and the surf-lifesavers. When things get really tough, as they did with the floods in Bundaberg, they throw their gear into a truck and they leave their families for a week or more.

These emergency service volunteers across Queensland do a marvellous job for our communities. Very shortly in my role as Assistant Minister for Emergency Volunteers, we will be announcing a major change in terms of volunteer management in Queensland. The volunteers will have a dedicated deputy commissioner. We are hopeful that will be announced very shortly. As we work through the 91 recommendations of the Malone review, our volunteers will be working more closely together. They will be working and training together. They will work together in their community groups so that when there is a disaster those volunteers know the personalities, they know each other and they know what they are capable of. At the end of the day, they will make our communities far more safe when things go wrong.

I would like to make a very special plug for those people in our community who without pay do all the hard yards and quite often have to raise money to do certain things for their brigades and their organisations. They never complain—well sometimes they complain a bit, but mostly it is a labour of love. I am very proud to be the Assistant Minister for Emergency Volunteers. Thank God we have got them.

### Palmer United Party

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (12.56 am): Yesterday the Premier made a significant public statement and has made offensive and exaggerated complaints against me and my colleague the member for Yeerongpilly in a vain attempt to drag us both into his vague legal battles. His claims are baseless and wrong. He, amongst other people, knows I set and maintain high personal standards and utterly reject his government funded response. I wish to table some documents. The first two are transcripts of a public discussion by Alan Jones on 2GB and the loss of belief in the public integrity of the political system.

*Tabled paper:* Transcripts of 2GB Breakfast program, dated 5 May 2014, at 7.14 am and 7.25 am, between Alan Jones and Dr Alex Douglas MP [\[5344\]](#).

Read it and enlighten yourselves. The second document I wish to table involves two major documents including the response to the scurrilous nonsense being perpetuated by a failed LNP government and some of the media regarding matters related to Clive Palmer, the member for Fairfax, and significant court cases involving Mr Palmer in Western Australia. This is the result of the

arbitration matter between Mineralogy, International Minerals, CITIC and the state of Western Australia. The document speaks for itself. Clive Palmer was 100 per cent successful in his claim. The finding, which is a damning indictment on CITIC and the Western Australian government, is within this document. I table it today.

*Tabled paper:* Arbitration matter under the Commercial Arbitration Act 1985, dated 20 May 2014, between Mineralogy Pty Ltd and International Minerals Pty Ltd and The State of Western Australia [[5345](#)].

These matters are very significant. They are issues that are raised in public almost daily by a variety of people. It has come to the point where literally all sorts of statements are being made, and they are largely untrue and they persist and they are using all sorts of claims. This needs to stop. These documents speak for themselves. They are tabled in parliament here tonight. You people need to read them.

### Hicks, Sergeant R

 **Mr SHUTTLEWORTH** (Ferny Grove—LNP) (12.59 am): I rise in the House to talk about a fantastic contribution to the electorate of Ferny Grove and the wider community of Queensland. Last Friday, 30 May, Sergeant Russell Hicks, a police sergeant of the Ferny Grove Police Station, retired after 41 years of service. He joined the service on 5 March 1973. On Friday we were joined by the Premier and a number of distinguished people, primarily the sergeant of the Ferny Grove Police Station, Senior Sergeant Matt Ryan, and Acting Commissioner Brett Pointing. About 60 other officers were there and they enabled us to have a fantastic morning tea to celebrate the great service that Sergeant Russell Hicks has contributed to our local communities and to the state of Queensland.

Sergeant Russell Hicks has been awarded a number of distinguished awards over the course of his service. He has received the first and second-class of the National Police Service Medal. He has received the QPS Medal in the 25, 30 and 40-year class. In 2010, he received flood and cyclone citations. Last year he received the Queensland Police Service 150-year citation for service. Over the course of his 41 years in the Police Service Sergeant Hicks' postings have been to Cairns, Innisfail, Dalby, central in Brisbane, Alderley and the last 13 years of his career has been spent at Ferny Grove Police Station. Obviously, Sergeant Hicks' distinguished service has been fantastic and our community values that highly. We look to Sergeant Hicks and other police officers in the Ferny Grove Police Station and across our great state in order to deliver great outcomes to the state of Queensland.

