



RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FOURTH PARLIAMENT

Friday, 6 June 2014

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FRIDAY, 6 JUNE 2014



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

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

PRIVILEGE

Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Member



Hon. JH LANGBROEK (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Minister for Education, Training and Employment) (9.31 am): I rise on a matter of privilege. During her budget reply speech yesterday, the member for Inala deliberately misled the House. She told this House that the Newman government's previous two budgets had seen 'massive cuts' to education funding and 'teachers losing their jobs'. This is not true. In 2012 the Newman government allocated \$6.7 billion to my department of education—an increase of 4.6 per cent. No teachers lost their jobs because of budget decisions. In 2013 the Newman government spent \$7 billion on school education—an increase of 3.7 per cent. And, again, no teachers lost their jobs because of budget decisions. In 2014, on Tuesday this week, the Newman government has increased spending on education, up 6.7 per cent to \$7.2 billion for schools, and this year we are hiring another 761 teachers. Teacher numbers have increased every year. Just because she says it is so does not make it so.

The opposition leader, with the most generously staffed office an opposition has ever had, should spend more time checking her facts. Last night she had to correct the record after her speech yesterday with regard to more misleading remarks over the Cross River Rail project. I ask how many more times will the member for Inala have to rise today to correct the record—giving the Newman government credit for a record spend on education, delivering the outcomes that Queensland student needs for a brighter future.

Madam Speaker, I will be writing to you to ask that the opposition leader be referred to the parliamentary Ethics Committee to investigate whether she is in contempt of the House for deliberately misleading the House in breach of standing order 266(2) of the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENTS

Questions on Notice

Madam SPEAKER: Standing order 114 requires questions on notice to be lodged with the Clerk by the end of question time each day. I remind all honourable members that question time will conclude at 10.30 am today, pursuant to sessional order 1(i).

Queensland Day

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, happy Queensland Day! As a fitting celebration of Queensland Day, I am pleased to remind members of the event at 1 pm today in the red chamber, at which I will be formally receiving a commissioned painting of our Parliament House from Queensland artist Mr Robert Brownhall. Robert was selected as the winning artist for the Speaker's Art Prize, which was a state-wide search for a Queensland artist to be awarded a commission for a painting, drawing or sketch of Queensland Parliament House.

The Speaker's Art Prize provided an opportunity to promote and nurture the arts in Queensland and for the parliament to own a unique work which will be available for official purposes and for ongoing display at Parliament House. This competition was facilitated by Flying Arts Alliance, an arts and cultural development organisation providing services to regional and remote Queensland.

Finally, the parliament will own its own painting of this magnificent building, and I am very happy to inform members that Robert has superbly captured the craftsmanship and beauty of this magnificent heritage building. This artwork will be a lasting benefit to the parliament and people of Queensland. I encourage visitors to the parliament to view the painting and appreciate this magnificent artistic depiction of one of Queensland's premier heritage buildings.

Sergeant-at-Arms and Manager, Security and Attendant Services

Madam SPEAKER: Honourable members, on behalf of the parliament, I congratulate Mr Michael Watkin, whose appointment as Sergeant-at-Arms and Manager, Security and Attendant Services was announced today. We recognise the importance of this position in the parliament and look forward to Michael's continuing service in this role.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the honourable member indicated—

Townsville City Plan 2013

Hon Crisafulli, from 65 petitioners, requesting the House to investigate the Townsville City Council and its links with developers over inconsistencies in the current Townsville City Plan 2013 [\[5346\]](#).

The Clerk presented the following e-petition, sponsored by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(4)—

Cassowary Coast, Agile Wallabies

From 260 petitioners, requesting the House to suspend further shooting of Agile wallabies within the Cassowary Coast until all non-lethal alternatives are exhausted and an independent scientific study is conducted [\[5347\]](#).

Petitions received.

TABLED PAPERS

MINISTERIAL PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following ministerial papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson)

[5348](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2253-14) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 577 petitioners, requesting the House to install a marked pedestrian crossing and/or pedestrian lights in Lawrie Street, Gracemere

[5349](#) Response from the Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Mr Emerson) to a paper petition (2254-14) presented by the Clerk in accordance with Standing Order 119(3), from 41 petitioners, requesting the House to install school zone flashing lights at Boonah State School

Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell)—

[5350](#) Response from the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection (Mr Powell) to an ePetition (2211-14) sponsored by Mr Woodforth, from 61 petitioners, requesting the House to change laws and regulations to once again deem crematoriums and their activities as Environmentally Relevant Activities

MEMBERS' PAPERS TABLED BY THE CLERK

The following members' papers were tabled by the Clerk—

Member for Gympie (Mr Gibson)—

[5351](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 42—Review of the Queensland Audit Office Report to Parliament 7 for 2013-14: Results of audit: Water sector entities 2012-13

[5352](#) State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee: Report No. 43—Review of the Queensland Audit Office Report to Parliament 9 for 2013-14: Results of audit: Energy sector entities 2012-13

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Queensland Day

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.36 am): Madam Speaker, today is our state's birthday. It was on this day, some 155 years ago back in 1859, that Queen Victoria gave her approval to separate us from New South Wales. Not surprisingly, she favoured the name Queensland over suggestions to call it Cooksland in honour of Captain James Cook. And so the letters patent were signed and the new colony of Queensland was established—and what a great move that was!

Since then, celebrations have occurred to mark what we call Queensland Day, and they have now extended out to a week of events. Today, hundreds of workplaces across the state are coming together as part of Queensland Day in the Office. From morning teas and barbeque lunches to office trivia and best dressed competitions, maroon is certainly the colour of the day.

A government member interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: Some people did not get the memo! Madam Speaker, the fun of Queensland Day does not stop there. Just this morning there was a community breakfast at the Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame. Tonight, there is a Queensland Day dinner hosted by the Royal Historical Society of Queensland, a free address by Queensland icon David Malouf at the State Library of Queensland, a performance of *Cribbie* at QPAC, plus the Luminous Lantern Parade at South Bank.

Honourable members may have also noticed the state has been sporting a shade of maroon this week. We have painted the town maroon by lighting iconic buildings and bridges. Head out in Brisbane city tonight and check out Suncorp Stadium, Kurilpa Bridge, QPAC, the Wheel of Brisbane, the Sir Leo Hielscher Bridges, King George Square, the Treasury Casino and right here at Parliament House. I encourage all Queenslanders to 'get their Queensland on' today and for the rest of Queensland Week.

Law and Order

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (9.38 am): Madam Speaker, recently I had the great pleasure of addressing the Queensland Police Union of Employees annual conference on the Gold Coast. I always enjoy spending time with our men and women in the blue uniforms, and what I was pleased to tell those present was that this government said we would act on law and order and we have. We said we would give our police service what they need to do their job and we are doing that. This government has given police the tools, support and powers they need to protect and serve the people of Queensland.

This government does not expect our police to fight crime with one arm tied behind their back and, with this budget and the hard work of the police minister and the Attorney-General, they do not have to. We have allocated more than \$2 billion to continue the work we have started in revitalising front-line services. A further 267 police officers will be provided as part of this budget and our strong plan to make our communities even safer, moving us closer to our commitment of 1,100 additional police. I might just say that again—1,100 additional police.

Of course, we need to house our officers in the most modern facilities possible, which is why we have allocated \$8.1 million to commence relocation of the Coolum Police Station and upgrades to the forensic service facility in Brisbane, and Nanango and Kingaroy police stations. We will also spend \$4.9 million to deliver upgraded police facilities at Thursday Island, Laidley and Chinchilla police stations, and the Brisbane City and Redland Bay Water Police. As part of our commitment to keeping police on the beat in the areas they are needed, we have committed a further \$920,000 towards the operations of two dedicated rapid action policing hubs on the Gold Coast and Townsville. We are also working to get our officers out from behind their desks by providing \$18.5 million to expand the mobile device fleet in time for the G20 summit in November this year. A total of \$44.5 million has been allocated to the Safe Night Out Strategy to try to stamp out alcohol and drug related violence, restore responsible behaviour and ensure Queensland's nightlife is safe for all. I note that the Queensland Police Union has supported our policy, and I thank it for that support.

We are making our roads safer with the toughest antihooning laws in Australia. Over 6,700 vehicles have been either impounded or immobilised state-wide since the laws commenced. As the minister informed us Wednesday, we have funded a further \$3.1 million to finalise the purchase and local construction of police catamarans for Cairns, Townsville and the Whitsundays. To further enhance our capabilities, the police helicopter has been equipped with state-of-the-art technology to ensure police have an eye in the sky. Where those opposite failed, we will deliver with a further \$3 million to fund the second—yes, a second—police helicopter.

These are just some of the things this government is doing to provide a brighter future and safer streets for the people of this great state. I listened and listened yesterday for any substantive announcements about policing and law and order in the budget address-in-reply by the Leader of the Opposition, and I heard nothing. That says it all. There is only one team with a strong plan to take this state forward for a brighter future and protect Queensland families and our kids.

Health Services

 **Hon. LJ SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Minister for Health) (9.41 am): All Queenslanders deserve the best possible health care no matter where they live. This week our state budget provided a record \$13.6 billion for health delivery—an increase of \$2 billion since 2011-12. Our government, with a strong plan for a brighter future, can do more for all Queensland patients. In the bush, as in the city, it is important that planning for better health be built on direct engagement with the community and the expert advice of local clinicians. That is the best way to deliver our three key objectives: patients first, local control and better performance. This morning at the Rural Press Club I launched a two-part policy statement—*Better Health for the Bush* and the *Queensland Rural and Remote Health Service Framework*. For the benefit of honourable members, I now table copies of those documents.

Tabled paper: Publication by the Department of Health titled 'Better Health for the Bush: A plan for safe, applicable healthcare for rural and remote Queensland' [\[5353\]](#).

Tabled paper: Publication by the Department of Health titled 'Queensland rural and remote health service framework, June 2014' [\[5354\]](#).

In the bush our efforts to overcome distance and provide equitable access to patient care require better communication, and that is what we are delivering through today's launch—better communication to build a partnership with local people and the skilled professionals who deliver local health care in remote regions. That is a dramatic change from the active neglect of bush communities by the former Labor government. We are making very good progress, but there is a lot of ground to make up. As technology improves, regular advances in the provision of timely health care specific to local needs is essential. Across Queensland, 16 hospital and health boards have now been established, each with direct control of local health strategy and they are gaining more and more autonomy each and every year. Working together, these boards and local clinicians and communities are empowered by the government to deliver improved local health care.

Nowhere in this mix is it more beneficial and the circumstances more challenging than in rural and remote Queensland. To review current thinking and map the path to future development, the government established the state-wide rural and remote clinical network. Now the network has authored *Better Health for the Bush*, supported by the government, which commissioned the accompanying rural and remote health service framework. Clarified standards and protocols describe and promote improved articulation between services across whole districts and regions and in individual local communities. Better support enables birthing, chemotherapy, renal dialysis, mental health, and alcohol and drug services, among others, to be delivered closer to a patient's home.

Local clinicians and more co-located services are to be supported; higher levels of clinical service provided; and innovative practice promoted and rewarded. Already we are investing in new and upgraded facilities and telehealth and new technologies in rural and remote areas. We must attract and retain a highly qualified, broadly skilled clinical workforce and provide better training to sustain it. This government has a strong plan to build a brighter future for Queenslanders in rural and remote areas of our state and to guarantee their continuation and investment in those services in the future. Through a strengthened local partnership we will build healthcare services that fit local needs, not simply impose healthcare services that seem effective elsewhere but have no application in rural areas of the state.

Queensland Day; Budget, Environment and Heritage Protection

 **Hon. AC POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection) (9.45 am): Happy Queensland Day. I will have the privilege later this evening of joining the Royal Historical Society of Queensland at its dinner. Based on the Premier's comments this morning, I had better change my tie before then. The Newman government's third budget continues our commitment to protecting Queensland's environment and heritage places. It is a budget which delivers a strong plan for a brighter future for the environment while growing a four-pillar economy and job opportunities. 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 remains one of the most biodiverse places on earth.

The Newman government is delivering practical environmentalism. Unlike Labor, we are focused on delivering green outcomes, not green preferences. This coming financial year a further \$26.7 million will be put aside for major land acquisition programs. The nature refuge network will also

be increased and more than four million hectares will be protected. Our nature refuge network will be complemented through our new offsets legislation, which will deliver strategic land corridors for habitat protection, unlike the random and patchwork quilt approach of the Labor government.

We will continue to increase koala habitat through the acquisition of suitable land, and we will continue to support our wildlife carers and research scientists as they look for solutions to the disease that is impacting on our koala population. Over the past two years we have already seen the success of our investing to protect our koalas initiative—a program which has put more dollars towards koala habitat protection, rescue and rehabilitation than any Labor government before us. Labor measures their environmental credentials in metres of green tape. We measure our environmental success in true environmental outcomes. We are about common-sense conservation, and we are working smarter and harder to deliver strong outcomes for an environment that will deliver real benefits for all of our Queensland community.

Queensland Day; One-Stop Shop

 **Hon. IB WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (Minister for Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts) (9.47 am): I am also glad to be able to acknowledge Queensland Day and to attend this evening the event with Mr David Malouf, son of Queensland and Brisbane who has catalogued so much of what Brisbane and Queensland is about in his writings and his poetry. It is a great way to celebrate and a great Queensland to honour.

This government recognises that Queenslanders are time poor. We are all so busy at work or at home that we need to spend time where it really counts: with our families, looking after our kids or each other rather than lining up in government queues waiting our time for simple services. The One-Stop Shop program is our initiative so you can tell us how you want to deal with government, rather than Labor's way of government telling you how you must deal with them. It makes it easier to apply for and get everything from fishing licences, fossicking permits, camping permits or emergency updates online, through a phone call or by visiting a counter. We have been delivering real improvements by working with Queenslanders across the state to understand their experiences, needs and what they want us to deliver for better services. This includes a series of workshops in the Lockyer Valley and Scenic Rim—our pilot areas—which I had the pleasure of attending.

One of the clearest messages we have received is that Queenslanders want more services available online. They want to apply for permits, licences and registration where and when it is convenient for them. Towards this, our government has delivered 59 new online services of the 100 we promised to deliver by the end of 2014 and the 200 we promised by the end of 2015—no more queuing at counters or having to travel kilometres from home for regional and remote Queenslanders to do something as simple as renew your driver's licence. For customers needing a little help online, we have been piloting social media and click-to-chat. Thousands of customers have been checking our Facebook and Twitter AskQGOV service, with more than 6,000 likes already. I would encourage all honourable members to try them out; you will like them too.

With our service outlet pilot in the Lockyer Valley and Scenic Rim, our aim is to work with the community on how to make it easier for customers to access the services they need in a simpler, clearer and faster way through local service outlets. We recently completed this initial community engagement in these two regions with feedback from 648 customers and community representatives.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr WALKER: It was a great process, member for Lockyer. Their feedback is helping shape the different ways they can access government services and the types of services needed. Over the coming months, we will roll out different service delivery models across the state tailored to the different needs of Queensland's diverse communities, and I am sure the member for Beaudesert and his constituents will also benefit from those.

As part of One-Stop Shop, we also started our change of address pilot, where customers will only need to tell us once if they move house. This month, we will be introducing changes that make it easier for customers to provide feedback about government services. In the near future, customers will be able to use one login and password to access a range of online government services in the same way they currently use online banking. Providing better services in a streamlined, efficient way is a priority of this government, with the 2013-14 budget providing an additional \$7.4 million for phase 1 of One-Stop Shop. Our approach for One-Stop Shop enables us to learn from pilot programs and customer feedback to deliver a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Reporting Dates

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (9.52 am): I seek to advise the House of determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting yesterday. The committee has resolved pursuant to standing order 136 that: the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee report on the State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (Red Tape Reduction) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 28 July 2014; the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report on the Land Sales and Other Legislation Amendment Bill by 30 August 2014; the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee report on the Mineral and Energy Resources (Common Provisions) Bill by 30 August 2014; the State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee report on the Water Legislation (Miscellaneous Provisions) Amendment Bill by 30 August 2014; and the Transport, Housing and Local Government Committee report on the Local Government Legislation Amendment Bill by 18 August 2014.

LEGAL AFFAIRS AND COMMUNITY SAFETY COMMITTEE

Report

Mr BERRY (Ipswich—LNP) (9.53 am): I lay upon the table a report of the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee titled *Report No. 67: subordinate legislation tabled between 19 March 2014 and 6 May 2014*. I commend the report to the House.

Tabled paper: Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee: Report No. 67—Subordinate legislation tabled between 19 March 2014 and 6 May 2014 [\[5355\]](#).

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Madam SPEAKER: Question time will conclude at 10.30 today.

Budget, Pensioner Concessions

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (9.53 am): My question is to the Treasurer. I refer the Treasurer to his public commitment to the pensioner concession cuts at a QCOS breakfast yesterday only an hour or so before the Premier announced a \$223 million hole in his budget, and I ask: will the Treasurer confirm that he was ordered to reverse his 'strong choice' to put up the cost of living for pensioners, and will he rule out further cuts to jobs and services to fund the Premier's spectacular backflip?

Mr NICHOLLS: What a question from an opposition leader who was so profoundly disappointed yesterday. After listening to what the Premier had to say, she went into a flurry of activity. All of those 22 people up there in the opposition office who had slaved so hard to write that speech and prepare those questions then had to slave so hard to come up with one replacement paragraph. I think there was one; I picked it out of it all—finally, the Premier gets his way apparently. The reality is this. In 2007 someone from the south side of the river was elected Prime Minister of Australia and his name was Kevin Rudd. What did he start doing?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Well, he was elected Prime Minister. I think most people thought for three years but it was only two actually. The then Prime Minister got the old stiletto in the back and I think the current opposition leader's fingerprints were all over the handle as it slipped in between his ribs. What did he start doing? He started spending a lot of money. He was obviously close friends with the then Premier of Queensland, the previous member for South Brisbane, and he started picking up some of her bad habits and started spending a lot of money.

What happened? The federal government—which had had \$25 billion in the bank with no net debt and was running surpluses—started running deficits, started accumulating debt, started spending more and started putting pink batts in people's roofs which, unfortunately and tragically, led to four people dying. He continued to spend money and continued to burden the people of Australia with more debt and deficits. So what happened in 2012 was that a new government was elected and started fixing up the problem because the debt was heading towards \$560 billion. In terms of what happened, the federal government made changes to the national partnership agreement, and we disagreed with them. We made a decision after listening to the people of Queensland about those

federal government cuts. We made a decision and responded to the people of Queensland and we reinstated and paid up the federal government's hole in the concessions payment program. Now all we have is an opposition trying to make a political bonus on the back of pensioners.

(Time expired)

Solar Bonus Scheme

Ms PALASZCZUK: My next question is to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that he has solar panels on his house making him part of the Treasurer's so-called 'champagne-sipping latte set'?

Mr NEWMAN: Come in spinner! There is that old thing that if you are going to ask a question you sort of need to have an idea about the answer. I would be happy to table my bills, because guess what I get paid? It is 8c or less. I have never got the 44c feed-in tariff, because do you know what? I put—

A government member: More research.

Mr NEWMAN: More research. What a bunch of clots we have in the opposition. What a bunch of wastrels. What a bunch of indolent, lazy people with their 22 members of staff. If they had done the research, they would have found out that it was in the local Quest paper in 2007—that is when I put my solar panels in because I was prepared to do something about the whole issue of carbon emissions with my family. It is all on the record. There was not a 44c deal in those days. I never got it, not at all, not one little bit of it, ever. I put it in because it was the right thing to do as far as I was concerned and that is what my family wanted us to do.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I am sorry to interrupt you, Premier. There are too many interjections on my left. They are not being taken. I warn members on my left and I will start warning you under the standing orders.

Mr NEWMAN: I hope that dispenses with that sort of lame-brain—well, I had better be careful—very half and poorly thought through effort this morning from the opposition. The real issue here is about that 44c policy being brought in by, who was it, the former Premier's partner? Was that his policy? Was that something that they then implemented without thinking it through? What will this cost in 2028? It is \$3 billion a year—that is what it will cost. The point is this: people who do not have the panels are paying. People are paying because those other people get the deal—and we as a government said we would honour the deal and we are honouring the deal. However, it was poor policy—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. I warn the Leader of Opposition Business under 253A.

Mr NEWMAN: My question rhetorically is: was the Leader of Opposition Business, the would-be alternative Treasurer, in the cabinet room when these decisions on the 44c feed-in tariff were made? They are the decisions that have led to higher power prices along with the efforts of the member for Redcliffe, who was there in the federal parliament, who wanted a carbon tax, who voted for a carbon tax, who opposed the carbon tax being removed, who has had the opportunity in this place to remove the carbon tax and we sent a motion to Canberra about that—squibbed on every opportunity.

High power prices are the legacy of the financial and fiscal incompetence of those opposite. They are the ones who inflicted this misery. Once again, this week they had the opportunity to send a message to Shorten and their federal Labor colleagues to get rid of the carbon tax so we can see real relief for the people across this state. What a hopeless opposition we have. They have no plan, no ideas and no policies. The only recycling was a failed former candidate.

(Time expired)

Budget, Wide Bay

Mr BENNETT: My question without notice is to the Premier. Can the Premier outline how the budget will contribute to the bright future of the great Wide Bay region and how the government's strong plan will help take the pressure off mums and dads in places like Bundaberg, Maryborough and Childers?

Mr NEWMAN: What a refreshing question to get as opposed to the personal muckraking, inept questions that we have seen from the opposition over the past few weeks. How typical of them. I thank the honourable member because he is a passionate advocate for his region. I congratulate him and the police minister on their showcasing last night of Bundaberg businesses and that great regional promotion that they have run for the third year in a row. I encourage members to have a good look at what we are doing for the Wide Bay and Burnett region. I table a statement covering the relevant information that is in the budget papers.

Tabled paper: State Budget 2014-15: Regional budget statement—Wide Bay [5356].

Let's go through some of that. There is a record \$458 million for the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service so local families can get the best medical help when they need it; almost \$15 million for new oral health facilities at Bundaberg and Hervey Bay; \$1½ million for new health technology equipment; \$500,000 to replace the Bundaberg Ambulance Station; and the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service's funding is up \$24 million compared to Labor's last budget. What about education? In the \$11.8 billion education budget, which sees better learning, more teachers and better schools for Wide Bay kids there is \$14 million to prepare schools in the Wide Bay region for the transition of year 7 into high school and a share of the 761 additional teachers and teacher aides state-wide. What about another area? There is investment in improving police and fire services, which means safer streets for families in the Wide Bay-Burnett area; \$1 million for the Bundaberg Fire and Rescue Station; \$300,000 for CCTV cameras at the Bundaberg watch-house; and a share of 267 new police officers, that is the state-wide figure.

In tourism, we are supporting Wide Bay tourism so that young people can get jobs and the local economy can grow. We did not hear anything yesterday from the other side about jobs, just another Public Service agency. They did not even have their own ideas about how to create jobs; they have to go and employ some public servants so they can work out how to create jobs. We are creating jobs. There is \$450,000 for the facilities at the wonderful Mon Repos Visitor Centre and \$650,000 to upgrade the Inskip Point amenities to help tourists go to Fraser Island. There are real funds for transport: more than \$11 million is going to upgrade and improve safety on the Burnett River and Kennedy bridges, the Isis Highway at Childers, the Tinana interchange, the Woongool Road and Maryborough-Hervey Bay Road intersection; \$11 million to build new tilt trains through Downer EDI at Maryborough. There is also \$800,000 for supported accommodation at Maryborough. It is a strong plan across the state, but it is most definitely a strong plan for the Wide Bay—

(Time expired)

Galilee Basin, State Development Areas

Mr GULLEY: My question without notice is to the Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. Can the Deputy Premier update the House on the declaration of state development areas in the Galilee Basin?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Murrumba for the question. I inform him and the House that very soon the Coordinator-General will make an announcement which will minimise the impact of the state development areas in the Galilee Basin on landholders, and that has been our intent all along. It was interesting that the member for Yeerongpilly asked the Premier a question about this yesterday. I was amused—or bemused I should say—to read today in the *Sunshine Coast Daily* about how 'No Show' Palmer—Clive Palmer, the leader of the party that the member for Yeerongpilly represents in here—has been missing from 29 out of 44 sittings of the federal parliament. One of those, of course, was when he had lunch with the member for Yeerongpilly and the member for Gaven just before the member for Yeerongpilly came into this chamber and asked a question about Clive Palmer's business interests. So the member had lunch with Clive Palmer and then came in here and asked a question about his business interests. It says in the paper that Clive Palmer claims he met with state MP Alex Douglas to discuss how pensioners were feeling about the concessions issue. There were no questions asked about the pensioner concessions, but there was a question about Clive Palmer's commercial business interests, a conspiracy theory about flu vaccinations and a question about the casino licence.

People cannot believe anything that Clive Palmer says. He lives in a delusional world where he thinks he can buy everybody, but he could not buy this government. He could not buy us, so he bought the member for Gaven and the member for Yeerongpilly and started his own party. Furthermore, this article states that, in response to criticism that he was spending too much time on the Gold Coast, Clive Palmer said he lived at Coolumb where he had lived for the past 10 years. I

found that a little bit intriguing because I have known Clive Palmer for quite a while and I know he lived at Fig Tree Pocket. In fact, I got the council electorate roll. There it is: in 2008 there is a listing for 'Palmer, Clive Frederick, 52 Botticelli Street, Fig Tree Pocket'. I will table that.

Tabled paper: Extract from electoral roll for Walter Taylor ward of Brisbane City [5357].

Clive Palmer is claiming he lived in Coolum for 10 years when I know he actually lived in Fig Tree Pocket, and I suspect he now lives on the Gold Coast. It is an offence to falsely enrol on the electoral roll. Section 176 of the Electoral Act makes it an offence. It states—

A person must not wilfully insert on any electoral roll a false or fictitious name or address.

I also table that.

Tabled paper: Extract from Electoral Act 1992 (section 176) [5358].

Clive Palmer cannot be trusted to tell the truth in any situation. The members who represent him in this place should be ashamed of the fact that they sold themselves to a man who cannot tell the truth—

(Time expired)

Madam SPEAKER: Having viewed the document that the Deputy Premier has tabled, it will be tabled. But considering there are other names on the electoral roll that are presented with their addresses, we will only be publishing those names that the Deputy Premier referred to.

Sale of Public Assets

Mr PITT: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the government's proposal for the privatisation of Ergon, Energex and Powerlink, and I ask: will the Premier confirm that this will be classified as an equity transaction, which is effectively an asset sale, in the budget papers?

Mr NEWMAN: I thank the honourable member for his question and I remind him of his strident defence of asset sales and privatisations only four years ago. I point out that he is a blatant, breathtaking hypocrite and so is his so-called leader, so is the member for Mackay and so is the member for Woodridge because they were all there in the parliament. The only person who is not a hypocrite, I have to say grudgingly—but I acknowledge it—is the member for Bundamba. At least the member for Bundamba did say some things against the program of asset sales. It is okay, Treasurer, do not get upset! The point is that, when they talk about privatisation, the media should look at them and say, 'You are hypocrites.' That is what they should be saying. They have absolutely no credibility. They absolutely campaigned against this.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I will take the interjection from the member for South Brisbane. If the member for South Brisbane would like, I can grab the dictionary. Prior to 2009 you stood up in this place and said quite clearly in black and white that you were not going to privatise anything, and then after the election you came in and rammed through legislation to sell assets. Now to try and justify that you come in here and say, 'Oh, we don't believe in it' and 'It's terrible', and that hypocrisy is breathtakingly dishonest and duplicitous.

In contrast, this strong political team here has said in a very upfront way what we would do after the next election. We have said what we would do, how we would do it and what the money would be used for. You cannot get more open and accountable than that, and that means we have a strong plan. Yesterday the Leader of the Opposition spent 20 minutes—

Mr PITT: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr PITT: I understand that the Premier still has time on the clock remaining; notwithstanding, the question related specifically to equity transactions and presentation of the budget papers. I ask that he answer the question.

Madam SPEAKER: I call the Premier. The Premier has time on the clock and is answering the question, and I ask the Premier to continue to answer it.

Mr NEWMAN: I would point out that we always get a point of order from the member for Mulgrave when he is on the ropes and he knows that he is drowning in a sea of hypocrisy, deceit and duplicity.

The plan for Energex, Ergon and Powerlink is that we would see the private sector becoming the partners of the people of Queensland. That is not privatisation in the way that the Labor Party practised it.

I want to make one correction. Yesterday I said that the people of Queensland would own 100 per cent of the equity. I meant to say 100 per cent of the common or ordinary shares of those companies. But the point is the same: Queenslanders will still own the ordinary shares of these companies. They will still receive the dividends going into consolidated revenue from that ownership. That is our plan; what is the Labor Party's plan?

(Time expired)

Budget, Vulnerable Queenslanders

Mr LATTER: My question without notice is to the Minister for Housing and Public Works. Will the minister advise the House how the 2014-15 budget will deliver a brighter future for vulnerable Queenslanders?

Mr MANDER: I do thank the member for Waterford for his question. I know he is a man who is very, very committed to the most vulnerable in his community. The 2014-15 budget does reaffirm the government's commitment to house the most vulnerable Queenslanders. We have committed \$250 million to provide better and more accessible public housing.

Again we need to remember where we came from two years ago, when we inherited a social housing system that was the victim of maladministration by the previous Labor government. We had a waiting list of over 30,000. That figure had increased 50 per cent in the last few years of their reign. We had soaring maintenance bills, we had antisocial behaviour that was totally unchecked, and we also had a housing-for-life mentality. Just a short two and a quarter years later, we have brought that social housing list down by 37 per cent to less than 20,000; we have reduced the maintenance bill from \$200 million to \$140 million per year; we have introduced the three-strike policy, which has worked; and we have also brought in fixed-term tenancies.

This budget for 2014-15 will provide funding for an additional 1,800 dwellings for people on low and moderate incomes. We will do this through partnerships with community housing organisations, through the ANROWS program as it starts to finish off and also through NPARIH. NPARIH is a great scheme, the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, where we are really providing relief for some people in Indigenous communities who live in overcrowded accommodation with up to 18 people living in one house. There is no greater feeling than being able to hand over the keys to someone for the first home they have ever had in their life. How can you have stable education, stable employment and stable relationships if you do not have a good housing situation?

We are also committed to changing the stock portfolio mix. At the moment we have an under-occupancy rate which is far too high, and we need to reduce that by having more one- and two-bedroom units. We are also committed to providing alternative products so that we do not have people crowding the social housing system. We will assist 40,000 households in the next 12 months by helping them to get into the private rental market through bond loans and the RentConnect program.

For the most vulnerable Queenslanders, those who are homeless, we have extended the Street to Home program which does literally get people who are sleeping rough off the streets and gives them accommodation, and of course we are building new supported accommodation facilities in Cairns—I know that the member for Cairns, who has been a very vocal advocate for that, is very pleased—and Townsville and 20 beds in Redcliffe. This budget delivers on a strong plan to give vulnerable Queenslanders a brighter future.

(Time expired)

Galilee Basin, State Development Areas

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning. In relation to the Galilee Basin State Development Area, will the minister meet current land users halfway and apply and enforce strict development construction time frames on the mining companies utilising state development area privileges as outlined in the mining companies' approval processes to give all sides the capacity to plan for future business developments?

Mr SEENEY: I thank the member for Dalrymple for the question. He clearly does not understand what a state development area is and the processes that surround what used to be called projects of state significance when they were declared, but what are now called coordinated projects.

The only power that the government will use—and we will use it as a last resort—is the power of compulsory land acquisition. That is the whole purpose of the declaration of the state development areas, and that power has always been available to the government ever since the projects were—quite rightly by the previous government—declared projects of state significance. They are powers that exist under the State Development and Public Works Organisation Act.

We have made it very clear to all of the proponents, both in the Galilee Basin and in the Surat Basin example—which is exactly the same, but years ahead—that they have a responsibility to negotiate with landholders on a market based process, and the statutory powers of compulsory acquisition will only be used as a last resort when all other avenues have been exhausted.

The argument that the member is echoing is the same argument that the member for Yeerongpilly tried to put on behalf of Clive Palmer the other day, that somehow or other negotiation rights have been taken away. That is quite false and it is nonsensical. The Coordinator-General has not made his final decision yet about where the state development areas are going to be. We have been out there consulting, as we should, for quite some time. But when he does make his decision, we will certainly meet with the landholders, who have had access to officers of my department for quite some time during the consultation process. The issue is one that affects all of the proponents in the Galilee Basin.

What has bemused me is that Clive Palmer has got the member for Yeerongpilly to come in here and ask a question that was seemingly about another one of the proponents in the Galilee Basin—

Mr JUDGE: I rise to a point of order.

Madam SPEAKER: Pause the clock. What is your point of order?

Mr JUDGE: That is a misleading statement, and I would ask for him to withdraw that statement. That question was asked—

Madam SPEAKER: Please take your seat. That is not a point of order under the standing orders. I refer you to the standing orders.

Mr SEENEY: It certainly was not a misleading statement. My very firm contention is that the member for Yeerongpilly sold his soul to Clive Palmer. He had lunch with him in the dining room, got his riding instructions and came in here and asked a question that was clearly about Clive Palmer's commercial interests. He sold himself—as did the member for Gaven—to Clive Palmer, who thinks he can buy everything. Well, he cannot buy this government. No-one buys this government! They bought the members for Gaven and Yeerongpilly instead, and Clive Palmer got a bad—

(Time expired)

Cape York Land Reform Program

Mr HOLSWICH: My question without notice is to the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier. Can the minister inform the House whether the Cape York land reform program will continue beyond the end of this year and, if so, what changes might be made to how it is implemented?

Mr ELMES: I draw members' attention to the fact that not only is it a wonderful day today being Queensland Day; it is also the 70th anniversary of the D-day landings. We should remember those Australian veterans, particularly sailors and airmen, who took part in that.

Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and multicultural communities will benefit from the 2014-15 state budget's strong plan for a brighter future. The Queensland government is continuing to revitalise front-line services with a further \$8 million to support Cape York welfare reform efforts and to continue the program until December 2015. 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. An evaluation last year found that progress had been made in some areas. It also concluded that more effort is required in areas of economic development and also in homeownership and engagement of high school aged children into ongoing education.

One aspect that has shown positive results is the Family Responsibilities Commission. The commission has to restore local Indigenous authority and reinforce positive social norms. It does this through strategies such as making welfare payments dependent on behavioural obligations and referring offenders to rehabilitation programs. Of all of the aspects of the trial so far, the success of the FRC is one point in which there has been no disagreement about the value and improving the lives of Indigenous Queenslanders. I am working with our program partners, the federal government and the Cape York Institute to consider how we can expand the current welfare reform program. I want to be sure that any expanded or new programs we introduce will complement what the federal government is doing through its Indigenous program. This is particularly so for the Empowered Communities program, which is currently being developed at a federal level.

One of the biggest constraining factors for Indigenous service delivery in the past has been the duplication of service delivery across different levels of government. It is also important that we continue to work with Indigenous communities to ensure services and programs we want to provide are actually what the communities want. The budget also includes funding of \$1 million to support community harmony, celebration of cultural diversity and building skills for migrants and refugees across Queensland. The funding is for the Valuing Diversity Grants which fund multicultural events and for economic participation grants for projects that support employment and business creation projects. The events funded through the Valuing Diversity Grants strengthen the understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity and its benefits to the wider community.

(Time expired)

North Stradbroke Island, Sandmining

Ms TRAD: My question without notice is to the Premier. I refer to the Quandamooka people's plans to lodge in the High Court this morning a challenge to the LNP's legislation that extends sandmining on North Stradbroke Island to 2035, and I ask: given that sandmining company Sibelco provided more than \$90,000 in electoral support in the Ashgrove campaign in 2012 to the benefit of the Premier, will the Premier advise whether he had any involvement in expediting the legislation?

Mr NEWMAN: Apart from the fact that the question does contain some inferences, I am more than happy to answer the question. I have some inferences of my own that I might deal with first. I note that in the Ashgrove campaign the Labor Party spent hundreds and hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars. In fact, it may well have been over a million dollars.

Mr Judge: It won't cost them that next time.

Mr NEWMAN: It is the member for Yeerongpilly interjecting: the best member that money can buy, the guy who sold his soul. Oh, possum! Oh, possum!

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr Judge interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Member for Yeerongpilly! I warn the member for Yeerongpilly under 253A. I ask members to pay attention to the chair. Premier, there is a matter before the courts and that, I think, puts a different inflection with respect to what can be talked—

Mrs Miller interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Bundamba under 253A. Premier, there is a matter before the courts. I would ask you to take care not to cross over into matters that are currently sub judice. I call the Premier.

Mr NEWMAN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To return to my favourite subject being the hypocrisy of the member for South Brisbane, the member for South Brisbane was one of the architects of arranging for hundreds of thousands of dollars of Labor Party funds and hundreds of thousands of dollars of union funds to go into the state electorate of Ashgrove. I would like to know what deals were done to ensure Labor Party support for featherbedding union protecting legislation—whether it be protecting the ETU, whether it be protecting the CFMEU, whether it be protecting the AWU, whether it be protecting Mr Bill Ludwig. Why doesn't the member for South Brisbane come in here one day—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I have hit a raw nerve with the master of nastiness and bitterness—the nastiness and bitterness and the bile of invective that we see from the member for South Brisbane. It knows no bounds. It pours like an everlasting fountain that class hatred that we see from the member

for South Brisbane. Butter would not melt in her mouth on radio station 4BC, but if those people could see how she carries on in this place that would be instructive, would it not? That would be instructive, or when the microphone is turned off and she turns on the compere and threatens that she will never come on again and she throws a vile tanty.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr NEWMAN: I have hit a very raw nerve this morning—a very raw nerve. But in answer to the question, it is very simple. We said upfront prior to the election that we supported sandmining continuing on North Stradbroke Island. I—

Ms Trad: The day before the election. A dirty, dirty deal.

Mr NEWMAN: I hear the interjection from the member for South Brisbane, who always trades in vulgar, vile insults. The member for South Brisbane was the architect of personal attacks on my wife and my father-in-law and other members of the family and has never apologised. We made it very clear that we supported sandmining continuing. We said that in the election campaign, and when I look at the results from the polling booths on Stradbroke Island people voted for us.

(Time expired)

Gladstone Port, Sale of Public Assets

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Treasurer, while my community remains opposed to the sale or lease of the Gladstone port, will the Treasurer assure residents that debt commitments to Gladstone Regional Council will be honoured by any new owner or leaseholder?

Mr NICHOLLS: I just did not quite catch the last part of the member's question. Was it debt commitment to the Gladstone city council? I am not quite sure.

Madam SPEAKER: I would ask the member to repeat the question.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: Will the Treasurer assure residents that debt commitments to Gladstone Regional Council will be honoured by any new owner or leaseholder?

Mr NICHOLLS: I thank the member for her question. I do acknowledge the member has often expressed her position in relation to the sale or lease of the Gladstone port and attended the civic and community leaders function together with the mayor, the deputy mayor and councillors and local businesspeople, and I do thank her for her contribution. I do understand the member's position very clearly and I respect that position. It is entirely justified for her to have a position in relation to it. In terms of the operations of the port of Gladstone, what we are proposing there is a long-term lease—that is, the people of Queensland will continue to own the underlying assets such as the land, the waterways, the channel rights and those sorts of things. So we will have those at the expiry of a lease perhaps up to 99 years, as is often and commonly talked about, such has recently been done in Newcastle and is being proposed to be done by the opposition in Victoria for the Port of Melbourne, which they conveniently do not mention. The port of Gladstone will be required to meet all of its obligations, and in that sense I understand the member is talking about the rates obligations. Because it is currently government owned, the council cannot tax the state and because it is a government owned instrumentality the state forces or directs the Gladstone Ports Corporation to pay what would be the normal payments for a corporate in those circumstances, much the same as the Brisbane Airport Corporation pays a rates equivalent. So we would oblige anyone who operates that port to operate it on the proper commercial terms, including the obligations to the local council.

Budget

Mrs FRANCE: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. I refer to yesterday's official budget reply where Labor failed to release a single costed policy. I ask: does the minister have a copy of any of Labor's fully costed policies?

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! I call the Minister for Health. There is one minute on the clock.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Deputy Speaker, I do, but it will take me a lot longer than one minute. Yesterday in parliament we heard absolutely no vision from the Labor Party whatsoever with regard to Health. So we do not know how they are going to run Health, other than the Labor Party's old plan to tear it in two, to bring back the fake Tahitian prince and to extend the waiting lists in Queensland.

Opposition members interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Could you please pause the clock. I warn members on my left. There are too many interjections.

Mr SPRINGBORG: We certainly have a document that was actually prepared and circulated as a direction to consultants by the Labor Party shadow minister when she was the assistant minister in 2005. That document asked for investigations into the implementation of co-payments, including co-payments for health subsidy schemes such as the Spectacle Supply Scheme, the Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme and also co-payments for non-urgent surgery.

This is the first time that this document has ever been released—the document which the Labor Party itself instructed for the development of co-payments for services in Queensland.

Tabled paper: Document titled 'Schedule 1 The Consultancy Services' [\[5359\]](#).

(Time expired)

Madam SPEAKER: The minister's time has expired. That is the finish of question time.

SAFE NIGHT OUT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Introduction

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (10.31 am): I present a bill for an act to amend the Bail Act 1980, the Corrective Services Act 2006, the Criminal Code, the Drugs Misuse Act 1986, the Drugs Misuse Regulation 1987, the Liquor Act 1992, the Penalties and Sentences Act 1992, the Police Powers and Responsibilities Act 2000, the Summary Offences Act 2005, the Vicious Lawless Association Disestablishment Act 2013, the Victims of Crime Assistance Act 2009 and the Wine Industry Act 1994 for particular purposes. I table the bill and the explanatory notes. I nominate the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to consider the bill.

Tabled paper: Safe Night Out Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 [\[5360\]](#).

Tabled paper: Safe Night Out Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes [\[5361\]](#).

I am pleased to introduce the Safe Night Out Legislation Amendment Bill 2014. As we all know, Queensland is a great place to enjoy a night out. Our night-life is vibrant and diverse, offering world-class venues that cater for all. Overwhelmingly, Queenslanders and visitors to our great state enjoy our night-life safely and without incident.

Unfortunately, alcohol and drug fuelled violence is not a new phenomenon in Queensland or throughout the country. The Safe Night Out Legislation Amendment Bill 2014 forms part of the government's Safe Night Out Strategy, a comprehensive action plan to tackle alcohol and drug fuelled violence in Queensland. The government has consulted the community extensively in developing the initiatives that form this bill. The message was clear: the community wanted something done about the violence and the culture that creates it.

The final strategy will deliver positive changes for the people of Queensland. It is not a bandaid solution; it is a comprehensive and holistic approach aimed at changing the culture that leads to antisocial and violent behaviour. Along with such initiatives as enhancing liquor licensing compliance, it contains enhanced education and social marketing campaigns to create long-term cultural change in the community. We believe that only with long-term cultural change that real, sustainable impacts will be delivered to the Queensland community. The government is now moving swiftly to implement the strategy. While some of the initiatives are administrative in nature and can be implemented straightaway, others require legislative change—the changes contained in this bill.

The bill includes a number of significant criminal law reforms. Fresh measures are called for to counter the dangerous trend of innocent people falling victim to senseless violence at the hands of people who are drunk or high on illicit drugs. We have all seen the devastating and too often tragic effects of coward punches—not just in our state but across the nation. The bill creates a new Criminal Code offence of unlawful striking causing death to directly target these unacceptable and cowardly acts of violence within our communities. The offence will be punishable by a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Where the offender is sentenced to a term of imprisonment of less than life, they will serve a mandatory 80 per cent of that sentence in prison before they can apply for release on parole. An offender sentenced to life imprisonment will be eligible to apply for parole under the current parole eligibility scheme.

The important and at times dangerous and challenging role performed by Queensland's front-line service providers, such as ambulance officers, nurses and hospital staff, is expressly acknowledged under this bill. Tougher penalties will be introduced for serious attacks against these officers. The bill also provides for mandatory drug and alcohol assessments for intoxicated offenders who commit offences of violence. All offenders charged with a prescribed offence of violence committed in public when intoxicated will face a new mandatory bail condition. It will require the person to attend a drug and alcohol assessment and referral session to help connect the person with rehabilitation providers and provide an opportunity to engage in brief drug and alcohol assessment and counselling.

As part of our commitment to crack down on alcohol and drug related violence and antisocial behaviour, the bill includes measures to strengthen the sentencing process. The bill ensures that the court cannot lessen a sentence because of the voluntary intoxication of an offender. People need to take responsibility for their actions. Mandatory community service orders for particular offenders who commit a violent offence in public when intoxicated will be imposed and the courts will be empowered to impose longer bans from licensed premises, including lifetime bans where necessary.

The bill also strengthens penalties for offences involving steroids to make sure they are consistent with the heavy penalties that apply to other dangerous drugs such as methamphetamine and ecstasy. The bill also makes important amendments to the Liquor Act 1992 to help ensure that the state's liquor licensing framework is best adapted to ensure a safe night out for all.

Legislative changes will ensure that licensees comply with the act's requirements to provide a safe environment for patrons and community members in and around licensed premises. The meaning of 'unduly intoxicated' will be amended to close an existing loophole and ensure that licensees can be prosecuted for serving an unduly intoxicated person regardless of whether the person is affected by alcohol or drugs.

Amendments will make it easier for the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming to condition licences to prevent issues in and around the licensed premises and protect the amenity of the local community. Notices will now be able to be issued to licensees to immediately prohibit or restrict them from engaging in or advertising unacceptable practices or promotions and amendments will ensure police and liquor compliance officers can effectively gather evidence when undertaking covert operations.

Local councils will have the power to prevent applications for adult entertainment permits being made in their council area and it is intended for this amendment to commence on 6 June 2014 in line with the introduction today of the bill. This is part of our commitment to empower local communities.

A new licensing regime for restaurants and nightclubs will be established to address the issue of restaurants trading as de facto nightclubs. The bill also establishes a framework for the creation of safe night precincts which, following consultation with local communities, will be established in key entertainment precincts across the state. Licensees in a safe night precinct will be required to join an incorporated association, which will be the local board for the precinct. Eligible members of the boards will also include local businesses, members of chambers of commerce, and representatives of local community organisations. The association's goals will reflect a commitment to preserving safety and amenity in the precinct. As a not-for-profit association, the local board will be eligible to raise funds in pursuit of its goals. Queensland government agencies, including police, transport and ambulance services, will work closely with the boards.

The bill also contains provision for local government representatives and community organisations to be part of the local precinct management. This approach reflects the government's commitment to working closely with licensees and community groups to build safe and supportive environments that grow dynamic and vibrant night-time economies.

Local communities will be empowered through the local boards to ensure that key entertainment precincts across Queensland are managed in the most effective way possible to safely deal with high volumes of patrons at peak times. What is needed in Airlie Beach may be different to Toowoomba and Broadbeach and, importantly, those decisions about managing the 15 respective safe night precincts will be in the hands of the local community.

A significant part of the management of the safe night precincts is the use of networked ID scanners to manage violent or disorderly patrons. The bill will amend the Liquor Act to require liquor licensed venues approved to trade past 12 midnight in a safe night precinct to operate an ID scanner that is networked to a broader ID scanner system from 8 pm until close of trade each day.

Licences considered low risk will be exempt from this mandatory requirement unless otherwise conditioned by the Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming. The Commissioner for Liquor and Gaming will also be able to require other licensed venues to operate networked ID scanners in the interests of managing community safety. Although there are many benefits to the use of ID scanners, there are also important privacy issues to consider and the bill incorporates important safeguards to ensure personal information is adequately protected. As a final change to the liquor licensing framework, the current moratorium on extended trading hours applications will be removed from 31 August 2014. After this date, applications for extended trading hours after midnight will be able to be considered.

The bill makes sure that police have the powers to ensure the unacceptable behaviour of a few does not ruin the enjoyment of our night-life by the greater majority of law-abiding Queenslanders. Police have a new power to ban a person from a licensed premises, safe night precinct or public events where liquor is being sold due to their violent or disorderly behaviour. A police banning notice can be for the duration of an event or for an initial period of 10 days. A senior sergeant, upon reviewing evidence of a person's conduct, may extend the banning order for up to three months in appropriate circumstances. Appropriate review processes are included for both the initial and extended banning notices. These new police banning powers in the bill will replace the ineffective civil banning order provisions under the Liquor Act.

The bill also provides for the trial of a Sober Safe Centre in Brisbane. If a person is intoxicated and behaving in a way that could result in harm to themselves or another person or is causing a public nuisance, the bill will allow police to detain them and take them to the Sober Safe Centre for up to eight hours. The person will not be charged with an offence; rather, they will be detained for their own safety under the supervision of a relevant healthcare professional. The person will be released once they are no longer intoxicated and a danger to themselves or other persons. People who are admitted into the Sober Safe Centre will have to pay a charge as part of the cost of their detention. The bill will also provide for an increase in a variety of penalties where the offences occur in or in the vicinity of licensed premises. This includes public nuisance, obstruction or assault of police or a person disobeys a police move-on direction.

The government is committed to the preservation of our diverse and vibrant night-life. Overwhelmingly, most Queenslanders do the right thing when they go out and the government wants people to be safe and enjoy themselves. The Safe Night Out Strategy is all about protecting Queenslanders and all that is great in our wonderful night-life, because we believe that a safe night out is a great night out. This can only be achieved by a can-do government with a strong plan for a brighter future. I commend the bill to the House.

First Reading

Hon. CKT NEWMAN (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (10.42 am): 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 Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee

Madam SPEAKER: In accordance with standing order 131, the bill is now referred to the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee.

Portfolio Committee, Reporting Date

Hon. CKT NEWMAN (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (10.42 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That under the provisions of standing order 136 the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee report to the House on the Safe Night Out Legislation Amendment Bill by 18 August 2014.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SPEAKER'S STATEMENT

School Group Tours

Madam SPEAKER: Before I call the Clerk to read the next order of the day, I wish to acknowledge a school visiting today, St Bernard's Primary School, Upper Mt Gravatt, in the electorate of Mansfield.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

REVENUE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from 5 June 2014 (see p. 2213), on motion of Mr Nicholls—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Hon. CKT NEWMAN** (Ashgrove—LNP) (Premier) (10.44 am): The 2014-15 state budget is about continuing our work to deliver on our strong plan for a brighter future in Queensland. It is the budget of a can-do LNP government committed to responsible financial management and being honest with Queenslanders about the choices we face as a state. It increases spending on education, health and community services while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services.

When we came to power in 2012, the Commission of Audit's interim report predicted that Labor's debt would hit \$100 billion in 2018-19 unless urgent action was taken. Urgent and tough reforms were needed just to stabilise current levels of debt, let alone start paying off debt and moving back toward regaining Queensland's AAA credit rating.

I am happy to say that this budget consolidates the important reforms made in the past two years. Importantly, Queensland remains a low tax state, with Queensland's taxation around \$536 lower per capita than the average of other states and territories. General government expenses have grown by only 2.2 per cent in 2013-14, following growth of 0.2 per cent in 2012-13. Under this government revenue has grown more than expenses every single year. We are now living within our means. This budget stabilises state debt at around \$80 billion—\$6.4 billion less than the estimate given by the Independent Commission of Audit two years ago.

The future of the Queensland economy outside of the government's finances is looking distinctly positive. In 2014-15, the Queensland economy is estimated to grow at three per cent—faster than any other state. The ramp-up in LNG production is expected to drive a surge in overseas exports, with gross state product set to grow by six per cent in 2015-16. Despite this, the government still faces revenue challenges in the form of a large reduction in coal royalties, essential investment in disaster recovery and funding cuts in the recent federal budget. It is particularly disappointing that despite having signed formal national partnership agreements between the federal government and the states for the delivery of health and education services, suddenly we are informed by the Commonwealth that money will not be provided. We have recognised, for example, that the federal government is reducing funding for Queensland pensioner concessions by around \$50 million per year with the state stepping in to pick up that tab.

Despite these continuing fiscal challenges, we have still managed to fund key initiatives for Queenslanders, including \$406 million over five years to implement the government's response to the Carmody review into child protection, with funding focused on early intervention and helping strengthen families; \$44.5 million over four years to implement the government's plan for dealing with alcohol and drug related violence in entertainment precincts—I note that the Labor Party plans to penalise all young Queenslanders rather than actually target those troublemakers; an additional \$25 million in 2014-15 for drought assistance, including fodder and water subsidies, fee relief and community and mental health programs; an additional \$11 million for reef protection initiatives, bringing total reef protection funding to \$55 million; and over \$132 million in additional funding to upgrade correctional centres.

We are also providing the infrastructure necessary to supercharge the Queensland economy. We will invest \$5.4 billion on roads and transport, with \$768 million of that to be spent on Bruce Highway upgrades and \$321 million to go towards the Toowoomba second range crossing—a 20-year Labor policy failure. We think it is worth doing a whole lot more than talking about investing to make sure Queensland mums and dads can get to and from work and home to their families safely and on time. We are also providing hundreds of millions of dollars for essential infrastructure in regional Queensland through the Royalties for the Regions program.

In 2014-15 health funding will rise by six per cent to a record \$13.6 billion—an investment to make sure Queensland families can get in to see the right medical professional quickly when they or their kids are sick. Education funding is going up by seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. There will be 761 new teachers and teacher aides, and this investment will be targeted to improve the numeracy and literacy skills of our children and to make sure they have got better classrooms and more targeted help. Again I note the correction that is required from the Leader of the Opposition in relation to some of her statements and the matter of privilege that was covered by the education minister this morning.

Through the efforts of this government, debt has now been stabilised. That is an outstanding achievement, but we still have around \$80 billion worth of Labor debt, which means that to fund the new roads, hospitals, schools and services that Queenslanders want and deserve, we need to make strong choices and strong decisions. We have now released our plan to address the huge problem of the state's debt and interest repayments. The draft plan proposes that some of the state's assets be sold or leased to raise \$33.6 billion, of which \$25 billion would be used to reduce state debt, reducing the state's interest bill by \$1.3 billion per year. That is probably about \$150,000 an hour saved in interest, which in itself is an extraordinary amount of money. Importantly, our plan ensures that \$8.6 billion goes to the Strong Choices Investment Program, a new infrastructure and investment fund to build critical infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and roads, and to invest in growing Queensland's science, research and knowledge based industries. The plan is on the table and, once we have received further feedback, the government will deliver our final plan in September 2014.

Once again I want to make it absolutely crystal clear that none of those proposals will be implemented without a mandate from the people of Queensland. This was our commitment when we came to office in 2012.

I take a moment to address the statement made yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition and the opposition's commentary on the budget more generally. This is a government that fights for Queensland's fair share and does what is right for Queenslanders to address the cost of living. The opposition has zero credibility in this area. It has failed time and time again to stand up to the Commonwealth when it is their cuts that are causing the problems. I say again that Labor does not have a leg to stand on when it comes to the cost of living.

Where was Labor when the carbon tax came in, adding \$170 to a typical household's annual bills? Where was Labor when Julia Gillard and their federal friends cut \$103 million out of Queensland Health just last year? Where was Labor when the renewable energy target came in? Seventeen per cent of the typical tariff 11 bill comprises green schemes—costs. It was Labor's policy to introduce unsustainable rebates for solar power and those opposite have the rampant stupidity to keep talking about it in parliament today. It was Labor and the Leader of the Opposition who allowed public transport fees to get out of control, with 15 per cent year-on-year increases. I am pleased to see that she corrected her false statements last night in relation to the ill-fated Cross River Rail project. And there are a lot more false statements in various speeches from the opposition. I urge honourable members to pore over things that the Labor Party said yesterday, because a lot more people should be going to the Ethics Committee, if you ask me.

It was Labor that pushed local councils to the brink with cost shifting and expensive red tape that has cost mums and dads and ratepayers. It was Labor that spent like drunken sailors and lost the state's AAA credit rating. It was Labor that spent billions on pipes that did not go anywhere and on dams, such as the Traveston, that were never built. How much did that cost? Over \$700 million, for no benefit whatsoever! It was Labor that allowed unnecessary gold plating of the Queensland electricity network and it was Treasurer Andrew Fraser who wrote to the Commonwealth agencies concerned saying, 'Please, allow us to make higher profits'. It was Labor that cruelly ripped out Queenslanders' 8c fuel subsidy with no consultation in direct contravention of an iron-clad election promise prior to the 2009 election.

Worst of all, Labor ran up a credit card debt of \$80,000 million. I will say it again: \$80,000 million. That is \$80 billion on Queensland's credit card, which means we have a huge debt and interest to repay with taxpayers' money that could be used to relieve the cost-of-living pressures and provide the concessions, services and infrastructure that Queenslanders want and, most importantly, so richly deserve. They pay their taxes and they deserve to get a proper deal from government.

The Australian Labor Party has absolutely no credibility, even when they do have a semblance of a go at policy, such as the Leader of the Opposition tried to do in yesterday's budget reply speech. It is ironic that Labor's first attempt at anything that even remotely looks like a policy has landed them right back where they started. It just confirms what we have been telling Queenslanders, which is that Labor's default policy position is always to go back to increased cost, increased bureaucracy and more red tape. Labor's Jobs Queensland thought bubble is not about jobs for Queenslanders; it is about jobs for the boys. They want to dig up old union hacks and give them a 'weekend at Bernie's'. They want to try to re-establish their union power in Queensland by giving the same old faces government jobs to tell industries and companies how they should be run. That is right: the member for South Brisbane, who arranged hundreds of thousands of dollars of election donations from the union power brokers, will continue to do what the unions tell her to do because that is the Labor way. Clearly, Labor has not learned from their past mistakes. They are the same old recycled, incapable, inept people and we saw the hacks yesterday paraded like a forlorn Dad's Army on the Speaker's Green.