In paying homage to Sergeant Russell Hicks, I would also like to thank the Police Service for their great contribution to the state of Queensland over the past few months, where we have been clamping down on crime across the state, where we have managed to have a great number of arrests undertaken—a 21 per cent reduction in robberies, a 23 per cent reduction in unlawful entry. Our Police Service is making a fantastic contribution to Queensland. We thank them very much for their service and all the volunteers. A total of 267 new police have been committed in this year's budget, which is part of the 1,100 that were committed during the election campaign.

*(Time expired)*

### Sale of Public Assets

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (1.02 am): Asset sales has firmly established itself as the main topic for discussion in parliament in the context of the current budget. The government has aggressively pursued this agenda since being elected to office, with the ground being made fertile from day one in office by it creating strong arguments relating to the treatment of debt. At the outset, I acknowledge the existence of the debt, but I object strongly to the one-dimensional approach in which it is being addressed.

This argument all stems back to the ideological cancer that is economic rationalism, which has firmly entrenched itself in political parties, our universities, our schools and our Treasury. I remember being a member of the Mount Isa City Council when we had Queensland Treasury espousing the virtues of asset sales some four to five years ago. I still disagree just as strongly today as I did then with many of the arguments driving economic rationalism and I would like to address one of those, with a particular focus on the Great Northern Railway from Townsville to Mount Isa.

About three years ago MITEZ—or the Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Zone—undertook a study of this area, which represents an area with a gross regional product of approximately \$14 billion. The cheapest transport route from Mount Isa to Townsville is via rail by a factor of about

300 per cent. The rail in that area makes us very competitive. Mines that do not get access to the rail line are paying three times as much if they have to take more on the roads. So it is a big factor if we do not have our rail acting as efficiently as it should.

In 1997 the Queensland government was part of an accord that committed to getting commercial rail on axle loads of up to 21 tonnes, travelling at an average of 80 kilometres an hour. The trains used to travel up to 80 kilometres an hour—used to. Now, they are travelling at 40 kilometres an hour. My discussions with train drivers of 30 years and more experience confirmed this. Many people involved in the rail say that the trains are going slower now because the track is not maintained. We do not have the fitters employed and there is no investment in the tracks. So the track warps. It is not maintained. There are 'slow down' signs all along the rail lines now. So we have fewer trains travelling along that line, putting more trucks on the roads. So our mines are less competitive. Now, we have 'slow down' signs on the road because they cannot keep up with the maintenance of the roads.

If the government cannot find the money to invest in this infrastructure, the solution is private industry, which only accepts hurdle rates of 10 per cent to 20 per cent return on their capital. The government should accept a hurdle rate of zero per cent on these assets, because they could facilitate so much industry development. There is so much revenue coming out of these mines. They could reduce their transport costs by a factor of three. So selling the asset is just a terrible result and denies Queenslanders the opportunity to facilitate development in that area in perpetuity.

There are huge opportunities with that rail line to make our mines more competitive in that area. I can absolutely guarantee that there is not going to be magical investment in this rail line by private industry. That seems to be the answer and it is a poor answer.

*(Time expired)*

### Nanango Electorate

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (1.05 am): It gives me great pleasure to stand to speak in the House tonight, because about 12 months ago today I was able to stand here and, in my speech in reply to the budget, announce the first ever traffic lights for Nanango town. I can say that this week I was very proud, with Councillor Barry Green of the South Burnett Regional Council, to be at Nanango when those lights were first turned on.

In all seriousness, this is an important issue, because regional and rural roads are extremely dangerous. I do not need to tell that to the majority of people on this side of the House who have grown up in those rural and regional areas. For me personally, road safety is an extremely important initiative. If these lights, which slow down the trucks going through the township of Nanango, up the Burnett Highway before turning on to the D'Aguiar Highway going towards Kingaroy, save a life, I am extremely proud to be the member who has delivered the first lights for Nanango.

On the same theme, I am also extremely grateful to the Minister for Transport that I have been able to deliver two sets of flashing lights—one set at Taabinga State School, which is located right on the main highway coming into Kingaroy. I want to thank the principal, Susan Beattie, who for a long time has advocated to have those flashing lights. So they are now installed. The other set of flashing lights was installed at Kumbia State School, and the principal there is Ross Deards.