Labor has no plan for real private sector jobs growth, but they want more jobs in the government, despite what the member for South Brisbane said—and I note that she said it—when she committed to not re-employing government employees. Yesterday that was blown out of the water with a howitzer. She would not re-employ those people probably; that is what she said. This is how they got themselves in trouble last time. They created the 'misery gap' for Queensland public servants by employing too many, too fast in a misguided attempt to meet Anna Bligh's doomed 100,000 jobs commitment. We know where that was.

We know that growing bureaucracies and increasing union power does not create real sustainable jobs. We know that getting out of the way and helping grow businesses is the way to create real jobs. This government has a strong plan for Queensland's future economy and jobs based on growing a four-pillar economy. We have already established the Ministerial Industry Commission, an independent body that provides advice to government on Queensland's skills and workforce development priorities. We do not need to be paying a new, union led bureaucracy to do backroom deals with government. We have the best and the brightest in the business world giving us advice for free. The clear difference between our policies and Labor policies is that the LNP gets our advice directly from industry, where Labor builds bureaucracies and fiefdoms. We are getting the best result on jobs—the best of any state—with more than 60,000 jobs created in the past 12 months. Half the nation's jobs growth is occurring here in the state of Queensland, yet we have only one-fifth of the nation's population.

The Leader of the Opposition also implied that the government was letting down business on payroll tax. It is this government that has committed to raising the payroll tax threshold to \$1.6 million. I was surprised that the opposition had the audacity to say that we had cut education funding when education funding is up seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. This government fought for Queensland and won four years of federal funding—\$794 million—and we have been able to do some amazing things with that money. We announced the Great Results Guarantee, giving funds straight to each and every school for literacy and numeracy programs. Unlike Labor's Gonski model, there are no losers. Everyone wins with the Great Results Guarantee. No other state in this country has showed the confidence in our principals and teachers that Queensland has and we are already seeing results. However, I do not have to talk it up myself. I just have to quote one principal who said—

I have worked for EQ since 1985, and honestly believe that the Great Results Guarantee is the most important and significant programme introduced over my 28 years with EQ, a programme that will have significant and ongoing positive results for the children of Queensland.

A gold star for the Minister for Education and Training!

Government members: Hurray!

Mr NEWMAN: I remind the Leader of the Opposition that under Labor Queensland Health became defined by waiting list blowouts, ambulance ramping, Jayant Patel and the Tahitian prince. The Tahitian prince: who could forget the \$16 million fraud that occurred under Labor's watch? Who could forget the \$1.2 billion Health payroll debacle? Our hard-working nurses and doctors were underpaid, overpaid or not paid at all. The commission of inquiry found that—

The replacement of the Queensland Health payroll system must take a place in the front rank of failures in public administration in this country. It may be the worst.

Under this government the Health budget has increased by 18.6 per cent since 2011-12. Our commitment is \$2 billion more than the last budget under Labor. The Health budget will be a record \$13.6 billion in 2014-15. The number of long wait dental patients has reduced from 62,513 as at 28 February 2013 to only 103 as at 31 May 2014. That is a gold star for the health minister.

Furthermore, Queensland now has the lowest median wait time for elective surgery in Australia. Ambulance response times have improved and we have dramatically reduced emergency department waiting times. Actually, it should be two gold stars for the health minister.

I must, of course, conclude my contribution to this debate by mentioning the fantastic outcomes this budget delivers for the Ashgrove electorate. Over several months now I have been asking for and listening to community feedback on what is required to improve the Walkabout Creek visitor centre in the D'Aguilar National Park. I am pleased to say that this budget provides \$2.5 million to upgrade this facility. I know families throughout the Ashgrove electorate will come and enjoy what will be a fantastic place for family outings on the weekend and over the school holidays, and not to mention a great tourist attraction for those visiting from further abroad.

As part of our commitment to ensure all Queensland kids reach the minimum standard in reading, writing and numeracy, kids in schools in the Ashgrove electorate will share in a further \$1.06 million for the Great Results Guarantee program. Mums and dads can feel assured that their kids have access to the support they need to be able to learn effectively and achieve their best. Already students at the Ashgrove State School, an IPS, have seen significant improvements in their grades all thanks to this program and funding.

I am proud that this budget also provides funds to support members of our community who need that extra help. Supporting our most vulnerable is so important and funding will continue for specialist homelessness services and be provided to our hardworking local organisations, like Communitify, that is focused on making sure that people get out of the chain of homelessness and back on their feet.

I also know there will be many families and sporting groups in the Ashgrove electorate excited about the extra funding for the hugely successful Get in the Game initiative. Of course, this initiative has helped so many next generation sports stars take to rugby fields and netball courts when they otherwise may not have been able to afford to do so.

This government is making significant progress in restoring our finances, growing a four-pillar economy, revitalising front-line services and funding infrastructure projects and jobs. A brighter future can be ours, but we need to reduce the state's \$80 billion debt and \$4 billion per year interest bill. The only political team in Queensland with a strong plan for a brighter future is the Newman LNP team. No other party or Independent in this place can offer the answers or the bright way forward that we can. I commend this budget to the House.



Mrs CUNNINGHAM (Gladstone—Ind) (11.03 am): I rise to speak to this budget on behalf of the Gladstone community. Gladstone residents have, for many years, contributed to the Queensland economy, above and beyond many other regions in the state. They have in the main accepted the pain of industrial development, asking only that governments recognise that pain of industrialisation by investing in critically necessary infrastructure. At the time of greatest—

Madam SPEAKER: Please pause the clock. I apologise member for Gladstone. Members, if you wish to have conversations please go outside and leave the chamber quietly. I call the member for Gladstone.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: At the time of greatest impact relating to LNG development, the previous government did little to equip my community to cope. While some acknowledgement of the local pain has been made more recently, the approach by the Deputy Premier to infrastructure funding from the Royalties for the Regions program and the priority development fund is very concerning.

The Gladstone Regional Council found at the commencement of the Labor government's infrastructure cap that they were out of pocket. The council has regularly stated that the community is covering the gap left between the actual cost of infrastructure provision and the developer's obligation to pay. This is not sustainable. Concerning, though, are the statements made in this place on Wednesday evening that any council that charges above the fair value charge will be ineligible to apply for funding under the Royalties for the Regions program or the priority development infrastructure fund. This precluding demonstrates a lack of understanding of the depth of pressure placed on communities like Gladstone during periods of intense development.

I must reiterate the Gladstone mayor's genuine concerns. At a time when the Minister for Local Government, Community Recovery and Resilience has worked incredibly hard to re-establish the relationship between the state government and councils, this big stick approach will do much to undermine that relationship. On behalf of Gladstone residents, I would ask the Deputy Premier to give some thought to those unique council areas which are subject to concentrated development pressures.

I would like to thank the Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection for the continued funding—in this budget \$1.5 million—for the healthy harbour report card. While this process does not address the problems in the past, and that has been acknowledged, it has the potential to re-establish the confidence of the community in the oversight process. I also note the joint funding in the budget from the federal and state governments of \$1 million for the Tigalee Creek detention basin. This will assist in future flooding events.

It is critical that, irrespective of the results of the next election, the rebuilding of the emergency department continues. We see in the budget further funding for the work at the Rockhampton Base Hospital. The reality is that the design for that refurbishment made under Labor was so poorly done that no helipad was included. Of concern also, the Rockhampton Hospital does not have the capacity to cope with referrals from the hospitals around the region. The best way forward is to build capacity at Gladstone given our growth and proposed future growth.

I commend our medical superintendent Nicki Murdock and her team for their diligence in increasing services at Gladstone. Their hard work is paying off. I also acknowledge Len Richards, the regional director, who is also committed to building services in Gladstone.

I have to, at this point, also thank the Minister for Health for his continuing and public commitment to sort out the problems that have been embedded in the health system over the state, but particularly in my electorate. I thank the Minister for Transport for the confirmed \$12.7 million for the Kin Kora roundabout. This has been a historic problem. With the growing population and increase in traffic the roundabout at times becomes very congested and tempers fray. There is some funding to come from the federal government, but the construction of the roundabout will put an end to much of the frustration in the city, particularly during peak hour.

I also commend the \$1.3 million that continues to be set aside for the Nellie Simpson bypass. Whilst the Gladstone council has got a view about the use of that money, I know that the Boyne Valley community still want to see options for the Nellie Simpson bypass fully examined. Work will also continue on the Bruce Highway, the Gladstone-Mount Larcom Road and the Dawson Highway. Each of these roads is critical for safety and for our economy.

As I said this morning, community concerns continue about the proposed lease of the Gladstone port. Concerns are that agreements for funding are honoured into the future, irrespective of what structure or framework is proposed. I thank the Treasurer for his confirmation today that the funding commitments made by the port to the Gladstone council, particularly in relation to the entertainment centre and the MSQ area at the top of the parking station, will be honoured. It is of concern that the government proposes to forgo continuing and growing income, preferring to receive a one-off payment. With LNG coming online and the inevitable improvements in coal royalty, the revenue from the port will only increase.

Funding for the drink safe precinct of \$2.21 million is very welcome and I thank the minister also for funding this initiative. It is something the community has been seeking for some time. Already the liquor accord works well, and this injection of funds will further assist with an increased police presence so necessary to manage behaviour.

The budget also allocates almost \$13 million for the operation of our child safety and disability services. These are very precious people needing specific support and care. Gladstone continues to have a need for independent living for those adults for whom life outside the family home is desirable. Gladstone has for quite some time been recognised as a priority area for such a facility.

An honourable member interjected.

Mrs CUNNINGHAM: I agree. I look forward to further discussions with providers of these services to progress the issue. I place on the record my appreciation for all who work in the area of child safety. This budget indicates an increase in funding for this area. It is a sad reality that there continues to be circumstances where it is safer for a child to be away from their parents than with them. This work is challenging and costly, both financially and emotionally, and I commend those who work in that area and those who provide foster care or kinship care.

My community at Calliope clearly remains of the view that the next high school should be at Calliope. While I live behind the Calliope township, I have no vested interest in the school other than to ensure the reduction in the number of students who are required to travel into Gladstone to attend high school. This number will increase markedly next year as the year 7 cohort transitions into high school.

I acknowledge the Minister for Transport's response to my questions without notice. I have travelled behind the bus travelling from Calliope into Gladstone. Whilst the minister was advised that the buses rarely travel over 80 kilometres an hour, having followed a number of them, I can assure the minister that buses often travel well over 80 kilometres an hour. Young people having to stand in that environment is not safe. I also note funding for most of my primary and secondary schools under Schools First, auspiced by the federal government, has been allocated and is welcome.

This budget also provides funding for the Gladstone Ambulance Station. This is the only station within the city limits and is greatly in need of expansion. It is located on a busy intersection. That is a negative in some ways but a positive in others because it fronts on to a number of arterial roads that go to all of our developing suburbs. This station does need this refurbishment critically because of the growing population.

The budget also provides funding for the Gladstone Area Water Board and the Gladstone Ports Corporation. The funding each year covers those two entities and also our power network. Augmentation or growth in both GAWB and the GPC, and power, is critical for the continued growth in our industry. Each of those provides important services. As I said earlier, our community is very concerned with the proposal to lease for 99 years the Gladstone port. As I have said previously, the port is different to so many others up and down the eastern seaboard in that it is located centrally in the community. It is located right in the centre of Gladstone and has been intrinsically linked to our community since it commenced its growth so many years ago.

Many of the schools can look to the port for clearing their ovals. Many of the churches and other sporting entities can acknowledge the port in the development of their sporting fields. It was a mutually beneficial arrangement because at that time Reg Tanna would say, 'Do you need some flat playing space?' And if anyone said yes he would say, 'Right, we'll be there at no cost to you.' They would flatten the ground and they would take the overburden and use it to infill the port to reclaim the land. So there was a beneficial arrangement between all of the entities and the port.

To some extent that changed when the Labor government corporatised the port, which was also opposed. But there is still that intrinsic link between our community and the Gladstone port. In fact, many in the community lost access to the front of the harbour for fishing when the Ports Corporation closed the Auckland Point loading facility area. They said it was for workplace health and safety reasons but many families went down there to fish. So there has been a long relationship between Gladstone and the operation of the port and I think that bears greatly on the strong feeling in relation to this proposal.

With very high boat ownership in my region, the \$1 million allocated for improvements of facilities at the Powerhouse and Toolooa Bends boat ramps is welcome. Fishing and boating are major recreational pursuits locally, and continuing improvements are welcome. The other priority for my electorate is the Boyne River mouth dredging—again for safety. This has been a matter of concern for at least 20 to 25 years. Whenever it has been put to the port or to the minister—not the current minister but previous ministers—they have talked about a cost-benefit analysis and that on that basis the dredging of the river mouth does not count. Can I say that if there is an accident—and there may be at any time because of the siltation at the mouth—it is going to be a poor response to a family who is grieving to say that on the basis of a cost-benefit analysis it did not stand up.

In finishing my contribution I would have to relay to this House concerns that have been made to me in relation to the consultation about Strong Choices. Many in my community tried to get on to the website to register their point of view. But their feedback to me was that they were channelled in a particular direction and if they did not take that direction they were unable to register their point of

view in relation to the privatisation. This was a frustration for them, and I think that it will into the future raise questions in relation to the government's direction. I think had people been able to write their comments—whether they be in opposition to or feelings about the proposal—the people in the electorate would have felt that they were more listened to.

That gives rise also to concerns that have been expressed to me that the privatisation proposals are just a Liberal government paying forward to those who might support them in their election campaign. The fact is, however, that big business will only get one vote each—that is, those in big business. I suspect that those hurt by the initiatives and the cutbacks that have been incorporated into this budget are both greater in number and more vehement in their drive for justice and transparency.

There were quite a number of areas in my electorate that benefited from this budget. Frankly our community cannot afford a Labor government to get back in because of the budget situation that has been left both state and federally. But my community feels very strongly that the current government has squandered a lot of the electoral capital that they were given after the election—this is the LNP—and many people are frustrated with some of the decisions that have been made and some of the changes in relation to the electoral process and electoral funding. I certainly hope that my community can feel that they have been thought about and that they have been listened to in relation to their concerns. I certainly hope that this government and any future government does not squander the trust that the community puts in them on election day.

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.18 am): What a pleasure it is to rise today on Queensland Day to support the Newman government's third budget, presented to the House on Tuesday by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade. This budget shows that the Newman government has a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. Unlike the former Labor government, the Newman government recognises the importance of enabling the productive and responsible use of our land, water, mineral and energy resources to grow the agriculture and resources sectors to generate wealth and prosperity for current and future generations of Queenslanders.

My Department of Natural Resources and Mines is modernising our regulatory framework, enhancing our business systems and developing our people so that we can be a leading economic development agency within the Queensland government. After years of fiscal neglect by an incompetent Labor administration, the Newman government is committed to returning the state's finances to a position of strength through the four pillars of the economy. The resources sector will continue to make a significant contribution to repairing Labor's debt legacy, and generate wealth and prosperity for all Queenslanders. Investment in resource exploration will deliver long-term benefits and will underwrite the future jobs and economic growth in Queensland's regions.

Some \$5 million of funding has been allocated to expand the purpose-built Zillmere core library site in order to preserve economically and scientifically valuable core rock samples acquired from company and government exploration drilling. The Zillmere core library was first opened in 1979 as a state-of-the-art facility used to assist exploration and to improve our understanding of the geology, resources and resource potential of the state. Queensland has benefited from a massive boom in exploration activity resulting in the generation of \$5 billion worth of new geological information over the past four years. The Newman government's encouragement of further resource exploration through initiatives such as ResourcesQ and the Ministerial Advisory Committee on Exploration will see an increased need for greater capacity to store and utilise this vital exploration data.

To preserve key elements of this information, the government has recognised the need to expand storage facilities for core and other geoscientific samples. As the resource industry grows, it is important to recognise the expectation of communities affected. This is why the Newman government committed to a properly resourced, dedicated inspection and enforcement unit to ensure full compliance with legislation and regulation for the coal seam gas industry. This budget delivers \$3.8 million in funding for 2014-15 to ensure that the Coal Seam Gas Compliance Unit keeps pace with industry growth and company demands. The ongoing operation of the CSG Compliance Unit is essential to the effective regulation of CSG activities in Queensland and to maintaining the industry's social licence to operate. The Newman government recognises the importance of an adequately resourced compliance unit to ensure that operational compliance of and timely response to community concerns and the responsible management of Queensland's resources is assured.

The Newman government has sought to achieve a balance between economic development and the responsible management of our land and water resources. The 2014-15 budget has allocated \$16 million as part of the \$80 million in funding for the Queensland Regional Natural Resource Management Investment Program for local and regional projects that improve, restore and protect land, watercourses and the Great Barrier Reef. The Newman government's commitment to funding regional natural resource management groups supports the productive and responsible use of our natural resources through projects that enhance the productivity of our industries and the resilience of our landscapes.

The funding will enable important strategic programs aimed at controlling pests and weeds, improving water quality, particularly in Great Barrier Reef catchments, and promoting sustainable agriculture. These projects range from targeting feral animals and pest weeds in Cape York to streambank rehabilitation in the Brisbane River catchment, to improving reef water quality and enhancing sustainable agriculture in the Wet Tropics. This funding has assisted in the development of innovative approaches to prickly acacia control in far western Queensland through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles.

In April I visited Morven in south-west Queensland with the member for Warrego to announce \$3.8 million for a cluster fencing project to protect more than 400,000 hectares of land from overgrazing by kangaroos, the spread of pest weeds by feral pigs and predation by wild dogs. These are just some of the many projects delivering tangible outcomes across Queensland, reaffirming the Newman government's commitment to grow agriculture as a pillar of the state economy. Ultimately, this \$16 million will enable regional NRM groups to focus on on-the-ground outcomes and undertake their valuable work through strong partnerships with landholders, the community, volunteer and Indigenous groups, rural industries and other levels of government.

I now turn to budget allocations relevant to my electorate of Hinchinbrook. The Hinchinbrook electorate has been challenged by a number of natural disasters, but the Queensland government has shown unprecedented support to ensure local communities are able to get up, brush themselves off and continue to make a contribution to the state's economy in North and Far North Queensland. Mission Beach has taken a hit in recent years, but the Newman government shares the community's commitment to rebuilding the local tourism industry. That is why I welcome the availability of \$18.9 million to improve marine infrastructure in Boat Bay at Mission Beach, which is a great outcome for local recreational boaters, commercial users and the tourism industry.

Significant road and transport infrastructure spending will be welcomed by my community, with \$15 million being invested in constructing overtaking lanes on the Bruce Highway at Feluga, just north of Tully. I am delighted with the \$2.8 million upgrade of the intersection of Mourilyan Road and the Bruce Highway, south of Innisfail. Residents in the lower Herbert area will also see a great benefit from this budget, with \$11.9 million allocated to reconstruct the Ingham-Halifax-Bemerside Road.

Finally, I am very pleased to see that \$80 million has been allocated this year as part of the \$200 million Townsville ring road project. This project, once completed, will be a great win for local residents on Townsville's northern beaches in my electorate of Hinchinbrook. This budget provides students in my electorate with a terrific level of support to ensure they receive high-quality education in the state system. I am pleased to see 30 schools across the Hinchinbrook electorate share in almost \$1 million through the Great Results Guarantee program, which will ensure our schools have the best teachers and the best curriculum possible. I am also pleased that almost \$1.4 million will be spent this year on a \$1.8 million project to enhance the Paluma Environmental Education Centre by providing a better learning environment for students visiting this unique facility in my electorate.

The Health budget will also mean a lot to my local community, with more than \$1.4 billion being invested into the health and hospital services in North and Far North Queensland. This significant investment in local health services, with \$676 million allocated to the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service and \$758 million to the Townsville Hospital and Health Service will see my local community benefit from improved health services, and I very much welcome this funding. I am also pleased to see that the budget contains \$81 million this year as part of the \$446 million expansion of clinical services and redevelopment of the Cairns Hospital, and \$41 million invested this year as part of the \$334 million expansion of clinical and additional services at the Townsville Hospital.

I must say I am excited that almost \$2.5 million in funding has been provided this year for the \$3.1 million replacement of the auxiliary Fire and Rescue Service station in Ingham—a long overdue project in the Herbert River district. Our local Queensland Fire and Rescue Service officers make a major contribution to keeping the local community safe, and I am proud to have guided this project

and look forward to its delivery later this year. This funding will ensure the community has a modern and flood resilient station to work out of so that the hardworking Fire and Rescue Service officers can concentrate on their lifesaving work and are ready to respond when the community needs them most.

I congratulate the Treasurer and Minister for Trade on yet another responsible budget that promises a brighter future for generations of Queenslanders. The first and second budgets delivered by the Newman government were designed to get the state's finances back on track, and this one is no different. We are committed to ensuring future generations of Queenslanders do not have to suffer from the same financial hardships this state has had to endure thanks to the \$80 billion of debt left behind by the previous Labor government. Only the Newman government has the determination to make the strong choices that Queensland needs.

 **Mrs MILLER** (Bundamba—ALP) (11.29 am): I rise today to respond to the 2014 state budget. Year after year I would rise in the budget sittings of parliament and set out how our state Labor government delivered progress, prosperity and dignity to my local community.

Government members interjected.

Mrs MILLER: Don't like it, do you? From 2000 to 2011, I would meticulously outline, suburb by suburb, how my representations to our Labor ministers resulted in expenditure in services and infrastructure to build and support our community—in fire stations, in police stations, in schools, in rail infrastructure like the Springfield railway line, in walking and cycling tracks, and in community groups and sporting clubs. New members of our community can go online to the parliamentary webpage and see, year after year, the investment in our future. As part of the accountability of the previous Labor government, I was able to have these printed, and for those new members of parliament they were called half-electorate speeches. I ensured that they were distributed to each and every resident so that they were able to see how and where their taxes were spent. But this half-electorate print run has also been cut out.

I will again outline the budget, 2014-style, of this LNP government, suburb by suburb, so residents can see the stark difference between a government that invests in citizens and the one that we have now—one that divests its interests to the top end of town, yes, to the big businesses, the multinationals and those LNP donors. So I will now go through suburb by suburb. In Ripley, there is a school but no details; it is re-announced under the LNP from a commitment by Labor. However, this is not a normal state school but 'an independent state school'. Well, what a joke. A state school should be a state school, full stop.

In Blackstone, there is nothing new. However, the LNP sold off the old Blackstone school site even though it went to the Blackstone people and promised that it would be reopened before the last election. The Blackstone school site was being used by multiple community groups, like the Ipswich Historical Society and the Bundamba Naval Association. So what did the Tories do? They sold it off from under the community. In Bundamba, there is a small upgrade of the Bundamba Fire Station but nothing else, and I believe there is a possible sale or lease of the Bremer Institute of TAFE at River Road, Bundamba—a broken promise for sure.

Ebbw Vale gets nothing. In Dinmore, the LNP is building a supported accommodation centre without extensive consultation with the community. I checked with people in Dinmore yesterday, and they told me that they had never, ever heard of such a supported accommodation centre. What did the LNP do? The LNP sold off the old Dinmore State School site, even though it was being used by the Samoan advisory council, churches and other community groups—another broken promise and another asset sold off.

Riverview gets nothing. In Redbank, sale of the remainder of Aurizon will lead to the closure of the Redbank railway workshops putting 430 people out of work and impacting on the local businesses in the Redbank community and the wider Ipswich community—another broken promise by the LNP. Furthermore, a closure of the police Railway Squad at Redbank will waste \$1 million, as it is simply being moved a few stations along the line to Ipswich station.

Goodna gets nothing, nothing at all. In Redbank Plains and Bellbird Park, schools previously planned by the Labor government have been rebadged again as independent public schools. This again is the toffee Tory philosophy rather than better education. They get nothing else, zilch. There is no money in the budget to extend the railway line from Springfield to Redbank Plains—nothing, not a zap. Collingwood Park gets zilch, with no funding to fill the underground mines yet again. This funding, along with a contribution from the Ipswich City Council, is necessary to provide peace of mind to hundreds of residents. This is absolutely disgraceful.

In Augustine Heights and Brookwater, what do the residents get there? Nothing. In Springfield, Springfield Lakes and Springfield Central, there is a continuation of the Labor planned expansion of the Springfield Central State High School. Another school may be funded, again on the independent public school tory model, but there are no further details of allocated funds. There may also be a possible lease or sale of the Bremer TAFE facilities at Springfield Central—if so, this is yet another broken promise.

Expenditure in the electorate of Bundamba has dropped from billions of dollars whilst Labor was in power to next to nothing under this disgraceful Newman LNP government. Labor delivered projects which provided the infrastructure our community needs whilst creating real jobs, but what is Premier Campbell Newman doing? He is building himself a Premier's palace over the road here and when it is built in Brisbane he will be looking down upon our people in Bundamba as they continue to get the sack.

I turn to pensioners now. While the Newman LNP government was very embarrassed by the Labor opposition and the understandable outrage by pensioners on cutting the rebates, they will still be stuck with higher electricity costs. I bet that this increase, like the water rebate, will be a one-off, vote-grabbing trick. Do you know what will happen? This LNP mob will smile at the pensioners all the way into the polling booths and then they will pinch their purses on the way out because that is their way. I bet the pensioner concessions are for one year only. You can never trust this LNP tory mob opposite because they are out of touch with the many pensioners who are forced under their blankets on a cold Ipswich winter night, as they go to bed in their flannelette PJs with beanies on their heads and football socks on their feet because they are too afraid to turn on a heater.

This arrogant Premier Newman lives in some sort of bubble I think, cutting himself off from the real world. Residents often say to me, 'Jo, give them the line from *The Castle*—tell him he's dreaming.' Other people in my electorate say a lot worse. They say a lot more colourful language about the Premier—

Ms Trad: At the Royal Mail.

Mrs MILLER: Particularly Bazza and Dogger who have a few things to say at the Royal Mail.

Ms Trad: What about the A-G?

Mrs MILLER: I will take that interjection. They actually rather fancy the Attorney-General as being their pin-up dancing queen. The pensioners and other people know that they will be slugged with \$1,320 in new taxes, that their kids' class sizes are getting bigger—they know that because they see it for themselves—that the line at Centrelink is getting longer, that the queue at the hospital is getting longer, and that the charity that helps people get back on their feet cannot cope. Queenslanders know that they have had enough of this LNP mob. In fact it is my view that many people in my electorate despise them. When you simply mention the name 'Campbell Newman', you can see their blood boil and their milk turn sour in their cups of tea. That is why Queensland Labor will introduce Jobs Queensland to provide expert advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning to make sure our kids have the right skills for the right time to get the job and build up their future.

Queensland Labor will be focused on jobs and job creation because that is the right thing to do by our people. We have already announced in Ipswich that we will return the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program that was highly successful in our community, delivering training at the Riverview Neighbourhood House and at the Salvation Army at Riverview, getting people job ready—

Mr Cox interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Member for Thuringowa, I warn you.

Mrs MILLER:—not casting them aside as a problem like the Newman LNP government does, and a tory senator once came into my electorate—and that was once too often—and famously talked about throwing pearls at the poor. Skilling Queenslanders for Work helped 57,000 Queenslanders get back to work, generating \$8 for the community for every dollar that was invested in people getting training. I say to every person in this House: we want jobs, not pearls. We want to be treated with dignity and with respect. We want training and we want hope for the future.

This Newman LNP budget saw this tory Treasurer move on to the next phase of his marketing campaign to sell more of Queensland's public assets. Guess what? We are all paying for these ads. The estimated \$20 million advertising blitz called Strong Choices, which I suggest is renamed 'Wrong Choices', is designed by a \$280-an-hour private consultant. It is now moving on to selling the LNP 'mandate message' to the voters of Queensland. This is one that has been clearly rejected by the

people of Queensland, from their own survey, and at the last election. This is supposed to be a vision or, should I say, a fog for the future of our state that the LNP is trying to sell. It is not a positive vision of growth or of jobs or of a fair go for pensioners or mums and dads struggling to raise a family. This LNP vision—sorry, fog—for the future of Queensland is a fog of sorrow for working families and for people on fixed incomes like pensioners. This budget is not about strong choices. As I said, it is about wrong choices because what they want to do in this budget is wrong, wrong, wrong. It is about a fire sale of \$33 billion of assets, of income-generating public assets, that helped build our state and that provide thousands of jobs in regional communities like Ipswich. The only winners are the merchant bankers profiting to the tune of billions of dollars a year and those seedy financiers seeking a cut of the nation's biggest privatisation program. Yes, the top end of town—those who obviously live in the Treasurer's area of Clayfield, Ascot and, of course, how can we forget leafy Hamilton?

Despite the government's backflip, the obvious people to lose out from this budget are the pensioners and the senior concession card holders. Can they really trust this government not to cut subsidies to electricity and rates bills and public transport after the election? No, they can never ever trust the LNP. As I have said, they will accept your vote for the LNP at the next election and then they will pinch your purse on the way out of the ballot box. But the people of Queensland should not be fooled again. They will never be fooled again. The reality is that everybody in this state is losing under this LNP government because unemployment is up, the cost of living is out of control, electricity bills are skyrocketing even before this government flogs off our power generators. Whilst trying to sell his budget message on talkback radio yesterday, the Treasurer got a reality check when a caller from Redcliffe said, 'You guys don't know what's going on in the real world and the way you treat people shows that you don't care. Why pick on pensioners?' I say good on that caller. The Treasurer tried to blame the federal government for any cut to pensioner concessions, but he quickly did a backflip with a tuck, a pike followed by a half-pirouette.

The Treasurer is also warning us that the small government ideology of the Abbott government will lead to a disaster in hospital funding. The Liberal-National coalition has done everything possible to undermine the National Health Reform Agreement of the last federal Labor government. Their priorities are completely wrong but, no, the Newman government does not care because they are only looking after the rich and the top end of town. With the recent federal budget, the Liberal Prime Minister, Mr Abbott, has destroyed five years worth of consensus building related to efficient and fair mechanisms for funding public hospitals. It is these national partnership agreements that have funded the hard work of Queensland doctors and nurses to reduce hospital and dental waiting lists. What is missing from the budget papers—and conveniently missing—and the health minister's contribution to debate is any mention of the horrendous implication of the LNP cuts to hospital funding in 2016-17. Premier Newman is reported in the media as saying, 'Up to 1,700 beds will go over 10 years.' This is the equivalent of closing both the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and the PA Hospital. How does the LNP intend to maintain our public hospitals in the face of such budget cuts? I say to my constituents, 'If you've been putting off going to hospital for an operation, go now because there may be no hospital beds for you in two years time. Go now before they demand your credit card and before asking for your Medicare card.'

The budget papers confirm that without this federal funding, hospital and health service performance will once again languish. Apart from taking credit for the work of others, the Minister for Health's contribution to improving health care in Queensland has been to destroy the trust of our senior doctors through a vicious campaign for Work Choices style individual contracts, once again the wrong priorities. The minister's attack on nurses and their professional organisation has also been relentless. More than 1,500 nursing and midwifery positions have been abolished since the LNP took office. Over the past two years more than 4,000 positions have been axed from our health system. These were real jobs held by real people with real families to feed and real mortgages or rents to pay. Again, these are the wrong choices with the wrong priorities. The minister forgets that, without the trust and commitment to the public system of our health workers, he himself would be without a job.

The Treasurer has offered Queensland a six per cent increase in the Health budget when most health policy experts know that an eight per cent to nine per cent increase is required just to keep pace with increasing demand from a growing and ageing population and from the higher costs of new medical technologies. It is our doctors, our nurses and our allied health professionals who are carrying the burden of increased service demand with inadequate staff levels. In fact, you have only to visit a hospital to see that the nurses are run off their feet.

The minister may also care to reflect on recent assaults on nurses at Redcliffe and Gold Coast hospitals. Front-line health workers are feeling the pain caused by the LNP every day. It is wrong and it is hurtful. I want to know what the minister is going to do about it because I think it is disgraceful that he is a member of the LNP and so is the federal government that is putting this impost onto the people of Queensland.

In conclusion, never ever believe anything this Newman LNP government says. Just like 'Bazza' and 'Dogger' tell everyone at the Royal Mail Hotel, if Newman tips the red dog in the last race at Dapto be sure to put your money on any other dishlicker. That way you have better than an even chance.'

 **Mr DAVIES** (Capalaba—LNP) (11.49 am): I rise today to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill 2014. I would like to say right off the bat that, as the Treasurer said earlier in the week, this is the right budget for this time. We do need to have a budget that is sensible and within our means. We just cannot keep on spending, as those opposite who live in a parallel universe obviously did, and put all our expenses on the credit card and just kick the can down the road for our children—or if they kept on going, our grandchildren—to pay for.

There is some really good news in this budget for my electorate. Firstly, there is an increase in the schools budget of 7 per cent up to \$11.8 billion. This includes over \$1.1 million for the Great Results Guarantee in my electorate. This is a top-up of the millions invested in cleaning up the maintenance backlog that those opposite left. The schools in my electorate were left in a terrible state, with peeling paint and drainage issues. Some of the schools were in absolute disrepair, and the close to \$2 million that was invested in my electorate has made a significant difference. I want to commend the Treasurer for the work he has done in the past to ensure that our schools are the best schools in Australia.

As far as health goes, we have also increased the budget by six per cent up to \$13.6 billion. If you break it down to my area, the Metro South region, that is \$1.8 billion, which includes an extra 155 ambulances right across Queensland—25 locally in the Metro South area—and 100 extra front-line employees, 10 of them in the Metro South region, which is just fantastic.

But it is not just what we are doing going forward; it is what we have done already. I think some of the statistics which are coming out are breathtaking and wonderful. Just by thinking outside the box and not going the conventional way that those opposite may have wanted us to go, the dental waiting list in my region alone went from over 11,000 people to zero to date. The voucher system has made a difference. For those pensioners who were waiting two, three or four years under Labor to have their teeth fixed, today their teeth have been fixed and no doubt they can eat without pain.

I have a number of people in my community who have issues with their hearing, and we went from 121 people on the waiting list for cochlear implants to now only eight. Of those eight, basically all of those people could have the operation right now if they were ready for it, but because the operation might take them out of work or school at a particular time, they have put the procedure on hold. So the waiting list for a cochlear implant has also gone to virtually zero, which is a fantastic thing. We have the lowest medium wait times for elective surgery and no ambulance ramping—all of these in a little over two years.

This budget also sees ongoing funding of services in my electorate: child safety, \$620,000; disability services, \$15.6 million; homelessness, \$330,000; and Home Assist, \$553,000. We also benefit from the \$406 million allocated for Child Safety as a result of the Carmody inquiry, which again shows the pro-active nature of this government. This is not something that was forced upon us; this was something that this government took on. When we first came into government we instituted the Carmody inquiry, and we are investing in the recommendations of that inquiry to the tune of \$406 million. That is an absolutely wonderful thing, and again it just shows what it is to be a pro-active government.

In this budget we are getting 267 extra new police right across Queensland, and no doubt some of them will be in my electorate. We even got a second police chopper! Labor refused to even fund one chopper, yet this Queensland LNP government has now budgeted for a second chopper which will be based out of Archerfield. That will have direct benefits because if there is crime in my area, that chopper can be sent out very quickly to assist in, for example, high speed chases.

We will also see 75 new six-carriage trains. Those trains will have seats, which is fantastic. As someone who lives close to the railway, I know we do have some old rolling stock because I hear them. You can hardly hear the new trains from my place, but every now and again you will hear the old rolling stock and you know that you've got an old train.

A government member: There was some old rolling stock over there!

Mr DAVIES: I take that interjection. I agree, there was a lot of old rolling stock over there. They are real clunkers! But I think that 75 extra trains is just a fantastic initiative of this government.

As of 30 June 2014, every man, woman and child in Queensland will owe \$16,209 in state debt that the Labor government has inflicted upon the people of Queensland. If we add to that the federal debt, I imagine it would be around \$30,000 that each man, woman and child in Queensland would have in Labor government debt. Just think of that: a little child born today at the Mater Hospital comes into this world bearing \$16,000 worth of Labor debt. Every year each individual in Queensland has to pay \$869 worth of interest. I came from the banking sector, and I have just done a quick back-of-the-envelope calculation. If that \$16,209 was a personal loan at 5 per cent—which is a very cheap interest rate—over five years, the repayment of the interest and principle would be \$85 per week per person, or \$1,360 per month for a family of four. That is the debt that Labor has afflicted on the families of Queensland. Albert Einstein said—

Compound interest is the eighth wonder of the world. He who understands it, earns it ... he who doesn't ... pays it.

Labor has forced the people of Queensland to pay it. Gross debt under Labor had grown tenfold between 2006 and 2011, while the average expenditure over the decades to 2011-12 was nine per cent.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr DAVIES: You economic vandals inflicted this on Queenslanders. The Labor Party are economic vandals, and they have vandalised and trashed Queensland's and Australia's economies. They have trashed the Australian economy with their Labornomics—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Order, those on my left! Member for South Brisbane, I think you have had your speech, haven't you?

Mr DAVIES: The Labor Party lives in some alternate universe where loans do not need to be paid and interest is not a problem. If you listen to Albert Einstein, he said that those who do not understand compound interest will have to pay it. What this mob over here has inflicted on the people of Queensland is just economic vandalism and an absolute travesty. In just two years we have brought the expenditure rate back from nine per cent to only 1.2 per cent, and that is absolutely fantastic. Manageable debt needs to be reduced by \$25 billion to \$30 billion. It will lower interest by \$1.3 billion to \$1.5 billion in interest every year if we can get that debt down.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Those on my left, order! Members will cease interjecting.

Mr DAVIES: Some aspects of the Stronger Choices campaign, which include leasing or selling some government assets, will actually give us a debt of \$55 billion. This will save over \$1.3 billion and it will also give us back our AAA credit rating. Guess who lost the AAA credit rating for Queensland? It was the ALP. It was you mob!

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Order! Members will cease interjecting.

Mr DAVIES: It was this mob over here that lost our AAA credit rating, which is costing us \$100 million extra every year. Thank you very much, Labor!

If we sell or lease some of these assets, 75 per cent of that money will go into debt reduction and 25 per cent will be reinvested back into infrastructure, including \$500 million for disaster preparedness.

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order!

Mr DAVIES: Isn't it wonderful that we have a government that actually thinks ahead and wants to put money aside if we have a disaster? Unlike Bligh and her team—

Ms Trad interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! Member for Capalaba, if you could just take your seat. Member for South Brisbane, I really tolerated a lot of interjection in the chamber today, but I have asked you to cease interjecting. You have given your speech. The member for Capalaba has the call and I warn you under 253A.

Mr DAVIES: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and the speech was an absolute sham and a fraud, by the way. We will invest \$500 million in a disaster future fund. Part of the Strong Choices investment plan is roads, and my electorate of Capalaba is desperate for great roads. There is only one main road in and out of Capalaba—that is, Old Cleveland Road—and I will be talking to the Treasurer and the transport and main roads minister about Mt Cotton Road dual carriageway of that road. Once we get that money, we need to dual carriageway Mt Cotton Road. Mr Deputy Speaker Robinson, that will benefit your electorate and it will also benefit the electorate of Redlands. I thank the Treasurer for the great work that he has done with this budget. It is a sensible budget and it is a budget that puts Queensland back on track. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (12.00 pm): For around 20 years up until 2012 Labor neglected Pine Rivers and took our community for granted. For so long it believed it had a divine right to represent Pine Rivers no matter how much it neglected the needs of our community. School buildings were left run-down, families were left to languish on public housing waiting lists, people who could not afford necessary dental work were left to wait with little hope of being attended to, and our public transport was becoming less and less reliable. Labor's contempt for Pine Rivers became even more apparent in 2009 when it parachuted an underperforming MP from another electorate into our community and our community became the plaything for Labor's factional infighting. In 2012 my community of Pine Rivers decided that it had had enough. It decided it wanted a government that had a plan, a government that would fight for our community, a government that would deliver for Pine Rivers families, a government that had a plan not just for now but for the future of our great community. Over the past two years this LNP government has shown time and time again that we have a plan for Pine Rivers, that we will deliver for Pine Rivers, and that we are committed to building a better Pine Rivers.

This year's budget continues to deliver for our community and continues to show that our LNP government is the only party in Queensland to have a strong plan for a brighter future for Pine Rivers. Across Queensland this budget increases spending on front-line services, including the seven per cent increase in Education spending, the six per cent increase in Health funding and the \$406 million commitment for child and family services in response to the Carmody inquiry. This budget will also further empower Queensland businesses and continues to deliver on our commitment to build a strong four-pillar Queensland economy. This budget has a strong plan to definitively deal with the legacy of debt that Labor left behind.

Asset sales, as we know, can be a very touchy subject for Queenslanders and, as Labor well knows, if you are dishonest about asset sales and then you squander the proceeds once you go ahead with your fire sale, your incompetence will be harshly dealt with. So I guess it is a fair question to ask why our government would even consider asset sales given what Labor inflicted on Queensland in the past and what happened to it. I would say that the answer is profoundly simple: as a government we simply cannot ignore the problem and try to convince people that a slow approach will somehow pay down our debt. If anyone has ever had a credit card, they know that if you can only afford to pay off your interest you actually do not get ahead and you never get your credit card paid off. We are not in government because we want to be simply liked or to do the popular thing; we are in government to do what is best for Queensland, and that is what we will do and that is what we are doing in this budget. We certainly did not make the mess that we are in, but we sure as hell are not going to leave Queensland in this mess either.

It is a scary thought for Queensland, but one day down the road the Labor economic vandals in this place will probably form government again. We as a government know that we need to fix their mess—

Mr Rickuss: Not in your lifetime though, Seath.

Mr HOLSWICH: I hope not, member for Lockyer. We know that we need to fix their mess before they get their hands on the government coffers again and drag our state back into more debt and deficit, as is their well-worn pattern of behaviour, both state and federally. We were elected to make the tough decisions. We were elected to put a strong plan in place that will lead to a brighter future for Queensland, and that is exactly what we as a government will do because it is the right thing to do.

The benefits of these strong choices will be seen in Pine Rivers and across Queensland for years and decades to come. How many opportunities does a state have to establish strategic funds potentially worth over \$8 billion to ensure necessary infrastructure can be funded and built over the next years and decades? I look forward to seeing the many benefits of this \$8 billion flow on to Pine Rivers through better schools, through more teachers, improved roads, new roads, improved health services and more police officers. That is what our government is about—thinking beyond the short term and planning for Queensland's long-term future. My community and I will continue to fight for the infrastructure and front-line services that we need and I know, as has happened for the last two years, that our government will continue to deliver for my community.

There are few things more important than ensuring our children have the education, the social skills and the life skills they need to grow into strong members of our community. Our government continues to deliver on our commitment to revitalise front-line education services. This year's budget reaffirms our commitment to ensuring Pine Rivers students have strong literacy and numeracy skills. Schools in my electorate are now employing literacy coaches, investing in home reader kits, updating resources that have not, in some cases, been updated in decades and holding workshops to equip parents in ways to teach their children—all thanks to the funds that were allocated by this LNP government under the Great Results Guarantee. We have wonderful schools in Pine Rivers and I am very pleased to work closely with each of them. Investing in our next generation through this commitment to literacy and numeracy is just one of many ways that we are building a bright future for Pine Rivers.

Our government is also responding to the transport needs of Pine Rivers and the Moreton Bay region. We continue our commitment to the Moreton Bay rail link, which is on target to be completed in just over two years. We have added to that commitment and are building a third and fourth track between Lawnton and Petrie stations to ensure that we have the capacity for even more passenger train services in coming years. Road safety is always a priority of our government, and I am very pleased to have been able to secure funding in this budget for the upgrade of the intersection of Eatons Crossing Road and Lilley Road that will particularly benefit residents in Warner and Cashmere and also residents in the electorate of Everton. This is a project that local residents and the member for Everton and I have lobbied for and we will now be able to deliver this important upgrade.

Our government understands the pressures on residents from increasing costs of living. This budget limits increases that will hit the hip pocket of Pine Rivers commuters. Public transport fees will only rise at the rate of CPI as opposed to Labor's legacy, which year upon year was 15 per cent fare increases. Our government already halved those increases in the last couple of years and we are now further limiting future increases. Pensioners were rightly concerned about the potential cuts to concessions due to changes in funding from the federal government. Our government understands the importance of these concessions to pensioners and we have taken the strong decision to cover the federal funding shortfall to ensure that there are no negative impacts for Pine Rivers pensioners. This budget also continues our commitment to freeze car registration for family vehicles for another year, which will again be a welcome relief for Pine Rivers families. This budget also builds on our commitment to make our communities safer and revitalise front-line emergency services. Pine Rivers is already benefiting from an additional 17 police on the beat compared to when our government was first elected, and across Queensland in this next year an additional 267 police officers will be on the front line protecting our communities. This budget also sees the commencement of the process to upgrade the fire and rescue station at Petrie, which will certainly be a beneficial project for our community and ensure that our fires are adequately resourced.

Before I conclude I want to touch briefly on a couple of the commitments in this budget in the Natural Resources and Mines portfolio. Resources and agriculture are two of the key pillars of the Queensland economy and through this budget our government again shows our strong commitment to growing both of these pillars, particularly through the development of a sustainable and profitable CSG industry.

Whilst the extremists on the other side of the chamber cannot wrap their heads around the concept of co-existence between mining, agriculture, communities and even environmental preservation, we will just continue to get on with the job, as we have been doing, of proving that it is readily achievable. Also in the Natural Resources and Mines portfolio I welcome this budget's allocation of funding to develop strategies to address issues associated with abandoned mines. I look forward to carrying on the work of my predecessor in this portfolio, the member for Pumicestone, in working with the department as we continue to implement those strategies right across Queensland.

In closing, let me just say that our government does not and will not take the community of Pine Rivers for granted. Our government has delivered more in the last two years than my community has seen in many years before that. This budget and our government continue to deliver for the Pine Rivers electorate and for the whole of Queensland. This budget plans for the future of the Pine Rivers electorate. This budget is our strong plan that will deliver a brighter future for the Pine Rivers electorate and the whole of Queensland and I very pleased to support it.

 **Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.10 pm): I rise to respond to the 2014-15 state budget. Today, I would like to focus on the Treasurer's so-called strong and smart choices for Queensland's salvation. The government's asset sales plan hangs off a few key claims and targets. Firstly, it focuses on the total state gross debt. Secondly, the LNP continues to claim that the state needs to pay \$25 billion in debt, sourcing its mate Peter Costello as the authority for that. Thirdly, the LNP claims that it will be able to raise a whopping \$33.6 billion in asset sales. Finally, the LNP makes a range of infrastructure project promises totalling \$8.6 billion, but these are conditional on the privatisation proceeding. I will deal with each, as I think that we need to deal with them to expose them for the charade on the Queensland voters that they actually are.

The \$80 billion debt figure that is constantly used by the LNP in its campaign is grossly misleading on a number of counts. Firstly, it is an outyear forecast, just as the \$85 billion figure in the 2011-12 midyear review was. It is not the actual level of gross state debt that we have today. According to the budget issued this week, that is \$76.1 billion. That is \$13.8 billion higher than the \$62.4 billion level in the 2011-12 midyear review, the last fiscal assessment by a Labor government. This government never accepts responsibility for this—the outcome of its nearly three years of decisions. It is time it did.

Secondly, that figure includes the debt of the GOCs. This is grossly misleading as the taxpayers of Queensland do not service this debt; the customers of the GOCs do. Many of those customers are multinational corporations. It is commercial debt that manages itself, provided that the projects borrowed for are commercially viable and generate strong returns for the state as the owner. As a whole, the GOCs do. That is what the former Office of Government Owned Corporations in Treasury—an office that this government stupidly abolished as part of its costs savings—worked on assiduously to be assured of on behalf of the government shareholder. That is \$31.1 billion of gross debt, forecast to grow to \$33.6 billion by 2017-18, that is not serviced by Queensland taxpayers. QTC also borrows on behalf of local government. Why does not the government add that debt in too? It is just the same as the debt of GOCs. Someone else is servicing the debt.

The appropriate measure to focus on to determine the debt that must be serviced by the taxpayers of Queensland out of their state budget is general government debt. That is now projected to be \$48.4 billion by 2017-18 and estimated to be this year about \$45 billion. It should also be noted that this figure is \$12.8 billion higher than the \$32.2 billion level as at the 2011-12 midyear review.

Thirdly, it is a gross debt measure. It takes no account of the fact that the state holds financial assets. This approach particularly skews the story as Queensland, of all jurisdictions in Australia, has always held considerable financial assets so as to fully fund its superannuation and other long-term liabilities. That is what governments should do and it is what other jurisdictions throughout Australia do. Queensland's general government net debt is now forecast to peak in 2014-15 at \$10.9 billion. That figure compares to the general government net debt in the 2011-12 midyear review of negative \$3.2 billion. So let us cut the rot about the so-called \$80 billion. It is a grossly misleading, politically inspired furphy to con Queensland voters. As the opposition leader and shadow Treasurer said in their speeches in this debate, 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.

The next key claim that I wish to dispute is the LNP's claim that the state needs to pay down at least \$25 billion in gross debt. Nearly \$34 billion of the forecast \$82 billion debt that this government likes to talk about is self-servicing GOC debt—good, income-producing, job-providing debt serviced by multinational corporations and other GOC customers. The LNP is proposing to sell debt of that type. It is not taxpayer debt for roads, schools, hospitals that does not generate cash flows to service debt. The state's debt book will be left heavily skewed towards taxpayer debt, with far fewer external income streams left to help service it. Moreover, the government will lose a large chunk of the \$2 billion it now expects to generate in 2014-15 in dividends and tax equivalents from the GOCs— income received after they have serviced their \$32 billion in debt. Some of that money, the tax payable by the private financiers, will end up with the federal government—money that we now collect as tax equivalents from the network GOCs.

The Costello Commission of Audit report never set out a clear rationale as to why the figure had to be \$25 billion. That is because the Commission of Audit report was a political document. More worryingly, it never considered the possible future fiscal implications of selling that much income-producing debt. That is what you do when you sell an asset: you sell the debt too. This will leave the remaining state debt book heavily skewed to non-income producing general government debt that has to be serviced by the taxpayer and not by other entities.

Thirdly, the LNP claims that it will be able to raise \$33.6 billion. This government is really counting on this private equity thing with Energex, Ergon and Powerlink purchasing their current debt books and funding future capital investment. The other assets listed might raise perhaps \$10 billion or a bit more. But already we are reading from Mark Ludlow in the *Australian Financial Review* that the financial markets are lukewarm about this pseudo privatisation.

The LNP claims that this proposal is not selling equity—that is ownership—in the businesses. But I understand that, under the accounting standards, it will be shown as an equity transaction. This deal may involve forward selling 25 years, or perhaps more, future capital expenditure external funding requirements of the networks after taking account of the existing \$11.6 billion debt that they want to sell. To take on effective ownership risk for a period that long, with five or more regulatory resets in that time, will come at a considerable price, if successfully pursued at all. This will be hard to get away, unless a strong element of control transfer occurs. That is what equity is about. The financiers will want to get something approaching, if not the full, weighted average cost of capital return that these entities are provided by the AER. That weighted average cost of capital currently includes about 390 basis points risk premium on the risk-free Commonwealth borrowing rate for some regulated entities. Currently, the QTC pays about 50 to 70 basis points on that bond rate. It is a huge difference. Make no bones about it, this is selling debt at a higher interest rate than what we pay now through QTC and will pay into the future. This is dumb economics and desperate politics.

That leads me then to the fourth point. What of the infrastructure investment of \$8.6 billion? It is nothing more than an election gimmick. It is on the never-never, as they have to pull off all the asset sales, including the network GOCs private financing transactions, to be able to pay it down to \$25 billion. Unless, of course, the \$25 billion is a furphy and they plan to do the infrastructure with the first \$8.6 billion raised, in which case it is just an asset swap for election purposes. Nothing more. Sadly though, it will be an asset swap of income-producing, jobs-providing GOCs for infrastructure, at least some of which looks suspiciously like pork barrel giveaways.

Taxpayers will have to make up the shortfall once the assets are sold and the government no longer receives any income from them. It will not be positive for the state's fiscal bottom line. And will Queenslanders be better off? Research by Professor John Quiggin and David Richardson in recent years has shown there is no demonstrable benefit from the private sector owning energy network utilities. And why should there be, unlike what the Premier claimed in here. The networks all are regulated by the Australian Energy Regulator under the same rules, getting the same expenditure allowances and the same WACC returns no matter if publicly or privately owned. Powerlink, for example, remains in the top quartile of transmission providers in the world for cost efficiency and reliability. Is that being more inefficient than their private sector counterparts?

The Newman government has a shocking record on infrastructure spending compared to the investment Labor made to modernise our state. But even by its pathetic record so far, the cuts to capital investment in the 2014-15 budget are staggering. All up the Newman government is cutting \$2.7 billion from infrastructure this year. So this government has taken away \$2.7 billion of infrastructure spending but, yes, voters, you can have it back if you agree to their asset sales. What a con! What a stunt! In Brisbane spending has been cut by \$648.6 million, but once again it is in the regions where the LNP's failures will be most keenly felt. These are the reductions in infrastructure spending in this 'do nothing and hope for the best' budget: Ipswich \$317.8 million; Darling Downs \$438.9 million; Gold Coast \$428.2 million; Mackay \$190.3 million; Outback \$299.7 million; Cairns \$294.9 million; Fitzroy \$187.5 million; and Townsville \$162.1 million. Those are the figures. What lies behind them is truly disturbing. It means that important infrastructure like roads and bridges, which are badly needed in those communities, will be delayed. This is a government that pretends to be a friend to regional Queensland, pretends through the Royalties for the Regions program to be sharing the benefits of the state's resources, but it is a sham. It is just another grant program. As most of the Royalties for the Regions money has been allocated to regions well away from Mount Isa and the Bowen Basin where the bulk of it is generated, this budget shows that regional Queensland is being

ignored by the Newman government. By any measure this is a breathtaking dereliction of duty by those opposite who have given up on investing in the future, just as they have given up on the unemployed.

As the Opposition Leader pointed out in this debate, what major projects have this government come up with? Oh, yes, the new executive building. It is not even a government project. Let us have a look at the figures in a bit more detail. Over four years the net acquisition of new capital infrastructure in the general government sector is \$9.9 billion—about \$2.5 billion per year. That compares with an average of a bit over \$4 billion per year for the three years from 2011-12 to 2013-14, after the previous government's GFC capital works response had largely worked itself off. That is a very significant drop of over \$1.5 billion per year on average. I recognise that sometimes it is sensible to have a limited period of lower capital works as part of a broader medium-term fiscal consolidation plan, but that does not appear to be the case here. Moreover, if this turns into a longer term trend, this is bad. We will be back to where we were at the end of the 1990s with a massive infrastructure backlog and real constraints on state economic activity due to a lack of capacity coming after 30 years or more of chronic under-provision of capital. What is driving this large drop-off this year then? It is the dearth of economically and socially critical projects from this government to replace the ones started by Labor—projects that this government is so happy to cut the ribbons for. Projects like the Gold Coast Light Rail, the new Children's Hospital, the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, the Mackay Hospital upgrade, the Cairns Hospital upgrade, the Townsville Hospital upgrade, the Rockhampton Hospital upgrade and the new generation rolling stock project for QR Citytrain funded by TransLink. When one looks at the new projects in this budget one quickly realises that the bigger ones are largely federally funded projects such as the Bruce Highway upgrade, the Warrego Highway project, the Gateway Motorway upgrade and the second Toowoomba range crossing. Where are this government's ideas and vision to grow the economy? Even in my own area of Mackay there are several worthy projects that a responsible government would be putting through thorough assessment and planning to develop: projects like the Walkerston Bypass Road and the Fursden Creek and Vines Creek bridge replacements. I welcome funding for the Mackay ring-road, for land acquisitions and design, another project initiated by federal and state Labor governments. I also note there is provision for intersectional upgrades on the Bruce Highway in the urban area of Mackay city—another federally funded project started by Labor. I also welcome funding of \$29 million for the Mackay Base Hospital which will bring to an end the construction phase of the \$408 million project that the Labor government initiated.

There is no vision and there are no new ideas in this budget. There are no innovative programs to boost productivity, the key to growing the economy and improving the economy's capacity to support greater revenue to the state. Productivity is the means by which new jobs are created—jobs that did not exist when we entered the labour force. For example, jobs like web design, creating computer games, 3D print design, biobased industrial products, and so on. This is the future for our kids. But where is the catalytic drivers for that here? Nowhere.

I am proud about the announcements in this debate by the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer on Jobs Queensland, Advance Queensland and Productivity Queensland. These proposed new policies and initiatives are precisely about this: raising the productivity and capacity of Queenslanders and the state economy, improving our capacity to fund the services we need, the projects to deliver exports, jobs and confidence to the state, like the massive LNG projects our government worked to bring about and that this government now just smugly sits there to take the credit for in their budget to the tune of more than \$600 million per year from 2016-17. But you lot did not do the hard yards to get those economic game-changing projects up for our great state. We did.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Order! Deputy Leader of the Opposition, please refer your comments through the chair.

Mr MULHERIN: In opposition those opposite carped and whinged about it. One of the most surprising and least welcome aspects of this budget is the smash and grab raid it performs on Tourism and Events Queensland. The total budget for TEQ will fall from \$123 million down to less than \$100 million. This is a cut of more than 20 per cent. This is a very strange way to treat one of the LNP's much lauded four pillars. The Tourism and Transport Forum Chief Executive, Ken Morrison, said the funding cut is completely at odds with the state's rhetoric. 'This budget kicks away one of the four pillars of Queensland's economy,' he said. Queensland Labor has always supported Tourism and Events Queensland, as we did its predecessors, Tourism Queensland and Major Events Queensland. TEQ is a bold and innovative tourism agency and it is the envy of its competitors.