Harlin State School is a successful little school. I want to congratulate the principal, Kay Ryan, and the teacher there, Mrs Kerry Derksen. Harlin State School is a beautiful little school, built in 1910 at the top of the Brisbane Valley. I am so proud of this school because the teachers and the students have put up with the tiny little room for all of them for many years. They have never been able to achieve greater space and I am very pleased to be able to announce, through just simple common sense and having a practical local member, that another building will be moved to Harlin State School to enable these poor children to have a little bit of space. These country schools are forgotten about when it comes to space. So I am really excited to be visiting the school again soon, which will have this extended space. It is really exciting.

There are good things happening in the Nanango electorate all the time. I hope that I will be able to stand here this time next year when I talk about the new police station.

*(Time expired)*

## Budget

 **Mr PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (1.08 am): Data released yesterday, just one day after the Newman government's third budget, again shows that the LNP has overseen a dramatic slump in Queensland's domestic economy. The national accounts ABS data showed a 0.8 per cent contraction in state final demand over the March quarter—the second consecutive contraction, following a 0.4 per cent contraction in the December quarter. A contraction in business investment of 20 per cent and a contraction in private investment of 11.25 per cent are set out in these budget papers. Add into the mix the forecast contraction in state final demand of 1.25 per cent next financial year and it means fewer jobs and less business activity across our state.

The LNP members in this House must stop misleading Queenslanders about the state of the economy. In particular, the Treasurer should start telling the truth and stop trying to hide information. Since July last year I have produced a brief monthly economic update to provide Queenslanders with regular information on Queensland's economy, principally because the Newman government has cancelled a number of economic publications since being elected, including analysis around the Queensland state accounts and the annual economic review. The Queensland economic review by Queensland Treasury has also been cut back from a monthly to a quarterly release and appears to have been discontinued after January 2013.

It is important that Queenslanders are informed about how our economy is tracking, particularly given this Treasurer's campaign of economic mismanagement and misinformation. They talk about being a grown-up government, but the grown-up thing would be for the Treasurer to tell the truth about how our economy is going, not make irresponsible comments like our state is going broke.

If the Treasurer will not give Queenslanders the facts on the economy, why should they believe him when it comes to his campaign to sell assets? Asset sales will not fix the negative 20 per cent business investment nosedive next year—a result of the LNP having no plans for the economy beyond LNG. Asset sales certainly will not create jobs; they will cut jobs.

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Madam SPEAKER:** Pause the clock. Members, your interjections are not being taken. I am having trouble hearing and I will ask members to cease interjecting.

**Mr PITT:** The Treasurer keeps saying that talk about revenue means taxes. Perhaps the Treasurer needs to be reminded that revenue also means returns from income-producing assets that he wants to sell and revenue from more people in jobs and the flow-on benefits of spending in the economy. The fact is that under the LNP's economic management the Queensland economy is hurting. Domestic economic activity under the LNP has screeched to a halt, and unemployment has blown out to 6.3 per cent—back at levels not seen since the GFC. This is a far cry from the promised four per cent unemployment rate.

As I said in my budget speech today, it is clear that the only elements of our economy driving Queensland's growth at the moment are export industries that Labor established and nurtured. The facts show that without LNG driven export growth the domestic economy would be on the verge of recession. After more than two years in office, this Newman LNP government still has no plan for jobs—just as this government still has no plan for the economy. Not only is the LNP not managing the economy in the interests of everyday Queenslanders; it is simply not managing the Queensland economy.

## Anzac Day

 **Mr COSTIGAN** (Whitsunday—LNP) (1.11 am): Today on Queensland Day, on the 70th anniversary of the D-day landings, I would like to recognise our sub-branches of the RSL in the Whitsunday and members of our close-knit veteran community. In my electorate we are blessed to have six sub-branches of the RSL—Farleigh and Northern Beaches, Kuttabul, Seaforth, St Helens, Proserpine and Airlie Beach-Whitsunday. They all do a mighty job, and on Anzac Day this year I was pleased to attend four services in four communities run by four different sub-branches in my patch.

On the 99th anniversary of the Gallipoli landings, I started my day with the traditional dawn service at Calen, where I joined our local diggers along with Tremain Thomas, who proudly served in the forces and came back to Calen as guest speaker, filling the role traditionally held by the late Ken Manning. After Calen, it was quickly down to Seaforth, where I addressed a large crowd including many young students and representatives of community groups on the Hibiscus Coast. I made a point of reflecting on a man who spent a lot of time at Seaforth after he served in the South West Pacific in

World War II, where he was awarded a military medal before serving in the Korean War. That same man was wounded on the Korean Peninsula and, sadly, from that point on he spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair—a story that resonated with ex-servicemen who stood proudly as the sun rose over the Coral Sea, as their local MP paid a small personal tribute to his cousin, the late Corporal Noel George Costigan.