Turning to agriculture, there are some elements within the funding allocation to the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry that I strongly endorse: the \$18.7 million allocation for the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme to help primary producers. However, I believe the agriculture sector would be feeling let down by the budget allocation for DAFF. In fact, Joanne Grainger, the President of the Queensland Farmers Federation, says—

Queensland farmers have a right to feel overlooked by this week's state budget and to ask whether this budget aligns with the government's rhetoric on growing agriculture as one of the four pillars of the economy.

I can give Ms Grainger the answer on where this aligns with the government—it is not with you. Just like the pensioners and the tourism industry, they are not there for you.

In conclusion, all things considered what should we conclude from the budget? I will tell the House what I have concluded from it: that the Treasurer has no compassion and no understanding of the financial hardship endured by thousands of seniors, other pensioners and low-paid Queenslanders; that he has abandoned the unemployed and given up all pretence that he knows what to do to arrest the catastrophic rise in youth unemployment; that he does not care about the cost-of-living pressures, condemning many Queenslanders to a life of scrimping, saving and financial misery; that he has never had a plan for sound economic management in Queensland that did not involve selling assets; that he has oversold our financial challenges into a debt crisis to justify a risky ideological plan to sell our income-generating government owned corporations; that he has no sense of responsibility to promote growth; and that he has failed miserably to support the regions that drive economic growth throughout Queensland.

 **Mrs OSTAPOVITCH** (Stretton—LNP) (12.30 pm): I commend the Treasurer for a very sensible and reasonable budget, with a plan to pay down debt whilst increasing expenditure for front-line services and attempting to keep the cost of living at a tolerable level for our most vulnerable. I was so excited to hear the Premier announce yesterday that this LNP government had the compassion to listen to pensioners who were genuinely worried about how they would budget their incomes and expenses. I was very concerned for the pensioners who contacted me, but collectively the members of this parliament pulled together to achieve a good outcome. Of course, Queensland had more right to complain than the other states because, thanks to the previous ALP Treasurer—the worst Treasurer in Australia—we have double the debt of any other state.

That said, the electorate of Stretton has indeed got what it needs, if not what it wants. My constituents believe it is an Australian fundamental right to have access to good hospitals and education. Nothing is more important than your health and the health of your family. Do not take it for granted, like I have. The LNP government has allocated \$13.6 billion to health, which is up another six per cent. This will help my constituents have access to better health care. Queensland has the lowest median wait times for elective surgery and how fantastic is it that the dental waiting lists have been slashed? I quote from a constituent of mine who wrote—

... it is with extreme gratitude for your efforts on my behalf. My dental problems have been expertly solved due to your response to a request for assistance. I humbly beseech you to accept praise for your help. This is as good as life can get.

For somebody who has dental problems, this has been a godsend and I commend the Minister for Health.

Second on my list of priorities is education. The budget sees investment in education up seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. Without educated adults, we have no future and we will see our best jobs go overseas where children value a good education as a way out of poverty. Over the past two years the schools in Stretton have benefited hugely from the maintenance program and the great results program will see \$1,702,000 go to my seven state schools. The schools can choose what to spend those funds on to achieve great results for our students.

Stronger law and order and community safety have been flagged as Stretton's biggest desire. I am very proud of the results that the government has achieved with break and enters decreased by 24 per cent in Brisbane's south region. The region and our hardworking Police Service will greatly benefit from the \$3 million police helicopter based at Archerfield.

Transport and good roads would be the next priority. I am pleased to announce that \$3 million has been spent on the realignment of 17 kilometres of T2 lanes on the Pacific Motorway to decrease peak-hour congestion and \$7,707,000 has been allocated for the Warrigal Road Greenlink priority bus works at Eight Mile Plains. I am very pleased to report that all my schools located on busy roads now have flashing warning lights or crossing supervisors.

Giving a hand up to those who are down on their luck is important to this government, too. Stretton has a number of very large disability service providers such as Multicap and Kyabra. We have received \$18.8 million for disability services, \$910,000 for social inclusion and \$568,000 for supported accommodation in Kuraby. The waiting list for housing is down by 36 per cent from 30,723 to 19,694 in just two years. I commend the minister for that. I am very proud that out of the \$406 million set aside to deal with things in the Carmody report, \$3,110,000 will go to child safety services located in Stretton that are dedicated to protecting children and young people from harm.

In my other life, I am a mother and mothers know a bit about budgets. As a politician, I now know about government debt as well. Other than the number of zeroes on the balance sheet, it is really just the same concept. If in our homes we go crazy on the credit card, or we borrow for items that do not increase in value, or we make bad choices and waste money, or if something nasty and unexpected happens to us we can easily find ourselves in big debt. Not addressing debt in time can lead to financial ruin and many a family has lost their home or business due to debt. A responsible government has no other choice but to find ways to reduce Queensland's inherited debt. It would be criminal to keep spending beyond the government's means and irresponsible to do nothing because we might lose popularity or, indeed, our jobs. This is not a populist budget. Unlike most budgets in an election year, this budget does not attempt to buy votes. It is a refreshingly honest budget and we have a refreshingly honest Treasurer.

What do mothers and fathers do when the blunt reality of impending financial disaster hits us in the face? We call the family in and say, 'Okay guys, we all need to find savings until we get back on our feet.' We might look at selling some of our stuff, especially those things we do not really need or things that are costing us money to keep. You would have to make strong choices for your family's future and the bigger the debt the stronger the choice that needs to be made. That is exactly what this government has been doing: identifying waste and trimming the fat. However, it is not enough to get rid of the \$80 billion debt hanging over us. It is incredulous that the largest cost to government is repaying our debt, with \$4 billion in annual interest. It is more than our hospital and healthcare system costs the people of Queensland. That dead money could be spent on vital infrastructure and services.

We are paying \$200 million per year in extra payments just because we lost our AAA credit rating. Back in the late 2000s, the lenders considered the Bligh government a bad risk and up went our interest rate. Can members imagine what we could build with \$200 million a year, just by proving to the money lenders that we are a fiscally responsible government? In my opinion, that is a very good reason to use part of the \$33 billion that we could make by sensible choices on selling a small amount—just 11.6 per cent—of the government owned assets to pay down our debt and pay for schools and roads that we must provide. It is what any household would look at doing if it got into financial trouble. It is what any businessperson would look at. They would all choose to sell or lease assets that cost money or are not making a worthwhile enough return, considering the money going out to service their debt. What they would not do is leave things the same.

What I love about this government is that, instead of lying to the people as Anna Bligh did, swearing her government would not sell assets but then doing so anyway within six months of being elected, our point of difference is that we have actually gone to the Queensland people and asked them to be part of the decision making. We are putting our money where our mouth is because at the end of the election day the people will have decided. We must all stay strong and have the integrity and conviction that we are doing what is right for Queensland and our kids, rather than protecting our jobs. If any of us lose our jobs because of our conviction to deal with the debt, we can definitely hold our heads high knowing that we have done what was right for Queensland. I commend the Treasurer and the LNP government.

 **Mrs SMITH** (Mount Ommaney—LNP) (12.39 pm): I rise as the member for Mount Ommaney and also as a proud member of the Newman government to give my contribution on the state budget handed down by our Treasurer earlier this week. This budget is a sensible budget which focuses on the continued growth of Queensland's economy—growth that will deliver our great state back to its rightful place as our nation's economic powerhouse.

This is a budget that is laying the foundation for a brighter future. This is the third budget this LNP government has handed down and I believe what the Treasurer, the Premier and indeed the whole cabinet has shown is both financial discipline and restraint and a commitment to make Queensland the best place to live, work, raise a family and run a business.

I have said it before, and I will say again, that this Treasurer is the Indiana Jones of treasurers. He was cast into a financial snake pit by the former government but he has had the fortitude and the commitment to climb his way out of the pit and navigate the people of Queensland towards a clear, long-awaited and deserved future.

When we look back at what we as an incoming government inherited just two short years ago, the achievements have been nothing short of miraculous. As a government we have reined in the absurd, out-of-control spending that saw a budget deficit year after year after year. This government is on track to deliver an operating surplus of \$188 million in 2014-15 and a fiscal surplus in 2015-16. Fiscal maturity and understanding is something that this side of the House live, breathe and, most importantly, understand.

It is clear from this budget that health, law and order and education are the big winners in Mount Ommaney. Firstly, I turn to education. The LNP government is proudly continuing to invest in local schools in Mount Ommaney. This budget has invested \$1.5 million in our local schools through our Great Results Guarantee program. This budget also invests over \$4 million in new classrooms and learning spaces for Corinda and Centenary state high schools. This funding comes on top of the \$14.3 million of education funding for Mount Ommaney delivered by the LNP government so far in this term of government. All up, some nearly \$20 million of funding has been delivered locally in the first term of the LNP government as part of my strong local plan to ensure that Mount Ommaney has the best teachers and the best classrooms to produce great results.

Another big winner for Mount Ommaney in this budget is health care. This budget has increased the Health budget by 6.4 per cent to \$13.6 billion, meaning better health services for Brisbane and better health services for Mount Ommaney. Locally in Mount Ommaney the Metro South Hospital and Health Service will receive \$1.89 billion to continue to deliver better healthcare services.

On top of our investment in the Metro South Hospital and Health Service, the LNP is also investing in palliative care—an important issue very close to my community. Ever since the former Labor government heartlessly shut down the palliative beds at Canossa Hospital in 2012 I have been listening to locals and campaigning on their behalf for better palliative care services for the western suburbs. I was proud to stand with the Minister for Health, Lawrence Springborg, when he announced \$1.9 million in funding in 2012 to reopen these beds. I am proud to stand here today and acknowledge the announcement of recurrent funding of \$1.9 million to keep these beds open.

In fact, we have increased palliative care services in the electorate of Mount Ommaney with the recent opening of the Corinda Palliative Care Centre. This new centre, as well as the recurrent funding for Canossa palliative care beds, represents our commitment to health care and palliative care in Mount Ommaney.

I turn to the issue of extra police and law enforcement. Our commitment as a government to tackle crime and revitalise our front-line services certainly can be seen by the results. To date there are over 750 new police across the state with another 267 positions included in this budget. The electorate of Mount Ommaney has benefited greatly from the influx of 49 additional officers being stationed in our district.

The crime statistics in my region speak for themselves. Robbery is down by 19 per cent and unlawful entry is down by 23 per cent. Again, these are real figures and real results. The Labor Party, the nay-sayers, have said openly that they would dismantle this government's tough stance on crime were they to govern. I would love to see the looks on the faces of my local Neighbourhood Watch groups when they walk up and say, 'Hey, I am with the ALP. We do not like the fact that crime has been reduced. We are going to go back to the way it was. Vote for me.' I can hear them laughing now.

I am so pleased and proud to be part of a government that made the tough decisions early so we can continue to provide vital front-line services for all of Queensland. Whilst I am disappointed that there was no funding in the budget for the Sumners Road overpass in my electorate—Treasurer, Minister for Transport and Premier, I will continue to fight for that funding—I cannot in all good conscience complain that the funding for road infrastructure has gone to where it is vitally needed.

Fatalities are occurring on the Bruce Highway and that is unacceptable. The money allocated to this vital lifeline is imperative so that fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters can get home to their families and that families can enjoy a trip together and make it to their destinations safely. I am pleased to announce the commitment to work on the Centenary Highway which will help ease congestion for the western suburbs. Residents of my electorate will certainly gain a benefit from that.

I will turn to child safety. I have to say this: all Labor members have no credibility in this portfolio after they opposed a very important bill this week that took steps to further protect our children. The shadow minister should be ashamed of the cynical comments in her speech which did not once recognise that the wellbeing of the child should be paramount in any decision making.

As the Assistant Minister for Child Safety, the announcements in this budget are dear to my heart. But, more importantly, these budget announcements are vital to those who sometimes search their hearts wondering what their life will be like. These people are our vulnerable children that, through no fault of their own, rely on us to nurture them, protect them and care for them.

As part of our election commitment we established a full inquiry into the protection of children in Queensland. The Queensland Child Protection Commission of Inquiry, led by the Hon. Tim Carmody QC, confirmed that the child protection system was overburdened, unsustainable, ineffective in protecting children and supporting families and at risk of collapsing without change.

We listened to Carmody and we listened to the people of Queensland. As part of this landmark reform in this budget the government will allocate an additional \$406 million over five years to better support the state's most vulnerable families and children. This is about investing in early intervention through supporting families before they reach breaking point, revitalising our whole approach to manage our children at risk, investing in our staff and focusing on better outcomes for our children at risk. This is a challenging portfolio, but one that makes a real difference in young people's lives. This is real money being delivered in real terms to benefit real young people for a brighter future.

Locally in Mount Ommaney I will continue to work hard to repair this area—an area that Labor took for granted for so long. In Mount Ommaney, like everywhere else, we want to go about our business in a wonderful community. We want to enjoy our work, our families and our daily lives. What we expect in Mount Ommaney is to know that our government is looking after our interests.

We would like to know that when our grandchildren visit us in 20 years time they will not still be confronted by the legacy of an inherited debt that would be the ball and chain of their lives. As Australians, many of our ancestors arrived with a ball and chain. This government is ensuring, through sound economic management, that future generations of Queenslanders will not be a financial convict of a Labor government. This LNP government has a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders. I support the passage of this bill.

 **Mr CAVALLUCCI** (Brisbane Central—LNP) (12.49 pm): I rise to add my voice on behalf of the people of Brisbane Central, to welcome the budget news, to commend the strong plan with the strongest choices made this week by the Treasurer, also known as Indiana Jones by the member for Mount Ommaney—it is far better than being known as the bunch of Tony Sopranos that sit over the other side of the House—and to highlight the great news and the bright future that is now ahead for my constituents, school students, families and small business operators in the Brisbane Central electorate.

It is worth noting the hard work over a long period of time that has occurred to produce this excellent economic plan to deliver for the future of Queensland. In February 2012, on the first day of the last election campaign, the Premier and the Treasurer launched the LNP's Economic Blueprint for Queensland. It was the key part of our plan to get Queensland back on track. We stated to the people of Queensland that we would return the budget to an operating surplus in 2014-15 and then we would ensure expenses growth does not exceed revenue growth. Additionally, we said we would subject major projects to cost-benefit analysis, fund long-term liabilities such as superannuation and, most importantly of all, put in place a genuine plan to regain the AAA credit rating and reduce the cost of borrowing.

That is the key point that Brisbane Central constituents want answers on: how do we address the huge Labor debt that we have been left with? Our government and our Treasurer have the necessary answers, and the people of Queensland have given us their own views on the necessary direction to take through the Strong Choices consultation process. We have listened; our opponents have not.

Another important commitment we made was to wage a war on waste in government by reviewing spending across all departments to stop taxpayers' money being squandered. We also promised to establish an independent Commission of Audit to detail Queensland's current and long-term liabilities and to chart a path back to a AAA credit rating. We have taken decisive action in all of these areas, and the 2014-15 budget continues to take Queensland in the correct economic direction, where we have planned for the future generations of all Queenslanders and where we genuinely provide a brighter future for all.

Importantly, this budget carefully balances increases in education, health and community services spending, while not introducing or raising any new taxes or reducing services. We need to reduce the state's \$80 billion debt and address the Labor legacy of a crippling \$4 billion interest bill. Through this budget our government outlines a real plan to secure our finances by making the strongest and smartest choice to reduce the debt and, in doing so, allow a proper investment in the important areas of our state and in my electorate of Brisbane Central such as the schools, hospitals and infrastructure that we all need.

The specific budget measures for Brisbane Central have included some excellent initiatives, I must say. I am very pleased to acknowledge the ongoing Great Results Guarantee for our schools, including \$467,000 for Kelvin Grove State College, \$148,000 for New Farm State School, \$34,000 for the Queensland Academy for Creative Industries, \$5,000 for the Royal Children's Hospital School, as well as \$213,000 for Windsor State School. This funding will ensure Brisbane Central students receive the best education, producing real results in numeracy and literacy, and setting them up for their future educational needs. There is an additional \$4.59 million for the finalisation of the 18 new classrooms for Kelvin Grove State College.

An amount of \$43,000 has been allocated for addressing flood mitigation issues and the construction of river gauges along central areas of the Brisbane River, with allocations of \$6 million and \$9.2 million respectively for Energex substation network improvements at Kelvin Grove and Victoria Park. Transport has been a priority, with \$5.71 million for the Inner City Busway and the Queen Street busway station, and \$7.14 million for the North Brisbane Bikeway between Herston and Bowen Hills. Delivery of this bikeway infrastructure is exceptional news for the thousands of daily bikeway users, connecting them to the city from my electorate and the northern suburbs of Brisbane.

Continued and growing participation in sport by women has been the focus of the \$50,000 for outdoor netball court upgrades at Victoria Park in Windsor. An amount of \$625,000 has been provided for cancer diagnostics research at UQ's Centre for Clinical Research at Herston, with an additional \$200,000 for QUT's spinal cord injury research. An amount of \$70,000 has been allocated for arts projects and programs through Creative Sparks and in partnership with Brisbane City Council; \$4 million has been allocated towards public libraries and their resources; \$2.3 million has been allocated for an upgrade to the forensic services facility at police headquarters at Roma Street; and an additional \$2.93 million goes towards the Spring Hill complex and station redevelopment, overseen by the highly successful Metro North division of Queensland Health.

The important point throughout this budget process is that 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 alone. It is the most simple fact: to sustain this growth we must reduce debt so that we can keep building on our strong plan and state economic growth for a brighter future in Queensland and for a brighter future in Brisbane Central.

There are some real highlights in funding through this budget, with health funding up six per cent to \$13.6 billion, including the \$224.5 million towards building the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital; \$369.8 million towards building the Sunshine Coast University Hospital; and \$173.3 million to redevelop the Cairns, Mackay, Mount Isa, Townsville and Rockhampton hospitals. In education, the funding is up seven per cent to \$11.8 billion, with \$131 million towards the Great Results Guarantee, addressing numeracy and literacy, and with 10 new schools under the \$1.4 billion Queensland Schools Project.

In the important area of community services, there is an allocation of \$406 million for child and family services in response to the Carmody inquiry, which the assistant minister spoke of earlier. Much needed drought assistance occurs to the level of \$62 million for those who have been badly affected, and towards the magnificent Great Barrier Reef there has been an allocation of \$55 million for reef water quality programs.

A particular highlight for me, and for many in the Brisbane Central community—and in fact right across all Queensland communities—is how the government has allocated \$44.5 million to deliver Australia's most comprehensive plan to deal with alcohol and drug related violence in our community. The Safe Night Out Strategy is a strong plan which will ensure Queensland—and, in particular for me, the Valley and the CBD—is the safest place in Australia for people to go out and enjoy themselves, because a safe night out is always a great night out.

This strategy is about changing the culture through school based alcohol and drug education and awareness campaigns. It is about changing the law by increasing police powers and penalties, and it is about changing the environment by providing safe and supportive spaces. This government took the time to deliver a strategy that is evidence based, that listened to Queenslanders, and, unlike those who sit opposite, is not based on a knee-jerk political fix that does nothing to change the underlying culture of alcohol or what behaviours are acceptable in our community.

Mr BYRNE: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member is referring to a bill that is before the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Krause): Member for Brisbane Central, I have been listening to your comments about the bill before the House and I just ask that you remain relevant to the provisions of the appropriation bills.

Mr CAVALLUCCI: Additionally there is funding for 267 new police officers as part of our commitment to 1,100 new police in Queensland. Tourism has been allocated \$33.9 million for tourism marketing and event promotion, and there has been an allocation of \$495 million for the Royalties for the Regions program.

These budgetary decisions all point towards actual outcomes for the community, and this is a government that now has a great track record for genuine outcomes. The improvement in health services is outstanding, where Queensland now has the lowest median wait time for elective surgery in Australia. We have 75 per cent of emergency department presentations completed within four hours. Ambulance response times improved by more than one minute in 90 per cent of code 1 cases. That is a very significant outcome. Today in Queensland our trains are running on time more than 95 per cent of the time—that is simply not the case in other states of Australia and was certainly not the case under Labor. The social housing wait list has dropped by 36 per cent. Tourist visitor nights from China have reached a record 2.2 million, up from 1.3 million in 2011.

Also, as has been announced recently, Queenslanders who benefit from concession payments will not suffer any reduction in payments as a result of cuts announced in the federal budget. The Premier has stated that government has listened to Queenslanders' concerns and will act. 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 Commonwealth government's concessions cuts and increased fees and taxes. Thus, within the space of two days, the Newman government has decided to pass on our part of those Commonwealth cuts and reinstate the full level of pensioner and senior concessions.

The facts are clear. Our community and our economy are already benefiting greatly by the hard work of the Treasurer. Through the leadership of the Premier and the entire cabinet, the 2014-15 budget provides the plan for further outcomes in Queensland. All members of the government are rightly proud of the planning that we have done to date and of the budget that we are presenting to the people. The outcomes are clear, and the strong plan for a brighter future is something I can and will proudly consult the benefits of with my constituents, small business operators and the overall community of Brisbane Central.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 pm to 2.30 pm.

 **Hon. TE DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services) (2.30 pm): The 2014-15 budget builds on this government's strong plan for a brighter future. I commend the Treasurer for delivering this sound and responsible budget which supports Queensland families without needing to introduce any new taxes or reduce services. This budget is consistent with the five pledges we made to the people of Queensland. One of those pledges—revitalising front-line services for families—is the cornerstone of my department's responsibilities and something we strive for every day. This budget will see my department continue to revitalise front-line services with planned expenditure of \$2.519 billion, including \$1.465 billion for disability services, \$190 million for community services and \$863 million for child safety.

A highlight of this budget is the commitment of an additional \$406 million over five years to implement the recommendations of the Carmody commission of inquiry into child protection. This is the largest ever commitment made by any Queensland government to support vulnerable families. Labor's legacy was a child protection system that was overburdened and unsustainable. It was a system that was not effectively supporting families and saw record numbers of children entering out-of-home care. That is why we established the Carmody commission of inquiry, and that is why we accepted all of Commissioner Carmody's recommendations.

The 2014-15 budget allocates \$25 million to commence these reforms with funding to deliver new secondary family support services aimed at vulnerable families and a new practice framework to underpin the new direction of the child protection system. In addition, we have provided \$6.5 million for an extra 77 front-line child safety officers. These reforms are designed to build a system that is designed to keep families together through effective prevention and early intervention. Key stakeholders know how important these reforms are and understand that the additional commitment in this budget shows the government is serious about fixing the child protection system and providing appropriate support for vulnerable families.

These reforms, and the commitment in this budget for child protection, have been widely applauded in the sector, as I mentioned in the House earlier in the week. But last night the opposition could not put politics aside when they responded to this budget. The member for Woodridge insinuated that this \$406 million is not new money. I emphatically reject the statement. This is an additional investment that is being put in early to reap the benefits that Commissioner Carmody spoke of in his report. The member also spoke of a supposed \$300 million commitment of the previous government into the Referral for Active Intervention initiative. I have the media release of the former minister, Warren Pitt, here. When it was announced in 2006, it was an \$8.5 million commitment. But that is the style of this Labor opposition—selectively rewriting history and cynically recycling old candidates.

While the additional commitment to child protection is a significant announcement in this budget for my portfolio, I am delighted that disability services funding increases to \$1.465 billion in 2014-15. This government inherited from the Labor Party a disability sector that had been historically underfunded. This meant that thousands of Queenslanders with a disability did not receive the supports they need. Thanks to prudent management of the state's finances, we have been able to commit to the NDIS and increase funding to disability services. To support Queensland's roll-out of the NDIS, \$50 million is allocated in this budget as part of our additional \$868 million over five years leading up to full implementation of the NDIS. It is an exciting time for the sector. While there is a lot of work to be done, we are progressing well to move to the NDIS from July 2016.

A key part of the transition to the NDIS is the Newman government's Your Life Your Choice initiative. We will continue to expand this highly successful program which allows people to self-direct their disability supports, and I am delighted that to date we have 1,059 participants. We expected only around 430 in the first year, but we might even make 1,100, so that is very exciting news.

The budget also allocates funding for the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial, which provides innovative accommodation solutions for adults with a disability who are cared for by their elderly parents. We have allocated \$5.5 million over four years to help young people with a disability leaving school. A total of \$11.1 million has been allocated to provide support for up to 64 young adults with a disability exiting care across the state. Some \$4.2 million will go to the Spinal Cord Injuries Response that will support up to 27 people with spinal cord injuries to leave the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit and live in the community.

Our commitment to transition to the NDIS and the initiatives we are undertaking demonstrate our strong plan for a brighter future for Queenslanders with a disability, their families and their carers. This is in contrast to the Labor Party. I heard the member for Redcliffe's speech on the budget last night and I thought I must have missed something. So I went back to *Hansard* and I noticed that the 'great pretender', the member for Redcliffe, devoted a whole two paragraphs in her speech to disability services. She pretends to care about Queenslanders with a disability and their families. She pretends to understand the NDIS. She pretends to understand disability policy, but she does not understand. I suggest the member for Redcliffe stop pretending to care for people with a disability and start supporting Queensland's transition to the NDIS.

We are also committed to giving a hand up to Queenslanders who have fallen on hard times. With nearly three-quarters of the state still in drought, I am pleased to advise the House that this budget includes \$5.9 million over two years as part of the 2014 drought assistance package. The drought assistance package has provided and will continue to provide a range of measures including support services, information, case management and coordination of community resilience building strategies. We know that Queensland's community organisations are the backbone of our Queensland communities. To support our community organisations, we will continue to deliver our Caring for our Community grants program. This program gives small grants that make a big difference to local community groups across Queensland.

We have also made it much easier to apply for these grants through the introduction of our online grants system, SmartyGrants. Earlier this year the government further cut red tape for community groups through the Communities Legislation (Funding Red Tape Reduction) Amendment Act 2014, which commences on 1 July. This act is part of the Newman government's commitment to reducing red tape, and this initiative will reduce the cost of doing business for funded organisations by approximately \$2.6 million per year. These reforms, together with other changes to streamline and reduce red tape across my department, mean our community organisations will spend less time on paperwork and more time delivering much needed services to vulnerable Queenslanders.

I would like to briefly talk about the capital program that my department is undertaking. The total capital works program for my department in 2014-15 is \$35.2 million. This includes \$11.5 million to support Queenslanders with a disability through upgrading infrastructure and constructing purpose-built accommodation. Madam Deputy Speaker Barton, it was great to visit your electorate recently and see the wonderful smiles on the faces of those three ladies who are going to be residents at the Horizon home in Broadwater. I agree with your sentiments earlier in the week about how important it is to give people an opportunity to live in supported accommodation that reflects their needs but gives them an opportunity to participate in community activities just like the rest of us.

We have also allocated \$1.7 million to deliver the Mornington Safe Haven Women's Shelter and \$2.2 million to continue establishing safe houses as part of the Indigenous Communities Project. We are also supporting regional communities by allocating \$4.6 million for neighbourhood and youth centres in Mount Isa and Chinchilla to provide access to community support services and an entry point for more specific support services.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate this government's decision to listen to Queenslanders and cover the federal government's cut to pensioner concessions. Despite being burdened by \$80 billion of Labor debt in this state, we decided it was better for the Queensland government to wear the cuts rather than Queensland pensioners.

Like all members in this House, I first and foremost represent my electorate, so it is a great pleasure to speak about some of the great initiatives that the Aspley electorate will benefit from as part of this year's budget. Seven schools in the Aspley electorate were pleased to receive a commitment of \$1.18 million under the Great Results Guarantee when that initiative was announced in January. Our schools are very excited about the results that they can achieve using that money. A total of \$5.14 million will assist people with a disability living in the Aspley electorate. In addition, \$40,000 has been provided towards upgrading and modifying an existing disability services property in the electorate. Our government is showing its commitment to supporting people with a disability and vulnerable families by providing \$1.2 million to assist the Australian Red Cross Society and UnitingCare to provide services that protect children and young people living in our local area.

There are many things that the Aspley electorate will be very pleased to receive as a result of this budget, but the one thing that I am very excited about is the delivery of the long-awaited Telegraph Road rail overpass. It will become a reality at the end of the year. This project would never have seen the light of day under a Labor government, but it will be completed. The project was promised by this government and it will be delivered by this government in partnership with the Brisbane City Council. Again, it would never have happened under a Labor government.

This budget outlines our plan for better financial management by making the strongest and smartest choice to reduce debt so we can sustainably invest in areas like child protection, disability services and community services. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Hon. MF McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (2.43 pm): I rise today to speak to the 2014-15 budget—the third budget of the Newman government. A budget cannot be considered merely as a document of figures and words—important as they are. It is the vehicle by which a government lays out a blueprint, and it is on that blueprint that they will be judged. True judgement may take some time but a true budget locks in for the long-term planning of a state. This budget in my opinion achieves exactly that by establishing a long-term vision, tackling the mistakes of Labor and growing the social and economic pillars of our future. It is a budget that provides a plan to pay down Labor's \$80 billion debt and to build the schools, hospitals and roads of tomorrow. It is a budget that does not increase or introduce new taxes, nor does it cut services. The Newman government has worked professionally for two years and has restored Queensland's finances to the point where next year the state will be in surplus.

This is the only side of the House that can claim it is promising to build the infrastructure of tomorrow with a plan to pay down the debt, a plan to pay for the infrastructure and a plan to provide for the children of tomorrow. Labor has no plan to pay down the debt, it has no plan for infrastructure and it has no plan for the children of tomorrow. The contrast between the two sides is absolutely stark.

In the budget, one of the most compelling issues in my portfolio is the potential sale of two government owned generators—CS Energy and Stanwell—together with a private sector equity model for future capital spend in the network businesses of Powerlink, Ergon and Energex. It must be made absolutely crystal clear that this government will seek a mandate from the people of this state with regard to the sale of the generators. We made the promise 12 months ago that we would keep the people of this state informed as to exactly what we were going to do and that if we were seeking a mandate we would do so in the 2015 election campaign. With regard to Powerlink, Ergon and Energex, the government will retain ownership of the shares in those entities and then seek capital, by way of a private sector equity model, to carry forward the growth in poles and wires and other infrastructure we need to grow the society, both economically and socially, in the forward years.

The issue with regard to CS Energy and Stanwell has been debated for some time now within the public arena, but more important than that is what the Labor Party has done. I make it quite clear that the history of the Labor Party in regard to the sale of assets is completely at odds with what we have done on this side of the House. I can recall quite clearly standing in this House in 2009 post the election campaign when Anna Bligh was returned on a litany of lies and she informed the House that she would in fact be selling the assets that the people of this state had held so dear for so long. The issue is also compounded by the lies of the ETU, the CFMEU and all of the unions affiliated with the Labor Party. They are perpetuating lie, myth and distrust in relation to what this government intends to do. They are simply trying to feather their own nest, trying to ensure that the deals they have done with the Labor Party in the past continue into the future. They have no real interest in this state or the people of this state; their only interest is self-interest, their only interest is to make certain they keep the good, strong deals they have got from the Labor Party.

This government gave back control of Powerlink, Ergon and Energex to the boards of those entities. We made certain that they were commercially operating, commercially viable and returning commercial returns to this state. In days gone by, the unions controlled those entities—simply by way of a pipeline to the Labor Party—to the point where they were strangled of innovation, strangled of initiative and strangled of outcomes. Those days have gone. It is about time the Labor Party understood that these entities are now working commercially and, more importantly, working for the people of this state.

I listened with some interest to the speech by the Leader of the Opposition in regard to the Productivity Commission that was touted as being the body they would utilise to look at electricity prices. It took me back to about 12 months ago when the shadow Treasurer raised the same point in the budget reply last year. They were going to put in place a Productivity Commission to look at a review and undertake and comment upon all aspects of pricing in regard to the electricity sector. They said 12 months ago, 'The opposition will provide for the detail on our plans to establish a Queensland Productivity Commission in coming months.' It has been 12 months and there is still nothing from the Labor Party as to what this commission is going to look like, what its powers will be or, more importantly, what it will achieve. We looked for the old Labor Party policy sheet today just to make certain that it was covered off there. There is not one mention on the Labor Party policy website of anything to do with a commission of this nature seeking, digesting, dissecting and analysing power prices. Again, it is merely a plan for a plan, nothing more than that. It is simply rhetoric. They have done no hard work and they have done nothing to indicate what their outcomes will be or, more importantly, what processes they will put in place. Contrast that with the LNP. I table the following documents: the *Independent Review Panel on Network Costs* produced by this government, the *Interdepartmental Committee on Electricity Sector Reform, May 2013*, and the Queensland government response to that last document.

Tabled paper: Interdepartmental Committee on Electricity Sector Reform, May 2013: Report to government [[5362](#)].

Tabled paper: Independent Review Panel on Network Costs: Electricity Network Costs Review Final Report [[5363](#)].

This is a government that saw the disaster that we were handed with regard to power prices. We acted immediately to ensure that we would achieve strong outcomes for Queensland and we make no apologies for the steps we have taken. The Labor Party, on the other hand, are simply using words—a plan for a plan. They have no idea, they have no concept and they do not admit that mistakes they made in years gone by have led us to the current situation with regard to electricity.

This government has a strong plan and a bright future for this state. We have done the hard yards. In my opinion, the third budget puts in place the planks to develop what we need for the future growth of Queensland if we get the mandate to sell the generators next year. What will happen is that we will pay down debt to about \$55 billion but then we will have a war chest of about \$8.6 billion to grow the schools, to grow the economy, to grow the roads and to build the hospitals so that our children's children get the education, the road network and the transport network and so that our older population get access to first-class medical treatment in the years to come. Contrast that with Labor. Read the speech delivered by the Leader of the Opposition. There are a lot of words and a lot of rhetoric but there is nothing on the ground. We have a plan; they have no plan. We have a strong team; they have no team. We have a party in power that is rejuvenated, that is looking forward; the Labor Party have simply the men and women of the past who brought us to the state of being on our knees economically. The contrast is stark and the contrast is clear.

Turning to Caloundra, can I make the point that there are 10 schools in the great electorate of Caloundra that will share in nearly \$1 million from the Great Results Guarantee funding. I say that the education minister has been a great minister, a hardworking minister, and he has done exceptionally well in providing for my electorate. We have \$24.5 million to widen Caloundra Road to the Sunshine Motorway to six lanes. My friend and companion the Minister for Transport has done an excellent job over the past two and a half to three years. I ask him to please take a bow as his colleague did.

The second major highlight in my opinion is the \$695 million going towards the Kawana hospital, a massive amount of money going into an infrastructure construction project that will deliver long-term outcomes medically, socially and also job-wise right across the Sunshine Coast. It is in no measure to the credit of the member for Kawana, my friend Mr Jarrod Bleijie, and the great work that he did. There are also some other funds for the seat of Caloundra. Caloundra Home Assist will receive \$545,000 and there is also \$449,000 for non-government organisations to help with homelessness.

This is a budget which is strong, effective, far-reaching and far-sighted. I say that the Treasurer, whom I have known since 2006, has grown in stature. Over many years he has grown in capacity and ability. He is a strong Treasurer who has taken some strong choices and he has lost weight. I say to the Treasurer: well done, sir; you have done an exceptional job on behalf of the people of this state. In years to come they will look back on this and the first two budgets as a cornerstone for the future. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (2.53 pm): I rise to speak to the government's budget handed down by the Treasurer on Tuesday, 3 June. Until recent times, the people of Queensland have endured more than 20 years of economic mismanagement under Labor governments. In that time they have endured Labor's binge budgets—budgets in which Labor spent far beyond what is healthy for the economy. These Labor binge budgets were followed by the first two budgets of the LNP government. Those fiscal repair budgets of the Newman government could be described as hangover budgets. Those two budgets of this government had to deal with the headache or legacy of Labor's binge in the form of debt, deficits and a culture of entitlement amongst some. The hangover has not been pleasant to deal with.

Now, in 2014-15 the Queensland government has delivered its third budget, not a binge budget like the Labor years, but a Berocca budget: the b-b-bounce of Queensland is coming back. This budget begins to restore our bounce to give us back our mojo. This budget brings the state's economy back to life again. It brings new life, new opportunity and new hope to the families and businesses of Queensland. The 2014-15 budget continues to deliver on the LNP government's strong plan for a brighter future. Strong choices have to be made so that a brighter future can be ours. We need to reduce Labor's \$80 billion debt and \$4 billion interest bill. This budget outlines our plan to make the strongest and smartest choices to reduce debt so we can sustainably invest in the schools, hospitals and infrastructure for the future. We have made significant progress in restoring our finances, growing a four-pillar economy, revitalising front-line services and funding infrastructure projects. We have also created jobs, with more than 60,000 jobs created in Queensland in the last year.

I want to congratulate my colleagues the Treasurer, Tim Nicholls, and the Premier, Campbell Newman, on delivering a fiscally responsible and measured budget in the face of difficult economic circumstances that we as a government inherited from the Bligh government as a legacy for all Queenslanders. We are putting to the people of Queensland our plan to sell or lease some assets. With the \$33 billion earned from these funds, we will be making a \$25 billion down payment on Labor's \$80 billion debt and investing \$8.6 billion in infrastructure throughout the state. I encourage

everyone in Cleveland, Wellington Point, Ormiston, Thornlands, Birkdale and North Stradbroke Island to jump online or write in to have their say as to where we should invest that \$8 billion on our assets should we be returned to government.

We are taking our plan to the next election to get a mandate from the people. It is important that all of Queensland have their say before we undertake such moves to sell or lease assets. I note the clear distinction between our government and the former Labor government, which promised they would not sell assets before the election and then proceeded to do so afterwards in a fire sale. They betrayed the trust of Queenslanders. But we have been upfront with our plans and will let the people decide.

The LNP government was elected with an unprecedented majority and mandate to fix Labor's mess. The LNP government has started the process of reining in Labor's debt and has a strong plan to get Queensland back in the black. In this budget the LNP government has invested in front-line services of health, education, housing services, child protection, disability services and law and order among other important areas. This government has not only maintained existing funding levels in these core areas but has increased the funding.

The residents of Cleveland will share in these increases in funding such as \$13.6 billion in Health funding, a six per cent increase over the last budget; \$11.8 billion in Education funding, representing a seven per cent increase in funding; \$5.4 billion into Transport and Main Roads; \$406 million in Child Protection; and \$44.5 million in our Safe Night Out Strategy. I am proud to be a member of a government that understands the importance of investing in these essential government services while at the same time beginning to tackle the debt crisis that the former government left behind.

We are also not leaving our pensioners behind. I am pleased to say that we have a leader and a Treasurer who listen. They listened to the concerns of our pensioners. The announcement that the Newman LNP government would pay for the entire concession is great news for the many seniors and pensioners of Cleveland. We have gone the extra mile to extend the state budget to fully cover the concession gap left by the federal budget. The government has demonstrated that we respond to the outcry of Queensland's most needy people.

In terms of Education, the budget contains \$11.8 billion in funding, representing a seven per cent increase. These funds are vital to the continued provision of a first-class education to the children of Cleveland. The Great Results Guarantee initiative sees a further \$1.25 million invested in the schools of Cleveland: Bay View State School, Cleveland District State High School, Cleveland State School, Dunwich State School, Ormiston State School, Redland District Special School, Thornlands State School, Wellington Point State High School and Wellington Point State School. The funding comes on the back of the \$300 million for school maintenance and \$535 million Great Teachers = Great Results initiative, as previously announced. Further, there is the millions of dollars spent recently on construction of the Bay View State School indoor multipurpose school auditorium, Cleveland District State High School year 7 buildings and a contribution to the Ormiston College administration building. This has meant that Cleveland residents continue to get their fair share of funding for education infrastructure.

In terms of health, this budget includes \$13.6 billion in funding, which is a six per cent increase over the last budget. Redlands Hospital and Allied Health Services will get their fair share of this funding increase. Redlands Hospital emergency department waiting times have come down, and so too have the elective surgery and dental waiting lists.

The government will continue to operate the recently established palliative care services and paediatric emergency department services that are based at the hospital. The continued palliative care service provides for the needs of people in Cleveland and the greater Redlands area. The recently constructed paediatric ED section of the new emergency department area will also continue to be a blessing to children in need of emergency treatment in this state-of-the-art centre. I commend the Metro South board and health minister for the efficiencies that they have achieved that make the continuation of these services possible, and I thank the government for its continued support of palliative and paediatric care in my electorate. The rebuild of the Cleveland Ambulance Station is almost completed. Soon ambulance officers will be able to move from their temporary facilities back to an even better permanent new home.

In terms of North Stradbroke Island, this year's state budget has delivered good news for North Stradbroke Island's Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents. The Newman government has committed \$1.4 million for various projects designed to improve access for visitors to the island. The

investment will assist in growing the pillar of tourism on the island as we move towards a non-sandmining future by 2035. This funding comes on top of the \$200,000 already allocated to promote Straddie as a tourism destination. The government is also committed to the future preservation of Straddie, with additional funding to maintain facilities, to manage the national park areas and to go towards the implementation of the Quandamooka Indigenous Land Use Agreement, or ILUA. The Quandamooka people will receive a further \$580,000 to assist in capacity building to provide a brighter future for the Indigenous people of the island. I am honoured to continue to be the member of parliament who represents the Quandamooka people, as the majority of the Indigenous people who constitute the Quandamooka people live on North Stradbroke Island within the Cleveland electorate. I was honoured to be their member through the establishment of their native title claim which this government, then in opposition, supported. Since forming government we have implemented the ILUA, and we have continued to invest in capacity building in this budget.

I remain grateful to the Quandamooka residents and families on the island for their strong support, which has continued to this day. They voted at the Dunwich booth on North Stradbroke Island to support the government's direction with respect to the future of North Stradbroke Island and our amendments to the North Stradbroke Island Protection and Sustainability Bill. It was the Quandamooka people who helped install this government and provide the mandate for this government to bring the changes that they wanted. So it is a little disappointing today that some individuals are taking this court action because the island community, including the Quandamooka residents, strongly supported the LNP government's direction with respect to their future and sandmining. The overwhelming majority of Quandamooka residents support our transitional plan for their future as it provides great jobs, meaningful livelihoods and opportunities for their families, youth and children.

It is disappointing that the Labor Party's actions in this House today show that they want to hold the Quandamooka back and promote their dependency on the government rather than support the opportunity for them to stand proudly on their own two feet—but this is the socialist Labor way. I urge the few individual Labor Party members on and off the island who are behind this court action in concert with the Labor opposition to consider that taxpayers' funds could be better utilised building capacity and creating jobs and opportunities, housing and other things that the people badly need rather than spending it on legal fees. This government in this budget continues to support the Quandamooka people of North Stradbroke Island, as we said we would.

In terms of law and order in the Cleveland electorate, again, this has been well provided for in this budget and I will not go over all the statistics in terms of the increase in the number of front-line police officers because it has already been well documented. Cleveland has been getting its fair share of police officers, both at the Dunwich and Cleveland stations. We will also benefit in the fight against crime from the second police helicopter.

In terms of recreational fishermen and boaties in the Cleveland electorate, they have been winners from successive budgets. The recreational fishing community continues to get their fair share of the budget, with a new \$370,000 allocation for resurfacing work at the Wellington Point Reserve boat ramp. This comes on top of the recent \$750,000 commitment to construct a new boat ramp that is underway at Raby Bay and the two floating walkways that will happen in this budget period. There has also been a commitment to artificial reefs in terms of reef balls at Peel and Coochie artificial reefs, and I am hopeful in the future of being able to see more artificial reef ball extensions and artificial reefs in Moreton Bay and the southern part of the bay, which are of great benefit to the sustainability of our fishing.

There are too many good things happening in transport and main roads to speak of in the time that I do not have left, so let me just say in closing that a brighter future is ours for the taking, but only under an LNP government with a strong plan. We have moved from the binge budgets of the Labor years, past the hangover budgets and on to this budget—a Berocca budget giving back to Queenslanders their b-b-bounce.

 **Mr KATTER** (Mount Isa—KAP) (3.06 pm): I would like to offer what will most certainly be an alternate view of the third budget handed down from this government. Having an alternate view is derived from a deep chasm between the mainstream economic ideologies prevalent today and those that the KAP wish to align themselves with as a counterpoint. The underlying direction driving this budget is referred to as supply side economics. This requires prioritising fiscal balance above all else; in essence, an austerity strategy to achieve a budget surplus strongly through savings in expenses and passively watching industry, hoping that it will gain confidence from disciplined spending.

What is forgotten in this budget strategy is that a state government in Australia closely resembles that of a member country of the Eurozone. Fiscal policy is the only policy arm available to build an economy and community in the way that Queensland people desire and need. By this I mean that monetary policy is determined by an independent central bank pursuing national objectives. A state government therefore needs to use its one remaining policy arm to build, not contract, economic activity. A weak point in Queensland's economy is reflected in the latest underutilisation rate of the labour force—a very stark reminder of where we are at.

For Queensland, the ABS gives the underutilisation rate for Queensland as at February 2014 at 13.6 per cent, up from 12.8 per cent 12 months prior, compared to the Australian figure for the same dates at 13.5 per cent. This means that Queensland is performing below the national average in efficiently utilising its labour force. Austerity budgets are the wrong way to address an underperforming economy.

I belong to the alternate view that is aligned with a policy that targets industry growth and employment over fiscal balance. These were the programs that were successful coming out of the Great Depression. An example of this thinking was the great Snowy Mountains project. When it was first mooted in 1946 by Ben Chifley, the \$800 million completion cost represented 25 to 28 per cent of the entire 1946 Australian budget. Can members imagine the hysteria that would surround such a project today, using public debt for an investment of that size? Yet Australia built this engineering wonder and the nation enjoyed full employment, rising living standards and prosperity. Future economic growth and consequent prosperity lay at the centre of thinking for this project.

Sadly, the political world today has lost such knowledge and skills. This austerity budget proposed today is consistent with the great loss of economic knowledge and skills that were once a feature of this country's political landscape. We are lucky to have opportunities for great nation-building projects in Queensland because we have such rich and diverse resources which are largely untapped. These are important points to acknowledge prior to making any point in this budget, because they intrinsically define the course upon which our state will be set.

Our economy is contracting at present and desperately needs an adrenaline shot to the heart to gradually rebuild the revenue base that deteriorated not just due to the end of the commodities boom, but also from failed industry policies employed in this state and country over the past 20 years.

A government member interjected.

Mr KATTER: I take that interjection, because there are indicators that will tell you that it is growing, but do your own test. If members walk about in their electorates and talk to small business owners to see how they are feeling, they will see how the economy is going.

The adrenaline shot is large scale infrastructure spends in strategic wealth-generating assets such as roads, rail lines, transmission lines, ports and dams. These activities will incur immense debt but will stimulate the economy, drive enormous confidence at all levels of business and create a more competitive environment on the back end. The obvious question to ask is: how do you fund large capital expenditure when you are worried about debt? This is a technical issue requiring lengthy discussion, but it in short relies on the federal government supporting the states in major economic development projects. This highlights a second criticism with supply side economic reliance upon the market allocation of resources. What is desperately required is a public financial institution directly charged with funding development and structural adjustment in low-income or debilitated regions.

In the context of nation building, a train of thought members might like to think about is that the budget is not disaster land. While the economy is stressed, the budget is not disaster land. On a \$400 billion gross state product, \$2.6 billion represents about 0.5 per cent of GSP which is nothing in economics. Just borrow the money. The subsequent public securities will be assets for the holders of the scrip. Interest paid will be income for the asset holders. Asset holders will pay income tax on the income and the income will actually boost both state GSP and national GDP. The problem is one of revenue, and that is a consequence of an ideology that seeks to minimise government involvement in the economy. Government enterprises in the past have provided important sources of public revenue. Minimisation of government in the economy has also led to a declining and narrowing of the state's production base from which to generate public revenue from licence fees, stamp duties et cetera. Consequently, what we are now facing is the consequence of inept policy which has produced sequential government policies of privatisation. Once a government business is privatised, then an alternate source of revenue must be found. This is now what this government is confronting—the folly of its own political ideology. Large scale capital expenditure programs by the Queensland government under Sir Joh were what orientated the state on the trajectory of growth that has kept it going for

decades only until successive governments no longer engaged in state industry infrastructure builds. Who would argue that the money spent on developing the coal industry, which we still live off today, was not a welcome embrace of debt—debt levels that would strike as much fear into those who would have you believe that it has shackled us as a state from going forward?

An honourable member interjected.

Mr KATTER: We are in the enviable position in Queensland that we have vast untapped resources that are able to be unlocked with strategic infrastructure development. I take the interjection that I thought I heard that it was a Labor budget. That is an interesting comment because the federal government fiscal stimulus was about school buildings and pink batts, and that is not what we are talking about here. We are talking about stimulus through infrastructure building projects—real industry building infrastructure projects. One of those that has been flagged is the William Street office building, which is not so much an infrastructure project. That office building was flagged as promoting economic development in this state, but when compared to investing in a rail line or strategic roads is ludicrous. There is no better example of investing in strategic infrastructure than the Mount Isa to Townsville rail line. Here is a line that can offer immense improvement in competitiveness to our mining, agriculture and businesses in western areas.

Mount Isa Mines was voted the most significant business in Queensland's history and the Mount Isa shire has been pumping royalties into this state for 90-plus years. We can take product—or mining product concentrate in many cases—from Mount Isa to Townsville by road or rail and the difference in cost is about 300 per cent. This is a very significant figure because many mines out there now cannot get access to the line and they are putting that concentrate on the road, which represents an additional cost in their transport costs of 300 per cent. Why do they not have access to the line? The answer is quite simple. Part of the answer is that the trains do not run fast enough because the track is not maintained. About 800 jobs went off that line in the Goss government and progressively more and more have gone off maintaining that line ever since. If you talk to anyone who has been on that line for more than 30 or 40 years, they will tell you that the tracks used to be straight and trains that used to travel at 80 kilometres an hour now travel at 40 kilometres an hour. We now have less capacity and fewer mines are able to get their ore to the coast faster or get access to the line so they are putting it in trucks. Members can imagine what this does to our competitiveness in the mining region, and it is a powerhouse in terms of a mining region. The answer is that we need to invest in this line and provide more competitiveness. That stimulates the economy and many mines that do not exist now will exist because suddenly they will be more competitive in terms of transport costs. One project in the north-west said that transport represented 80 per cent to 90 per cent of the cost of production for that one product. Clearly, many mining and other activities would open up if we could make that line more efficient.

Unfortunately, over the last 20 or so years there have been no significant upgrades at all on that line and the situation has deteriorated to the point that there are not only slow down signs on the rail but on the roads as well because there are that many trucks now using the road because they cannot fit all of their product on rail. The only logical conclusion I can draw from that is that in 20 years time we will be on horse and cart because everything is deteriorating and we are going backwards. If you are in government and you want to stimulate the economy while making industry more competitive, what a great idea it would be to upgrade these tracks and install some passing loops and better coordinate the activity on the line. The north-west minerals province is contributing—again, I think these are 2011 figures—\$200 million per annum to the state in royalties, so that would be a good investment—an investment which is a lot better than an office building in Brisbane or the proposed traffic tunnel in Brisbane. That is where we should be spending money—not on pink batts, not on school buildings, not on traffic tunnels in Brisbane. That is where this money should be spent and it will deliver back to Queenslanders in perpetuity. I will come back to address that issue in terms of the asset sales.

Anyone who spends time talking to small businesses at the moment would realise that people are doing it tough, and without our gas industry the GDP would not look good. That begs the question: what other meaningful initiatives are out there in our economy that can create some economic activity? I want to offer some cost-effective solutions for the government, and I will start with ethanol. If the government in Queensland mandated the use of ethanol, we can deliver some 10,000 to 20,000 jobs, cheaper fuel and greatly increase our tax base. And for what? For the stroke of a pen; for the mandating of ethanol. That is a legislative change. It will not cost the taxpayers anything at all. It is an industry builder and it is sitting there for the taking.

The next one is irrigation. In the Mount Isa electorate the Flinders-Leichhardt river systems are currently assessed with an average annual mean flow of 6,390,000 megalitres. Applying a conservative environmentally acceptable figure of 15 per cent of the take from the stream flow should allow us 958,500 megalitres per annum. We currently have access to 80,000 megalitres. It should be almost a million megalitres we can take out of that system while at the moment we are allowed to take 80,000 megalitres. The way that tender system worked has favoured the big guys in that there are about five or six people with one tender to take water out of that river. None of them have turned a sod and some would offer that they do not intend to at all, that it is just to inflate the value of their asset. Any irrigation that exists on the Flinders was built exactly the opposite way. It was the smaller guys who got their allocation and it was low cost, because there is no infrastructure to recover your costs. I do not know why there needs to be pricing at all because there is no rush on demand for it anyway. We need to let people take water out of the river for low cost or next to nothing. Errol Enriken, who farms way out of the farming footprint towards Winton, built his farm up. He and his son started it. They grew it. It was a low-cost operation. They grew it organically—and I use the word ‘organically’ figuratively. He and his son built it up. They tried different crops because it was a different soil type and they eventually ended up employing five people. So those extra five employees create taxes. He is buying tractors. He is generating a lot of stimulus for that local economy. We might say that that is a small effect, but we need to multiply that out by a lot of Errol Enrikens along that river system, and that costs the government nothing. You are just allowing them to take the water that is flowing out into the ocean, and a very small portion of it.

At the moment, under the current system Errol Enriken would have to do a business plan, a farm plan and put down 20 grand as a deposit for his water allocation, all for the chance of maybe getting his water allocation. I think the likes of Errol Enriken just would not have a go if there were that many barriers put in place. But if it is made easy for people like him, he will have a crack. A lot of people out there are struggling, but they will have a go if the government makes it easier for them to get access to that water and makes it more affordable for them. Like I said, there is no infrastructure there. There is no dam there or anything to recover costs from. Let them take out the water. That way they can start farming and towns like Richmond and Hughenden can start looking like St George and Emerald. It could be a great initiative of this government. It is an easy one for them, because it is not going to cost anyone any money and it is not going to disturb the environment at all. When the Flinders River is in flood, 200 megalitres a day flows past the town of Richmond. The whole allocation on the entire system is 80,000 megalitres. It does not make sense. There is enormous capacity there to increase and open it up to all of those farmers who exist along there so that we could have 50 or 100 Errol Enrikens. I think that is an initiative that the government should reconsider and change its attitude towards. There are some great benefits there to be had.

Although this is mainly a federal issue, the state needs to support the Australian Reconstruction and Development Board. Any assistance apart from the Australian Reconstruction and Development Board is welcome, but it falls horribly short. It is not going to save large portions of this industry. This year, farmers are already on their knees and once things start drying up again and they start having big lick bills and transport bills coming in, there is going to be a lot of pain out there and there are going to be questions asked of the government. The effort should be made now. The best step that could be made is to support the ARDB, which is before the federal parliament. It is the most cost-effective way to cage that portion of rural debt that is hamstringing agriculture in Australia. It will open the floodgates to foreign investment and for jobs that Australian farmers can do much more efficiently and we can still retain that sovereignty. I make the point that a lot of these foreign owners are coming in. If we do not provide assistance with rural debt in Australia, other countries that have reconstruction or development boards that assist their agricultural industry will be coming in to buy our farmers’ land. If you are ideologically opposed to the ARDB, it is pointless, because someone from another country is going to take advantage of it. The ARDB provides a very cost-effective solution to cage rural debt. It should be adopted and supported at a state level and at the moment it has not been. The federal government is happy to appropriate \$8 billion for desk jockeys to play around with pesos and the rupiah. They can give \$14 billion to the banking industry to keep it afloat. We are looking for \$4 billion to \$6 billion from the federal government to cage rural debt in Australia. The starting point is for this state to support a recovery in the agricultural sector.

I will move now on to asset sales, which seems to be causing the most debate on this budget. Obviously, I am vehemently opposed to asset sales. I think we should be building those assets, not selling them. I cannot help but focus on the rail and energy assets that are in my own electorate and how my electorate would be affected if they were sold. I can start easily by talking about the social cost. We saw Telstra privatised and then Sol Trujillo started taking a multimillion dollar salary and

started sacking all the workers in regional areas to save money. The people in regional areas can see the writing on the wall. Despite everyone's best attempts, and although the current government might not want those jobs in rural areas to go, it will happen. Private industry takes over and it will happen and service levels, standards and employment in rural and regional areas will diminish. That is a fact. Everyone knows it. Everyone is aware of it. There is no convincing the people in rural areas otherwise, because they all know how it is going to be.

Aside from the social cost to asset sales, I do not even have to scratch the surface to look at the retrospective study of the electricity assets in Victoria. The electricity assets in that state were sold on the basis of bringing down the interest bill on the debt in that state. Retrospectively, the revenue that was generated from the sale of the electricity assets in Victoria was less than the savings that the government in that state made on the interest payments after those assets were sold. It was a pointless exercise.

Electricity assets are leveraged just like rail assets. They provide the government with the leverage so that it can build industry in this state. Sun Metals zinc in Townsville exists because the government did deals on the cost of energy to make that industry happen. That was because the government had a vested interest in providing jobs and delivering other social delivery outcomes through owning these utilities. If private industry owns the assets, there is no desire for them to provide jobs or anything beyond getting a commercial return. So perhaps Sun Metals zinc would never exist if the energy assets were privately owned. These assets are very valuable tools. We have a basket of these utilities. This government needs to look at that basket of utilities and take it to industry and ask, 'How can we use these best to make you guys flourish?' I think that handing them over to a monopoly owner for a sugar hit sale just beggars belief. It defies logic and any sort of commercial rationale. It is a poor outcome.

The Royalties for the Regions is a nice effort, but taking it from applying to 14 councils and opening it up to all regional councils made it pointless. Although it is welcome, whatever funding does come, it is not enough.

A government member interjected.