From Seaforth, it was back up to Airlie Beach, where just like in 2012 when I was the freshly minted MP for Whitsunday a large crowd of locals and tourists gathered on the shores of Pioneer Bay for a service organised by Terry Brown and his wonderful crew that make up the Airlie Beach sub-branch of the RSL. To Terry, Bill Rose, Ron James and those other fine gentlemen who are members of that sub-branch, I say congratulations and keep up the great work in our community.

In what was an emotional address at the main service in Airlie, following the parade up the main street, I made a point of calling on our younger generation to keep the Anzac Day tradition going, especially with the centenary of the Anzac landings now less than a year away. As I looked into the eyes of those young students from our local schools—Cannonvale, Whitsunday Christian College, St Catherine's Catholic College and Proserpine State High School—I am sure it sunk in.

From Airlie, it was onto Proserpine, where I laid another wreath and gave another address, making a point of acknowledging the good work of organisations like Legacy. I was told later by a respected school teacher that we made one particular lady cry. I am sorry I did that, but that is what happens when you speak from the heart on a day when all of us should be proud of those people who paid the ultimate sacrifice and those who fought for a free world.

Regrettably, this year I could not join members of the two other sub-branches in my electorate—the Kuttabul sub-branch and the Farleigh and Northern Beaches sub-branch—but I was with them 12 months ago when they conducted great services at Kuttabul and Bucasia respectively. Hats off to people like John Fenner, Frosty McLean and Monty Edmonds, who are the crew at Kuttabul—a great community which conducts great services. I also acknowledge Russell Flor, Ralph Strecker and the team from Farleigh and Northern Beaches, whose new memorial at Bucasia is a great asset for our community. It would not have happened without the late Bill McKenzie, who battled cancer and passed away a couple of years ago. Rest in peace, Bill McKenzie.

### **Disability Services; Tyrrell, Mrs J**

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (1.14 am): It gives me great pleasure to rise today and talk about the great joint project that was opened at Muir Street in Labrador in my great electorate last Thursday. It was a joint project between the state government and Horizon Housing. In last year's budget I announced that the state government would provide \$445,000 in capital funding to enable people with disabilities to live independent lives in our community. It was a great pleasure to be able to help the minister open that facility last Thursday. This facility will house three women who are in their 50s and 60s and who have never had the opportunity to lead independent lives. There is one woman who is severely disabled and has lived in an institution in Toowoomba since she was 11 years old. It was incredibly touching to be able to see her family have peace of mind knowing there was always going to be someone to care for her.

I spoke to the 70-year-old parents of an incredible lady with Down syndrome who are very comforted in the knowledge that they are able to provide for their daughter but are also able to lead their own lives—something that they have not been able to do for nearly 50 years. I would like to pay tribute to the Minister for Disability Services, who in her tenure strives to ensure that people with disabilities are able to lead dignified lives and are able to live independently in our community where possible. We make sure that we support those people where we are able.

Today, given that it is already Friday, 6 June, is the 100th birthday of Mrs Joyce Tyrrell, a resident of Paradise Point in my electorate of Broadwater. I had the great opportunity to sit down with Joyce last week and have a cup of tea and take a birthday cake to her. She is an amazing woman who has led an incredibly interesting life. It was really fantastic to sit down with her and learn the lessons of what is a very long life. I pay tribute to her not only for the great life that she has led over the past 100 years but also for the great work she has done supporting various community groups in Paradise Point and in the electorate of Broadwater. I believe she is having birthday celebrations with her family this weekend who are coming from all over the country and from New Zealand. I am sure that she will really enjoy it. If I can be as sharp and as spritely as she is at 100, then I will be an incredibly happy person. I hope that Joyce has a very happy birthday today, on 6 June, as she celebrates her centenary.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1.17 am (Friday).

### **ATTENDANCE**

Barton, Bates, Bennett, Berry, Bleijie, Boothman, Byrne, Cavallucci, Choat, Costigan, Cox, Crandon, Cripps, Crisafulli, Cunningham, D'Ath, Davies, 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, 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