Mr KATTER: We want the royalties money, but it just needs to be—

(Time expired)

 **Hon. JP BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) (3.25 pm): Today, it is great to be able to speak in support of the appropriation bills, which outline a methodical, carefully balanced budget that will build a four-pillar economy and, of course, revitalise front line services. I want to start by applauding my colleague the Hon. Treasurer and Minister for Trade on the delivery of his third budget. He continues to do a tremendous job, having inherited a financial basket case from the wasteful, chaotic former Labor government made up of those members opposite whose legacy will always remain an \$80 billion debt which is costing Queenslanders the price of a family home—\$450,000—every hour.

Queensland has a strong plan. It now has a strong team. It also has a brighter future. But to have that brighter future, it is always good to look at the past. I remind those opposite in the House that we inherited a basket case economy. As we have heard in this debate, the members of the Labor Party opposite pumped billions of dollars into failed projects like the Traveston Dam—dams with no pipes to them and dams with no pipes at the end of them. They rolled out the red carpet in the health department for the fake Tahitian prince while denying hardworking medical staff their pay and their conditions, and, of course, over the past 20 years they have rolled out the welcome mat to criminal gangs to flourish in this state.

Despite grappling with these huge financial pressures, I am delighted that with this budget the government will deliver important infrastructure—tourism, resources and construction investments—whilst revitalising front-line services such as health. Health is very important. I want to deal with two issues. The first one relates to my local electorate of Kawana and the revitalisation of front-line services in the Kawana electorate and then I will deal with the Department of Justice and Attorney-General revitalising front-line services.

As I said, health is very important for the people of the Kawana electorate. I stood shoulder to shoulder with my constituents when we dealt with the delay of the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital. For years we called for the construction of the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital and it fell on the deaf ears of the Labor Party. It kept having a plan for the hospital.

Mr Stevens: Patience.

Mr BLEIJIE: They said that they were going to do it. I take the interjection from the Leader of the House. The members of the Labor Party had a lot of patience. They said, 'Be patient. We have no money. We can't afford it. But we've got a parcel of land.' For years I stood with my community watching this grassland build up, so much so that there was an abundance of food for the kangaroos. But that was the Labor Party. It ticked it off. It had completed the job, because it bought a block of land. It got a block of land from a developer for where the hospital was going to go and that was satisfactory to the Labor Party. It was not satisfactory to the people of the Sunshine Coast, who wanted a university hospital. They wanted a tertiary hospital. They wanted 10,000 fewer constituents going to Brisbane each year because they could not get the health services on the Sunshine Coast. How times have changed in two years. Last week I drove past the hospital site with the health minister and it has nine cranes on site. It is going up. The land is there, the frame is built and the Sunshine Coast community can see this \$1.8 billion investment coming out of the ground.

Mr Stevens: Is it going to have a helipad?

Mr BLEIJIE: It will have a helipad. It was great to see an investment of over \$370 million in this budget being spent on the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital because health services are not only a key objective of this government, they are a key issue for residents of the Sunshine Coast. Also in health care I welcome the announcement of a new ambulance station at Currimundi, that I am sure the member for Caloundra will be happy about as well. This follows the recent delivery of two new ambulances at Kawana. Across the state I welcome the funds to recruit an additional 100 ambulance officers and the commission of 155 new and replacement ambulance vehicles. The amount of \$6.4 million has been allocated towards additional beds for the Sunshine Coast community care unit and that is a welcome investment.

Quality education is a key strength of our strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland. We are working hard to deliver quality schools after years of neglect by those opposite. We have seen all members engage with their local schools, their P&Cs and their communities with the great investment from this government in terms of the Great Results Guarantee money, but also the maintenance money to try to clear the backlog, a backlog that the Labor Party left there. It is always important to remind community members that in only two years we have achieved this. In two years we have all but cleared some maintenance backlogs from our schools. We have got on with the job. We are looking at numeracy and literacy amongst our young people. We are getting on with the job. The Labor Party never could and they never would. It was all promises.

If I can turn to the opposition leader's budget response, there was no budget response. There was a lot of rhetoric. There were a lot of plans to have a plan. There were two big policy announcements: firstly, they were going to have a plan and people would find out about it at the election and, secondly, they were going to set up more bureaucracy because that was the answer. That is how Anna Bligh, the former Labor Premier, got away with saying she created 100,000 jobs. They just kept setting up these bureaucracies. The Queensland community understands that is not how you create jobs. Business investment creates jobs in the state. Businesses coming to Queensland creates jobs. It is putting a spotlight on Queensland so businesses can come and invest here. If they grow the economy people—young people—have jobs in the state.

Over the last two years in the Department of Justice and Attorney-General I have been particularly proud with this government to lead the charge in getting rid of criminal gangs in this state. I have been particularly pleased to help the Premier lead the charge in making sure young offenders are held responsible for their actions, dealing with the crime issues that we have seen up in Townsville, dealing with the crime issues we have seen in other areas—particularly Cairns and our regions. We only have to look at the statistics now coming through. All these criminal gang reforms were opposed by the Labor Party. This budget is an investment for the future of our kids in this state. This budget is about revitalising front-line services for families. This budget is about keeping communities safe. How do we do it? By having the laws in place to tackle the issues of the day. The issues of the day are criminal gangs, armed robberies, robberies, assaults on individuals and alcohol and drug related violence. I was particularly pleased we got \$44 million in this budget. We announced the Safe Night Out Strategy today. It is about making sure our communities are safe. If the Labor Party are ever elected back in this state as the government they will roll the red carpet out for criminal gangs. In the last few weeks we have seen stories in the paper about leaders of criminal gangs fleeing the jurisdiction, fleeing to international places where they can continue their illegality. Not in Queensland. Yes, we put these laws in place—these fair laws in place—but the results speak for themselves.

If I can refer to the Sunshine Coast police statistics from October to April this year, we have had a 54 per cent reduction in robberies and a 17 per cent unlawful entry reduction. In the Gold Coast district there has been an 18 per cent reduction in robberies and a 30 per cent reduction in unlawful entries. If we look at the Moreton Bay district, there has been a 55 per cent reduction in robberies and a 14 per cent reduction in unlawful entries. The Labor opposition leader can deliver an hour budget in reply speech and not say for once they got it wrong, for once they should have supported the government's reforms in terms of criminal gangs, they should have supported the youth justice reforms because they are working. Young offenders are working out that they will be held responsible for their actions. They want to get their life on track, the government wants them to get their life on track, and that is going to happen through our boot camps. I love hearing the hysteria from the member for Rockhampton when he talks about boot camps. He has condemned boot camps in his own electorate. The Police Citizens Youth Club runs the boot camp in Rockhampton. Two weeks ago the member visited the PCYC, handed a cheque over and got a photo with them, despite the fact he does not support the programs of his local PCYC. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. The results are there in terms of making sure that our commitment to Queenslanders about revitalising front-line services, making our communities safer, developing this strong plan for a brighter future for all our men, women and children in this state is there. The ingredients have been there over the last couple of years. I think it is shameful that we are seeing these recycled assets of the Labor Party coming through. They are bringing back Kerry Shine in the electorate of the honourable member for Toowoomba North. This is a fellow who was Attorney-General, who let criminal gangs and sexual offenders thrive in this state and did not tackle the issue head-on. He has come out and attacked some of the laws that we have introduced in the last couple of years. Those opposite have not changed their position despite the fact that, looking at the statistics coming through, the laws are working. Young offenders are being held responsible for their actions, but they are also in programs to assist them get a job and an education so that they can contribute positively to society.

Compare and contrast this: a strong team with a strong plan with a strong leader—the plan is all about a brighter future—compared to that mob over there who have no plan, failed policies, failed leadership, failed candidates and failed members of parliament. That is what they are going to give to the people of Queensland in 2015. The people of Queensland will not accept that. The people of Queensland want positive policies for a brighter future for Queensland. They will get that from this side of the House: a strong plan for a brighter future—not from that mob in the Labor Party.

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (3.36 pm): Today is Queensland Day, the 155th anniversary of when our state separated from the colony of New South Wales.

Mr Holswich: Best thing we ever did!

Ms SIMPSON: I think it was a terrific move and one we are still celebrating. A can-do attitude built this state and a can-do attitude is what motivates us to do the hard yards to build an even greater future. In speaking in the budget reply debate for 2014-15 let me say this: this is a good budget for my electorate of Maroochydore, the 330,000 people in the region of the Sunshine Coast and Queensland as a whole. It delivers benefits not only for today but lays a sound foundation for the future, with increases in funding for good local projects such as the Bruce Highway, health and schools in my area. I am thrilled to see funding for the Coolum Police Station, with its move from the temporary site to a permanent location, which has been funded in this budget.

Before reporting on the wins in my electorate, let me first reflect on some history as there are lessons that resonate true today. Good government is about empowering people rather than ruling over them and leadership is about taking responsibility rather than shifting responsibility to another generation. Back in 1859, one of the key reasons our state was created was the pragmatic realisation that Queensland could not and should not be ruled from Sydney. We were too far away and there were too many challenges and opportunities that needed hands-on leadership and timely decision making by people who not only invested in this part of the world but also lived here. Queenslanders, those who lived in the area that was then known as the Northern Districts of New South Wales, realised that if we were to develop and reach our potential then we needed self-determination—we needed self-representation. That came about by having our own government. Our forefathers and foremothers, even though they were not allowed to vote at first, took the risk when they lobbied for Queensland's statehood, but they wanted to be responsible for creating a better society. Interestingly, the legislature of New South Wales voted in opposition to Queensland separating from this part of the world—

A government member: Outrageous.

Ms SIMPSON: Indeed, it was outrageous—but fortunately to no effect because it had been proclaimed that this would occur. The audacity of the opposition prompted a response that was reported in the *Argus* on 12 October 1859—

We believe that Queensland, with a territory of 140,000 acres and a population of 25,000 people, an export trade of the annual value of £600,000 and her almost incalculable resources of natural production, is quite well able to stand on her own legs, and needs no longer to be in leading-strings.

Queensland had humble origins but great ambitions and this beautiful parliamentary building, which was started in 1864, is testament to that. The history of this building reflects the early economic history of the state. The colony started with high hopes and the potential to grow its economy, but it also started with debt. At first that debt was manageable. Then a banking collapse overseas where the state's loans were held, exacerbated by spiralling building costs here at Parliament House, meant that work had to be ceased until the state was in a better financial position and could rescope the works and get on with it. Fortunately, then gold was discovered in Gympie and the mining boom was on.

As I said earlier, good government is about empowering people rather than ruling over them and leadership is about taking responsibility rather than shifting responsibility to another generation. Our state does have a bright future if we are prepared to talk honestly and act decisively together to tackle the excessive burden of debt that this government inherited, while still delivering services and infrastructure today. The loss of the state's AAA rating a few years ago cannot be sugar coated. It was a disgrace. It is hard evidence of the damage suffered by our state's finances. At the highest levels, this debt is estimated to cost about \$450,000 an hour in interest repayments.

Any responsible household knows that debt is like fire: it is a good servant but a bad master. If we do not keep it under control, it will control us. The plan released by the Treasurer this week to secure the finances and the economy of Queensland is about taking control back for Queenslanders. It is about a fair go for today's citizens and future citizens, the children of the state, so their opportunities are not hocked by debt deniers and wasters of public funds for short-term sugar hits of popularity. It is also a watershed in how state governments, over many terms, have interacted with constituents by involving them in the decisions. I still remember 21 May 2009 in this chamber when I asked Rachel Nolan, the then transport minister, about her government's plans to sell assets. The minister famously and erroneously replied—

Queensland Rail is not for sale.

Mr Sorensen: I remember it.

Ms SIMPSON: That is right. About four days later, apparently it was for sale. The front page of the paper declared the news that the Bligh Labor government was planning asset sales that they did not bother to tell the people of Queensland about before the election. This LNP government is keeping its promise not to sell major assets without going to the people at a state election. This state government is also involving the people of Queensland in a conversation about what excessive debt means for the future of this state—an interest bill of \$450,000 per hour, at the highest, is not sustainable—and what the loss of the AAA rating has meant not only for the state government but also for local governments as they pay more when borrowing. I commend the Treasurer for the engagement tools he has released to involve Queenslanders in this conversation about what it takes to get the raging fire of debt back under control so that it serves rather than burns us and we can build the sustainable infrastructure that is required.

I also commend the draft action plan, which is about up-cycling state assets, getting more for Queenslanders from their assets to build the infrastructure and deliver the services the state needs, without the dead hand of more burdensome tax. Public consultation on how Queenslanders want the money released from reinvesting these assets is now open. Consultation is open so that people can be involved in deciding the priorities and how that money should be spent. I welcome people's feedback in that process, which is open until 15 August. We are asking Queenslanders how they want spending prioritised and allocated for the infrastructure spend of \$8 billion.

I am already on the record in support of the upgrade of the north coast rail line to the Sunshine Coast. Our region of more than 330,000 people currently has an 1880s rail alignment. In 2014, when the tilt train travels through that area its top speed is only about 50 or 55 kilometres an hour. What they did in the 1880s was amazing, but it is time—it is more than time—for a new rail alignment that services our regional area of the Sunshine Coast and connects us to greater South-East Queensland.

It is vital infrastructure to connect our region and to anchor a better public integrated transport system across the coast. I am also lobbying for more road projects, as well as other essential long-term infrastructure for the Maroochydore electorate and the Sunshine Coast.

I celebrate and commend the wins we see in this 2014-15 budget, because through judicious budgeting there is much good news. I have mentioned before the Coolumbine Police Station. I am thrilled to see that, through my advocacy for this station, the site that has been leased since 2005 will be no more and we will have a permanent home for the police, with more than \$2.2 million allocated to relocate the police station near the ambulance station. That is a great outcome.

For the Bruce Highway, I am pleased to see further funding announcements for upgrades between Caboolture and the Sunshine Motorway Interchange. This will include six-laning works and two new interchanges from Caloundra Road to the Sunshine Motorway and interchange upgrades. \$24.5 million has been allocated to start stage 1 of that work, which is a joint project between the Australian and Queensland governments and is desperately needed. It is in addition to the \$80.3 million from the Australian government for the \$195 million program of interchange upgrades between Caboolture and Caloundra.

On the Safe Night Out Strategy, there is legislation before the House so I will not talk about the details of that legislation. However, the funding in this budget is very welcome. On the Sunshine Coast we have seen the tragic deaths of a couple of people where violence touched their lives in a way that has left a permanent mark on their families. As I said, I will not allude to the legislation but certainly I commend the \$44 million commitment in the budget going forward for this program. It is about changing culture. It is about more resources for the police and looking at other mechanisms, but it is also about tackling the issue of educating those who binge drink and take no responsibility for their actions, with tragic consequences.

Concessions for pensioners will continue thanks to this state government stretching its budget to cover the federal government cuts to concessions. I understand that this will cost the state about \$50 million extra, but it is recognition that it is easier for the state to do that than for ordinary pensioners who do not have a lot of spare cash. The state has significantly lifted its subsidies to bridge this gap to help vulnerable Queenslanders.

I commend the Minister for Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services for her work in one of the most challenging but most necessary of portfolios to assist vulnerable Queenslanders. The Carmody review implementation is funded by this government, with about \$400 million in additional funding over the next five years to assist this very vital work. I particularly commend the minister for the help she has given to people with disabilities and their families. Recently, that important work certainly has helped ageing parents of disabled children in my electorate. It is very humbling when you see how tough some people do it. They have lived a life of care for their children and the disability those children have means they need a lot of extra help. I know the minister is doing a lot of work in this area to help more families and I certainly appreciate it.

A caring and compassionate government is one that recognises both human and financial needs, as both are intertwined. The stronger our state budget into the future, the better we can support those who have special needs. I seek leave to have the rest of my speech incorporated into *Hansard*. I can confirm the Speaker has read the rest of the speech!

Leave granted.

Health Funding is up and so is Education spending

Health spending is up 6% in this budget.

- \$369.768 million has been allocated in 2014/15 towards construction of the \$1.87 billion Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital (due to be completed in 2016).
- \$6.393 million has been allocated towards additional beds to be constructed at the Sunshine Coast Community Care Unit
- \$7.384 million has been allocated in 2014/15 for minor capital projects across the HHS
- \$1.406 million has been allocated towards health technology equipment throughout the HHS.

Improvements in health service delivery and waiting times:

- In just thirteen months [Feb 2013 to Mar 2014] the number of Sunshine Coast residents on Queensland Health's dental waiting lists for more than two years has been slashed—I am advised from 4,204 to just 207
- Local waiting times for public hospital appointments have been reduced with more than 400 public patients being referred to the newly opened Sunshine Coast University Private Hospital to receive treatment free of charge. This will continue to be used for public healthcare services until our new Public University Hospital opens in 2016 with 450 beds.

Education spending is up 7% to \$11.8 billion—and on the Sunshine Coast ...

- Education funding for the region includes \$12 million to prepare schools for the transition of Year 7 into high school next year.
- Nearly \$800,000 has been awarded to 5 schools in my electorate under the Great Results Guarantee Initiative to boost literacy and numeracy outcomes.
- Over \$2 million (\$2,125,733) to schools in my electorate to help clear maintenance backlog in 2012-13 and 2013-14

Maroochydore Schools Capital Works Total Expenditure	1,614,786.73 Actual 2012-13	984,274.63 Planned 2013-14
------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------------------------------

Tourism/Economy/jobs/Small business

Our State economy is growing, leading Australia. The latest ABS data shows that Queensland dwelling approvals rose 3.8% in December, which is the highest level in six years and marks 24 consecutive months of increases, placing approvals at 58.6% higher than in December 2011.

The State Government is continuing to support our construction sector, with more than 4,200 Great Start Grants of \$15,000 already helping Queensland's first time buyers.

Sunshine Coast businesses have created more jobs than any other region in the March ABS data which shows there were 11,300 more people in work in the region than 12 months before. The unemployment rate has fallen 0.6 percentage points to 6.1%.

We are unabashedly "pro-business" in tackling red tape, and supporting the job creators who hold the key to unlocking job opportunities for our region.

After some tough years for many businesses and job seekers, there is still a way to go but the positive figures are welcome and heading in the right direction.

Local tourism operators have reported a turnaround for 2013-14 year.

Tourism is one of the Queensland economy's four pillars and is extremely important to the Sunshine Coast.

The State Government is committed to doubling Queensland's annual overnight visitor expenditure to \$30 billion by 2020.

Building the new east-west runway at the Sunshine Coast airport and securing more international tourists is critical to growing local jobs. The State Government has contributed land to the regional council to help facilitate this.

Housing—reduction in wait times

- 40% reduction in social housing waiting list (March 2012-Jan 2014)

Reductions in crime rates

For the Sunshine Coast Police Region—the latest figures are stunning with robberies down 54% and unlawful entry down 17% since Operation Resolute commenced (1 October 2013) to 31 April 2014 compared to the same period for 2012/2013. (The percentage rate change is per 100,000 head of population).

I will continue to fight tenaciously for my area as a local member first.

It is a privilege to serve in this House as Speaker but first and foremost it is a privilege to serve the people of the Sunshine Coast as a local member, who as part of a strong Government team is working to deliver for the future of the Sunshine Coast and Queensland.

 **Mr HOPPER** (Condamine—KAP) (3.50 pm): In my short contribution to the budget debate I would like to point out a few issues. I do a weekly column and this is exactly what I predicted in my column last week. I predicted the sell-off of more intrinsic infrastructure to fund things like football stadiums. With Energex and Ergon, there is something to hide here. It is actually a sell-off. That is exactly what it is.

Government members interjected.

Mr HOPPER: If I keep getting interjections I will speak for 20 minutes. I have no problem with that. I do not mind talking about the budget.

The situation with Energex and Ergon is a sell-off. They will be privatised so people should start saving now for their power bills because they will absolutely soar. All rural groups have expressed grave concerns about this. Farmers who need to use irrigation will face unsustainable production costs. They are at their wit's end trying to pay for power.

Thankfully, we saw this government do a complete backflip on the \$53 million pensioner concessions. That resulted due to community pressure and community backlash. It was the second backflip in 12 hours. We saw them have to rescind legislation the night before.

In terms of the sale of assets, former Treasury secretary, Ken Henry, accused state governments of lacking the courage to make infrastructure investment decisions based on rigorous financial analysis claiming they instead pander to special interests. Mr Henry, who is now the chairman of the University of Wollongong's SMART infrastructure group, said that 'governments were not understanding stringent cost benefit analyses when planning projects.' He also stated—

'Governments are making decisions based on short-term political benefit rather than looking long-term at what's in the national interest,' he said, adding they needed to make 'brutal assessments' of high priority projects.

I am sure that is what the member for Mount Isa was trying to explain in his speech. What is the government doing to build Queensland into the future? We seem to be living from day to day. Sir Joh Bjelke-Petersen borrowed money to build infrastructure which has taken Queensland ahead and laid the foundation for following governments. I am talking here about the Bowen Basin rail line. That is how we get our coal to port. He had the vision to put that electric train line in. He had the vision to put the electric train lines in in Brisbane. We borrowed the money from the Japanese. It is all paid back now. We are prospering from the decisions of a Premier who looked 50 years ahead.

We have seen government squander income. When assets are sold future governments are going to be in trouble because that is how revenue is raised. I am very concerned about where our revenue is going to come from when our money-making entities are gone.

Mr Crandon: What are your plans after leaving here in March?

Mr HOPPER: That means only another 17 minutes to go. That will be good. Thank goodness the second range crossing has been allocated funding. Although it is nearly all federal money, this is actually 15 years too late. We saw the federal member for Groom, Ian Macfarlane, sacrifice the second range crossing for a ring-road in Victoria. It had been ticked off. At that stage it was worth about \$600 million. That is the difference. We are faced with the fact that it is going to cost nearly three times as much to build the second range crossing now due a lack of representation in the seat of Groom by the fourth-highest ranking minister in the Howard government. He should hang his head in shame.

There is a major injection of funds for the Warrego Highway. I appreciate that the government has done that. It is something that we have waited a long time for. The Warrego Highway in my electorate is built on black soil. There is a massive cost associated with self-mulching black soil. The worst accident I nearly had was on Cecil Plains Road. We see \$14.5 million injected into that in this budget. So thank you very much, Treasurer.

No-one here gives the answers. I believe that Queensland needs to start to look at making wealth and raising our own money. I have a bill before the House on mandating ethanol. It is the LNP's very own bill. If that bill passes it will create a lot of wealth for Queensland. The government needs to look at its resources. Why do we let overseas companies come in and take our wealth? I believe there are massive resources in Queensland and we have to start looking at government owned mines and looking at ways for the government to produce wealth.

We see that there will be no new taxes in this budget. We will watch over the next 12 months to see what happens. We see that there is a \$52 million injection for drought measures for primary industries. I thank the minister for that. We heard the minister criticise and sling off at me in parliament yesterday. I would describe Minister McVeigh as the worst primary industries minister Queensland has ever seen. There is no doubt that he is just a puppet for the Newman government. That is why he has been given that ministry. If it was not for Bruce Mills, Mr McVeigh's chief of staff—

Mr Crandon: You would've remembered that you only wanted three things. You wanted a fuel card. You wanted a car. And the third thing you wanted was to have that job. You didn't get it so you spat the dummy and left the party. That's your problem.

Mr HOPPER: I will take that interjection. What he does not know is that I had a car the whole time. From the very day I joined the Katter party I had a car but the staff here are too nice to let the government know. That is exactly right. As the leader of a minor party, I had a car and a fuel card.

Going back to the primary industries minister, it was the KAP that had to drag the minister kicking and screaming to meet with the farmers of Richmond to get him to front up to a drought package. That is absolutely disgusting. He should hang his head in shame.

We see a six per cent increase in Health funding in this budget. We thank God for that.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Miss Barton): Order! Member for Coomera!

Mr Crandon: I'm leaving in five minutes anyway.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Coomera, I trust that that was not a reflection on the chair?

Mr Crandon: Absolutely not.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Condamine you have the call.

Mr HOPPER: The comments of the member for Coomera have absolutely nothing to do with my speech or the budget and I think he is a disgusting member in this House.

We have seen waiting lists cut. I think Lawrence Springborg is probably the best health minister we have seen in Queensland. There is no doubt about that. He is probably the most experienced politician in this state and he has been given the poison chalice. I think he is doing a very good job in Health at the moment.

Debt is to be cut by \$25 billion to \$30 billion.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Coomera, if you continue to interject I will warn you under the standing orders. I call the member for Condamine.

Mr HOPPER: As I said before, no doubt the asset sales are what will cut debt. We are going to see a 15 per cent rise in electricity prices. There is no doubt about that. That makes me extremely concerned for the pensioners and people of the Darling Downs and the seat of Condamine.

We see that there is funding for the Pittsworth fire and rescue station. That is a great thing. There is \$30.4 million allocated for the second range crossing. There is \$18.5 million allocated for the Warrego Highway at Charlton. There is \$5.9 million for the Warrego Highway upgrade program. I know the member for Warrego has been pushing for that as well. There is \$14.5 million for the Toowoomba-Cecil Plains Road. There is \$22 million for the Warrego Highway from Dalby to Miles. There is \$30 million for the Warrego Highway from Toowoomba to Dalby.

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (3.58 pm): I rise to congratulate the hardworking Treasurer on his third budget. This is a workmanlike budget and it is a budget that lays out a strong plan for a brighter future for Queensland and all Queenslanders. It is a budget that does not shirk responsibility. It is a budget that does not hide behind debt and deficit—the hallmark of former Labor treasurers. It is an honest budget. It is a budget that lays out a strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders and particularly those living in regional Queensland and in Toowoomba.

A very important announcement was made during the budget, and I would like to thank the Treasurer for it. It was just over two years ago that I stood here in this House and gave my maiden speech. In my maiden speech I invoked the first words of the first member for Toowoomba and Darling Downs, the late John Watts. He was a member of this House over 150 years ago and he had a desire to see a road built to the capital and to the port that was of a standard equal to the other roads in the state. It has taken 154 years, but finally we have a Treasurer in this state who has announced the state's share of the funding—20 per cent, fully funded in this budget, ready to go. Many people in Toowoomba have spoken about building a second range crossing and many people in Toowoomba have said that they would make this happen. But this Treasurer, this government, has made it happen—

Mr Dillaway: And the local member.

Mr WATTS: I take the interjection—and the local member. The people of the Darling Downs, and especially all of the people who live in Toowoomba, are very thankful to see this finally happen. This is a budget that stops talking about doing things and actually starts delivering things. It sees a level of cooperation between the state and federal government that the people of Toowoomba have been waiting many, many years for. Now the families of Toowoomba will be able to get their children to school on time without having to do battle with B-doubles. For many long years the people of my town have wanted to be able to go to the shops without wrestling with the state's industrial traffic. For many long years the mums and dads have had fear struck into their hearts as their kids venture to the park and in doing so have to cross one of the busiest industrial roads that Queensland has.

With this strong government the people of Toowoomba can confidently know that they are being listened to, that their needs will be heard in this place—needs that have fallen on deaf ears for so many years. Well, Toowoomba, John McVeigh and I have presented your case for a second range crossing to a strong government. That government has listened and it has delivered a partnership—

Mr Rickuss: What about me?

Mr WATTS: I take the interjection from the member for Lockyer. He was definitely a strong voice also. I recognise that the bulk of the works are in his electorate. If only his electorate was flatter, we would not need to spend so much money! This partnership with the federal government will finally see the road built. I would like to put on record my thanks to the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls; my thanks to the Premier, the Hon. Campbell Newman; and my thanks to both the Deputy Premier, the Hon. Jeff Seeney, and the Minister for Transport and Roads, the Hon. Scott Emerson. I would also like to recognise the longstanding efforts of my federal member, the Minister for Industry, the Hon. Ian Macfarlane, and the Deputy Prime Minister, Warren Truss. My council have also worked hard to ensure that this road happens and they will have key works to do in connecting this road to the community. So I certainly thank all of the councillors including the mayor, Paul Antonio, for that.

There are many people who have contributed to the project, but we have to ask why the project is so important. It is important to make sure that our businesses are efficient and that our resources and our agriculture get to the port efficiently. But it is more important for the people of Toowoomba to have their lifestyle back. It is more important for the people of Toowoomba to be able to get their kids to school on time safely and effectively without having to deal with this road. If I have played any part in getting this range crossing built for the people of Toowoomba and regional Queensland, I hope that my part will be remembered as that of a little blue cattle dog—tenacious, determined, unafraid and also willing to nip at the ankles when necessary to keep this project moving.

Compare and contrast that with the former Labor member, who spoke about the range crossing in his maiden speech some 13 years ago. All we ever got was words. He served four terms in the government. He served as a cabinet minister, and all we got was talk and platitudes from a government that could not manage money, could not deliver for Toowoomba and could not deliver for Queensland. All it ever created was mess and incompetence.

There are many more provisions in the budget for my electorate. Before I elaborate on those, I would just like to ask people to consider for a moment why we have government at all. Government is here so people can achieve their dreams so that they can be all they can be. Government is here to protect the weak, educate the young and provide services, facilities and infrastructure that communities need to feel safe and to have fulfilling lives. This government is here to serve the people. This is a strong government that will serve Queensland well.

Governments tax the population to do these things, but we have not needed to increase taxes in this budget because of good management. Strong governments will treasure the tax dollar. They will protect it from waste and squander. They will carefully consider its application and how it might best serve the people. They will carefully consider and weigh up the options. That is what this budget does. That is what this Treasurer has done. Compare and contrast the LNP Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, with the last Labor Treasurer, Andrew Fraser. He was called the wonder boy and the only thing Queensland were left wondering was what he had done with all the money.

Let us have a look at education. Education in my electorate has been served very well. There are some great schools in my electorate that were left basically derelict by the former Labor government. Some had gutters that leaked, and I actually visited a school where paint was falling off the ceiling on to the children's books as they were trying to read. The people of Toowoomba were neglected and ignored, and so were their children.

Labor squandered Queensland's hard-earned money. Compare and contrast that with the LNP. Our strong government is providing modern, clean, safe, up-to-date facilities in which to educate our children. In Toowoomba we have spent over \$10 million on Flying Start capital assistance. Whilst \$10 million is a lot of money, I ask the mums and dads to consider why the money has been spent. They can be reassured that as their children enter grade 7 they will have good quality facilities, they will have a good environment and they will have the support services they need to be successful—because they are the future doctors, nurses, businesspeople and the ones who will do all of the jobs that we need done in our society. So providing them with that, I think, is a good and worthy cause.

But so much more has been done in education. I thank the education minister for building the schools that we need in the areas that we need them, such as Highfields. Highfields is an area that is growing. It has over 1,000 children—nearly 1,500—catching buses every day. They spend around an hour and a half or sometimes two hours with the interchange to get to and from school, and that is just unacceptable. So to have a school in their local community means that they can participate in extracurricular activities after school and form part of the community. I think that is a very worthy and good investment. I thank both the Treasurer for funding it and the minister for building it.

It is great to see the slab has been poured and the walls are going up. Again, this is a project that has been talked about in my electorate since around 2005—talk, talk, talk. We had a government minister as the local representative—more talk and no action. We announced that we would buy the land in 2009, and a couple of weeks later all of a sudden wonder boy Treasurer, who squandered all the money, managed to find some money to buy the land. The local member proudly announced they would build it, and then it just sat there again—an empty block of land. Now that land has buildings on it and there is an oval. The slab has been poured, the roof is going on and people will soon see their children being educated in their own community.

When it comes to health, I think the Treasurer and the health minister have done a fantastic job not only increasing health funding for the Darling Downs but increasing health funding in total by 17.6 per cent compared to the last Labor budget. That is an extra \$92 million a year being spent on front-line services in Toowoomba. But it is not just about the money. I said earlier that what people want from their government when it comes to health is to know that they can rely on us to help when they need us.

The Darling Downs Hospital and Health Board, led by Mike Horan, with the hardworking doctors, nurses and support staff, has delivered—and let's just compare and contrast this with Labor—massive improvements. Those improvements include from 65 per cent of people being seen within four hours at the emergency department to now 83 per cent—nearly a 20 per cent improvement. Under Labor, 10 out of 100 people were left waiting past the 30-day deadline for category 1 surgery. Now 100 per cent are being seen on time. Category 2 was the same—10 out of 100 people were left waiting past the 90-day deadline for their very necessary surgery. It is completely unacceptable to the community of the Darling Downs. That has been fixed by Minister Springborg, and the funds have been provided by the Treasurer.

What about our long dental waiting list? Listen to this figure: 7,210 people were waiting to have their teeth seen under this government; it is now zero. BreastScreening services in my electorate are running ahead by 690 people currently. They are in front of their target and have seen 14,190 people screened this year. This is not just about saving dollars; this is about saving lives.

It is very important that we understand that the budget provided by the Treasurer and the government is here to serve the people of Queensland. I thank the Treasurer for the service he has given to the people of Toowoomba by giving us the range crossing. If I had more time, I would talk to you about the wonderful Royalties for the Regions program in my electorate, where \$45 million is being spent on a ring road that will also improve some of the flooding and prevent my town from going under water if we ever see a weather event such as we have had before. I commend the Treasurer for this hardworking budget. It will lead to brighter futures for the people of Queensland. It is a strong government. I think the investment in our infrastructure in our regions is a wonderful investment and the people of my electorate certainly thank him for it.

 **Mr LATTER** (Waterford—LNP) (4.11 pm): I rise in the House today to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill. There is no escaping the fact that this budget truly is a no-frills budget. In fact, it is fair to say that this government has had to make choices since having been elected that are not sexy, that is for sure. There is no question that there have been decisions that this government has made that are not popular, and that is because they are tough and they have to be in order to meet the challenges that we have been faced with as a government. You do not have an electoral whitewash because everything is fine. You do not get the voter backlash that the previous government experienced because the state is in a wonderful position with glowing prospects.

I have seen the opposition try to make an absolute mockery of the state's position and the government's agenda for reform. I might remind anyone in this House who thinks otherwise that this is no joke. We are talking about decisions that impact on real people in real ways, and I acknowledge that in our community some are anxious about the future. Our state's ability to support Queenslanders into the future is and should be the priority. This government has a strong plan for a brighter future. While there are many things that we may like to deliver—more schools, roads, hospitals and better services—we are encumbered by having to deal with Labor legacy issues of up to \$80 billion of debt and deficit. We are losing up to \$450,000 every hour of every day in interest payments alone. That figure represents almost twice my mortgage. It is 1½ times the value of my family's three-bedroom home in Waterford. As I mentioned, that is every hour of every day in interest payments alone.

Despite the difficulties, this responsible government with a strong plan for a brighter future is still able to deliver for Queensland. Health funding has increased by six per cent to \$13.6 billion. Education funding has increased by seven per cent to \$11.8 billion. As the member for Toowoomba North likes to keep reminding me, the government is investing significantly in transport and roads.

The government has responded to the Carmody inquiry by investing \$406 million towards child safety through child and family services. We are investing in our environment by funding the Reef Water Quality Protection Plan. We are tackling safety on our streets with the implementation of the Safe Night Out Strategy. We are providing for our regions through Royalties for the Regions and supporting our farmers through drought assistance funding.

In Waterford we are seeing significant gains—wins in education, wins for my schools such as Beenleigh State High School, Beenleigh State School, Edens Landing State School, Loganholme State School, Loganlea State High School, Mabel Park State School, Marsden State High School, Waterford State School and Waterford West State School. All of these schools will see some benefit from the government through funding for the Great Results Guarantee.

Operating grants for child safety, disability services and social inclusion will see a direct benefit for Waterford as well. There is an investment in infrastructure in the Logan Motorway to Nerang with the rehabilitation of road pavement. Get in the Game has been a wonderful program for my city of Logan, and we are seeing great results with fields, baseball nets and irrigation occurring across different facilities.

Public housing is also going to see relief in my space. There has been significant investment from the government in past budgets and there will continue to be in the Metro South Hospital and Health Service. Logan Hospital will be a direct recipient of those funds as well. There is also funding in the budget for the Local Area Multicultural Partnerships program.

I would like to express my gratitude and that of the pensioners in my community—some of our most vulnerable—for the government's decision to pick up the federal government's funding shortfall for pensioner concessions. I thank my constituents who took the time to contact me or my office to express their concern. To them I would say: you were not alone and you certainly were not ignored by this government. There is no question that times are tough at the moment. However, this government is delivering for Queensland and, more importantly, is delivering for the future of Queenslanders.

 **Mr DILLAWAY** (Bulimba—LNP) (4.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the appropriation bills 2014. I congratulate the Treasurer on his third budget and commend the enormous work he has done in the past 2½ years in his essential role in delivering our strong plan for a brighter future for all Queenslanders. We are dedicated to improving Queensland's state finances through disciplined expenditure management. That is strongly evident in this budget. We again see government expenditure at record lows when compared to an average of about nine per cent for a decade under the former Labor government.

Actions speak louder than words and our results speak volumes, although there is still an enormous amount of work to be done. Over the past couple of months, the Strong Choices campaign helped Queenslanders understand that in terms of being on the path towards regaining our state's economic strength, we had arrived at a three-pronged fork in the road. They were put in the driver's seat with the people's budget tool. Do we increase taxes? Do we reduce services? Or do we sell or lease some of our assets? We had to make a choice—a smart choice.

As a government, we had stabilised the level of debt through a number of measures aimed at repairing the budget. 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 at \$80 billion with a \$4 billion annual interest bill. Queenslanders have indicated that they are less likely to want to steer down the road to reduced services or increased taxes. The proposed asset transactions could potentially reduce debt and deliver proceeds to a value of \$33.6 billion at their current book value. Seventy-five per cent of this would be applied to provide a \$25 billion reduction in the state's debt, bringing it back to \$55 billion. This new debt level would mean our annual interest bill would drop from \$4 billion to \$2.7 billion—an extra \$1.3 billion that can again be reinvested into our economy. The remaining quarter of the proceeds would go towards the strong choices investment program that will help build more schools, hospitals and vital infrastructure needed for the growth and development of our state. I invite members of the Bulimba community to put their ideas forward by logging onto the Strong Choices website and have their say on how they would allocate this money to build the vital infrastructure we need for growth and development.

A strong economy is there for our taking but only under the strong leadership of this government, which understands the importance of a well-managed economy and is willing to navigate Queensland in the right direction. By making the strongest and smartest choice to fix the state's finances, we are securing a positive future for Queensland. We do not want Labor's debt to be the next generation's problem—our children's problem. The choices we make at the next election will shape what that future will be—a bright future or the risk of going back to the recycled Labor candidates, who know only one thing, and that is to deliver increased taxes, fees and charges, higher debt and untenable budget deficits. As we heard yesterday, they have no plan to take this state forward.

The government's objective of responsible fiscal management is well balanced with its objective of revitalising front-line services in the 2014-15 budget. I am delighted that this budget will greatly benefit the Bulimba electorate in many areas. I look forward to continuing to deliver for my constituents in the next financial year and being their strong local voice in a can-do government. We have been working tirelessly to save and ease Queenslanders from having to pay the price of the previous government's mistakes. That is why there are no new or increased taxes in this budget. I further welcome the Premier's commitment during his ministerial statement on Thursday to ensure that our pensioners will continue to have access to their full concession entitlements that the federal Abbott government ripped away from our Queensland seniors.

When I delivered my maiden speech, I highlighted five priorities that my community and I believed were important to focus on in my first term. They were: to fight for improved public transport, to fight for improved educational outcomes, to fight for improved safety for our children around schools, to work towards a sustainable and liveable environment and, finally, to secure funding to recognise the important contribution sporting clubs play in our community.

As a strong advocate for public transport I welcome our government's commitment to fund 75 new six-car trains. Earlier this year I was able to secure 266 additional services on the Cleveland train line. Already we have seen an increase in use equivalent to 8,000 journeys per week. That is equivalent to between 500 and 800 cars off the road each and every day. This is going some way to combatting the ever-increasing traffic congestion faced on the roads in and around the Bulimba electorate. No longer will we see the 15 per cent fare increases that we saw under the former Labor government year after year after year.

I also welcome our government's continued commitment to funding education, which has increased by seven per cent to a record investment of \$11.8 billion. We will see just under \$900,000 to support literacy and numeracy in the early years across Bulimba state schools as part of the Great Results Guarantee funding. Over the past two years, we have seen considerable amounts of investment in school maintenance, new building programs and structures, and new programs for local education right across Bulimba, now totalling over \$11.7 million.

I further welcome our government's commitment to safety around our schools. In the past 12 months, we have seen flashing school lights installed in three locations to support Camp Hill State Infants and Primary School, Morningside State School and Lourdes Hill College. Recently, I launched a petition calling for the installation of flashing school lights along Riding Road to support Bulimba State School, Morningside State School and Saints Peter and Paul's Catholic School. I will continue to fight for these safety measures to protect our children, their carers and motorists.

One of our most popular announcements is the continuation of the Everyone's Environment grants of \$5 million. Most recently, we have seen the Bulimba Creek Catchment Coordinating Committee's activities bolstered by these grants as well as providing heritage grants to the landmark Bulimba Uniting Church. I look forward to securing additional funding from this pool for our local Bulimba community over the next budget period.

A further \$21 million has been provided for our Get in the Game sport and recreation program. I have witnessed the benefits that this program has already delivered, with kids playing sport when they may not have otherwise under our \$150 Get Started vouchers over the past two years. Most recently, the Brisbane Sailing Squadron and the Brisbane Outrigger Canoe Club secured Get Going funding to support junior participation. There are a number of clubs that I will be promoting as worthy recipients of the Get Going and Get Playing funding, including the Morningside Panthers for their gym plans, Brisbane Riverside Rugby for new change rooms or field lighting and the Riverside Rebels for a scrum machine.

An additional \$942 million will be spent on Health, which is an increase of six per cent to a total of \$13.6 billion, and I am happy to report that a total of \$1.89 billion will go to Metro South alone. The stark contrast of the performance of the health system under the Newman government compared to the former Labor government is astounding. The Metro South Region results are a testament to the hardworking doctors, nurses and staff at our public hospitals. Long wait dental waiting lists have been slashed from 10,589 in March 2013 to zero, zip, zilch as at March 2014. Category 1 30-day elective surgery waiting lists have improved from 81 per cent in 2012 to 89 per cent in 2014. We are seeing shorter stays in emergency departments; 55 per cent of patients were seen within four hours in 2012 and that has improved to 74 per cent of patients in 2014. Our hospital emergency departments now lead the nation.

I further welcome and will be fighting for some of the additional 267 police officers who will hit the beat over the next year as part of our commitment to deliver 1,100 extra police officers over four years. We have already seen crime rates across the Bulimba electorate fall, with break and enters down 26 per cent between March 2013 and March 2014 and assaults dropping 20 per cent over the same period. Our efforts to bring criminals to account with some of the toughest laws in the nation are clearly working.

As a father with three young children and as the state representative of an area that has a high number of young families, I strongly support our government's new initiative of \$406 million for child and family services in response to the Carmody inquiry. In addition, I was very excited to see \$44.5 million committed to the Safe Night Out Strategy as the government's initiative to address the increasing incidence of drug and alcohol related violence across Queensland.

Earlier this year, I conducted a survey across the Bulimba electorate asking for my community's views to help form the government's response to the issue. I note that the majority of the suggestions from people in the Bulimba electorate on how to tackle this important matter were taken up and now form part of our government's comprehensive strategy. I look forward to the strategy's implementation in the coming months. I congratulate the Treasurer again on a responsible budget that continues to deliver for Queensland. We have a strong plan for a bright future, and this budget will help see that plan come to fruition. I support the bills before the House.

 **Mr GULLEY** (Murrumba—LNP) (4.26 pm): I am pleased to deliver my speech in reply to the budget on behalf of the people of Murrumba. Murrumba is a vibrant and growing electorate. 'Murrumba', as this chamber knows, is the Aboriginal word for 'good place', and as an electorate it lives up to its name. Murrumba is a place of growth. We have recently welcomed Costco to the region, and I thank the Deputy Premier who called that application in to ensure this major employer came to my region years quicker than otherwise would have been the case. I would also like to thank the state Treasurer for coming to North Lakes and letting Murrumba residents have their say in the Strong Choices campaign.

I was an accountant in a prior life, so it may not come as a surprise that budgets are a particular interest of mine. This budget is prudent, steady and balanced. It is about practical solutions and services and sensible choices. It is a strong budget, a smart budget. When we came to government only two years ago, we were faced with a mess of red ink and a failure to plan for the future. It is only through doing the hard work of pruning back, prioritising and identifying where essential spending is needed that the Treasurer has been able to give us the chance for a better and brighter future for our children. I commend the Treasurer for his hard work.

Before the budget was delivered, I was asked what my wishes were for my electorate. What I wanted was for Murrumba to receive its fair share and for the issues of education, health, roads, rail, communities and police to be addressed. I am pleased to say to the House that those wishes have been fulfilled. On Education, funding for local schools has continued to be a key element of delivering opportunities for local children and their families. Almost \$6 million has been earmarked for the Great Results Guarantee and capital works programs. The Great Results Guarantee means more funds for state schools such as Bounty Boulevard State School, with \$322,000; Deception Bay North State School, with \$312,000; Deception Bay State High School, with \$551,000; Deception Bay State School, with \$187,000; Hercules Road State School, with \$250,000; Mango Hill State School, with \$152,000; Moreton Downs State School, with \$221,000; and North Lakes State College, with \$451,000. Capital works has not been overlooked, with Bounty Boulevard State School being allocated \$2 million and Mango Hill State School being allocated \$1.378 million. Mango Hill is one of

my growing communities, and only last month I had the pleasure of being at the opening of the new Mango Hill kindergarten with the Minister for Education. I continue to welcome the Newman government's \$10 million commitment to installing school flashing lights, and it is great to see that Grace Lutheran College and Deception Bay North State School have benefited from this initiative.

Mr Powell: Great school.

Mr GULLEY: 'Great school' says the former school captain of Grace Lutheran College. Whether it is kindergarten, primary or high schools, this is all about recognising that the education of our children is paramount. As the husband of a teacher and the father of three school-age children, I continually value the importance the Newman government places on education as a major priority in funding. This is one of the strongest and smartest choices we can make to ensure Queensland has a better and brighter future.

Everything we do in Education is aimed at achieving better student outcomes. In recognition of this goal, I am delighted to remind the House again that \$2.446 million will be spent locally through the Great Results Guarantee program, a program which aims to boost student literacy and numeracy and, importantly, a program that is run at the school by the school as local schools know their community best.

I turn to roads and rail. Transport features as a major priority in the lives of the Murrumba constituents. Improved access to transport choices and opportunities and less congestion will make all of our lives so much easier. I welcome the further commitment to the Moreton Bay Rail Link of \$374 million, which means that a rail option, scheduled for 2016, is not far away for commuters. Those who use the buses will be pleased to see that \$3.1 million of a total of \$5.71 million has been earmarked this year for the construction of the Deception Bay bus station at Bay Avenue. Of course, this is in addition to the upgrades to the Boundary Road and Deception Bay Road access ramps to the Bruce Highway, which commenced last month. The work which has started will include installing state-of-the-art technology which uses traffic signalling to reduce congestion, lengthening and widening off ramps, installing turning lanes and improving slip lanes. There is no doubt that transport—providing more and better commuter experiences and easing congestion for motorists—is a major priority of this government.

In the area of Health, the Metropolitan North Hospital and Health Service, which includes the Redcliffe and Caboolture hospitals, has seen an increase in its budget of \$52 million. It now receives \$2.088 billion, which is 5.1 per cent more compared to Labor's last budget. These increased funds have not been lost in some bottomless pit of bureaucracy. Our government's efficiencies, reduction of red tape and better targeting of front-line services has meant that they have impacted positively on front-line services. A comparison in the following three areas demonstrates the positive outcomes of prudent management and emphasis on delivering services.

Dental waiting lists of more than two years for local residents have been slashed. In February 2013 there were 14,595 people on the waiting list and in March 2014 there was one. Secondly, in the category of residents receiving urgent surgery within a 30-day time frame, in March 2012, 87 per cent were seen on time and in March 2014, that increased to 95 per cent. Thirdly, in the category of people seen within four hours of arriving at emergency departments in March 2012, 57 per cent were seen. In March this year it had risen to 75 per cent who were seen within that four-hour time frame. This is a government that is all about delivering improved front-line services and practical solutions. These stats are not just numbers but real people with real families. I applaud the Minister for Health for delivering for my constituents.

I turn now to Communities. I applaud the continued recognition of the social challenges facing many residents and the provision of funding to ensure that the vulnerable receive protection, support and assistance. Almost \$11 million has been allocated for Disability Services to assist the disabled and their families to access the support and services they need throughout the different stages of their life. Also, \$16,000 has been allocated for disability services upgrades at the respite accommodation at Deception Bay. Community services funding of \$510,000 for social inclusion initiatives has been allocated. I welcome the \$1.5 million earmarked for child safety services to protect children and young people from risk of harm. There is also \$438,000 regionally for Home Assist Secure and \$876,000 regionally to deliver specialist homelessness services.

Turning to Police, I welcome the government's commitment to front-line services by providing for an extra 267 police officers to provide safer streets. The Murrumba electorate is serviced by three police stations and since April 2012 we have seen an extra 10 police officers attached to the Deception Bay, North Lakes and Redcliffe police stations. Increased police numbers is about

delivering front-line services. This is about a practical government bringing government directly to the people. The increased police presence and emphasis on tackling crime has resulted in a decrease in offences since the deployment of Operation Resolute. The Moreton Police District has consistently delivered, with robbery crime falling 55 per cent. Yes, that is 55 per cent. Unlawful burglaries and entries to properties also fell 14 per cent. These figures show how the government's strong plan for Queensland is delivering safer streets for families and residents of my electorate of Murrumba.

Turning to Sport and Recreation, a topic close to most of our hearts, I welcome the government's commitment to the residents of Murrumba in encouraging a keep fit, healthy lifestyle. This healthy lifestyle was encouraged by two great sport and recreation initiatives. Get in the Game delivered the following for Murrumba residents: \$100,000 to Deception Bay Junior Rugby League Football Club, \$4,900 to North Lakes Eels Junior Australian Football Club and \$7,620 to North Lakes Leopards Junior Rugby Union Club. The Young Athlete Assistance Program delivered 43 grants to assist individuals with the costs for state, national and international representation across a variety of sports.

I will try to squeeze in a couple of final initiatives to the 10 minutes that has been allocated to me. Up to 31 May 2014, 213 North Lakes and Mango Hill families had bought their first home with the help of the Newman government's \$15,000 Great Start Grant. This is a staggering \$3.195 million injected into the construction industry in Murrumba as first home buyers purchase their new homes. Construction is one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy and the Great Start Grant is helping to support the industry.

Demonstrating the diversity of the electorate, other funding initiatives range from supporting libraries to practical environmental solutions and to engaging the multicultural diversity of the region. These include: \$217,000 for the remediation and monitoring of lands at Narangba Industrial Estate impacted by the Binary Chemicals fire—and that is a whole other topic with regard to the involvement of the former member for Kallangur and his family, the Hayward family, with the Binary Chemicals business. An amount of \$1.692 million was allocated for the Public Libraries Grant scheme for Moreton Bay Regional Council libraries, including North Lakes and Deception Bay libraries. There is also \$46,000 for the Local Area Multicultural Partnerships to strengthen multiculturalism in the local government sector.

I continue to enjoy advocating for Murrumba, the Aboriginal word for good place. On behalf of that community, I welcome the fact that it has received its fair share from the state budget. I congratulate my Treasurer. I support the 2014-15 budget—a strong budget, a smart budget.

 **Mr SORENSEN** (Hervey Bay—LNP) (4.36 pm): Strong choices have been made and will continue to be made for this great state of Queensland. The LNP government went to the last election with a clear purpose to turn the ship around. I am proud to be part of a responsible LNP government that has worked hard to make sure that this great state prospers. It is pretty sad to consider where we have come from. Our current situation is the result of the reckless spending of the past Labor government. Recent media reports have quoted Mr Don Argus, former chairman of the corporate giants BHP and Brambles. The article states—

Don Argus, former chairman of corporate giants BHP and Brambles, said Australia's economic growth would suffer if Australia's total debt, now 220 per cent of GDP, climbed much further.

It goes on to say—

This rigid focus on commonwealth government debt ignores state and significant corporate and household debt, which combined make Australia one of the most indebted countries ...

Today in the House I am happy to say we have a responsible state budget from a responsible government. This budget continues to deliver on the LNP government's election promises of a strong plan for a brighter future. There is no doubt that it is a mammoth task to reduce the \$80 billion debt and the \$4 billion interest bill. As a result of the hard work we have done over the past two years, we are able to continue to deliver services without increases in fees, taxes or charges, and that is a real feat in itself. It is a tribute to the Treasurer that he has been able to do that. We are making significant progress in restoring our finances with this responsible budget. We will continue to grow our four pillars of the economy, revitalise front-line services and invest in our schools and hospitals for the secure future of this great state.

My electorate benefited from DestinationQ, a 20-year plan for our tourism industry in which we have a target to double overnight stay expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by 2020. Currently, 410,000 small businesses around Queensland have less red tape and are no longer being strangled by the mountain of regulations and legislation.

The Labor Party just do not care about small business and tourism, and I will give you some examples. I received an email from the journo from the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* with some points that were addressed by the Labor candidate for Hervey Bay, who said—

The \$40,000 for the Bill Fraser Park enhancement project. Why does that project have a State injection? Is it a local government project?

I have been in local government, and I really do not know how to answer that question because I have never seen such a stupid, dumb question ever asked of me. I just think it is a total—

Mr Berry: Come to Ipswich, mate!

Mr SORENSEN: Yes! Then he goes on to say, 'Why is the \$300,000 going to FCO', which is an RTO of Hervey Bay-Fraser Coast. They just do not like tourism. I agree with the member for Cairns when he said that they trashed the tourism industry in Cairns. Why do they dislike tourism? They have to keep sucking up to the greenies all the time. I will read from the minutes of the Fraser Island Community Advisory Committee. This is what one of their mates said—

JS outlined the very real possibility to offset some of the visitor pressure and impacts away from—

Listen to this—

the primitive Fraser Island ...

Primitive? What a disgrace! They have to suck up to these greenies all the time to try and get back into power, and they are just trying to shut down our national parks. As far as I am concerned, it is a total disgrace. We have to try and get our businesses up and growing, and it is just an absolute disgrace. Every time you go around the corner you have to face this sort of harassment, and I just cannot believe what goes on sometimes.

Only an LNP government will continue to fund essential infrastructure projects which will create jobs for Queenslanders. Sixty thousand jobs in the last 12 months is something of which to be very proud. We are leading Australia in creating jobs. But what happens? We just get knocked over all the time. I just cannot believe some of the rubbish that has come out from those opposite. To listen to the lies from the opposition, it is unbelievable. In my electorate local Health spending has increased by 5.6 per cent. Where are the reductions? Where are the cuts? There are no cuts.

Look at waiting times. When I first got into this job the waiting times were horrendous. People were queuing on waiting lists with morphine patches on their arms whilst waiting for their operation, but today we can get them into the hospital to have their operation straightaway. It is great to see that happening. What was happening when I first got into this job was terrible, and it was a total and utter disgrace. You had to wait 10 years to get a set of dentures. What use would they be to somebody after 10 years of waiting? But we have reduced those waiting lists to a level where people can feel confident. When we go to the next election I will be telling people just how good it is to be able to go and see a doctor or dentist when you are crook or have a toothache. The waiting lists under the former Labor government were absolutely disgraceful. People with kidney conditions had to travel three hours to get to Nambour for dialysis, spend another three hours on the dialysis machine and then drive home again. We have rectified those types of things, and we have done a great job. We should be out there selling that great job right around this state of ours, because we are leading the way.

Look at what we had to put up with for school maintenance. It was disgusting. The old toilet block in Hervey Bay has been there for 100 years, and it smelled like a toilet block. They are the things we are still fixing up. Expenditure in my area which is really appreciated is \$390,000 for the continuation of Home Assist services, and they really do a great job.

The other thing that gets up my nose is how this mob over here will not support the repeal of the carbon tax. It is there in black and white in *Hansard* that they oppose it, and I think that is a total disgrace as well. The carbon tax is something that is putting huge pressure on not just pensioners, but on the fishing industry and any cold storage industries. The cost to trawler operators in Hervey Bay would have jumped by five or six times. Some of the operators spent from \$5,000 to \$8,000 right through to about \$30,000 to regas their refrigeration units. That is a huge cost to industry here in Australia. How can those industries prosper when we have such a stupid tax like this on energy which everybody is using? You just would not believe it.

I would just like to thank the Treasurer for the wonderful job that he has done, and I really appreciate seeing that Queensland is back on track and open for business. Let's go! Let's do it!

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (4.47 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise and make a contribution to this bill. I am one of the few people who were here in 2004, when I think the Labor government might have brought in a 'nearly' balanced budget.

A government member: They got close!

Mr RICKUSS: They got close, but since then it has been an absolute disaster. Broke in a boom! They are the only government that has ever sent a state broke in a boom. I just cannot believe it. As this is a house of debate I actually listened to the Hon. Annastacia Palaszczuk's contribution, and you just cannot believe some of the rubbish that she said. She was complaining about every single Queenslander who receives an electricity bill. This is legacy of debt that they have left. They created a disaster and then left it for us to clean up. It is absolutely ridiculous!

There was criticism from those opposite about the unemployment rate. If I am right, more than 50 per cent of the jobs created in Australia in these last few months have come from Queensland. This is the growth state, and that was an absolutely ridiculous statement from those opposite. They spoke about the Safe Night Out Strategy forever. I will ask the police minister at some stage on a question without notice about the needle prick legislation that was brought in by the previous Beattie government which was going to put an end to all of these needles being thrown away. I will bet you, Minister, that there has never been a conviction for illegally disposing of a needle because it is a stupid bit of legislation, and that is what the previous government did. It was stupid legislation that just made no sense whatsoever. We are the only ones who have a strong plan for a brighter future.

I would also like to congratulate my colleagues who have been involved in improving the health system, particularly Lawrence Springborg, who has done a wonderful job. Recently there have been some concerns up in the Lockyer Valley about a cancer cluster, and I would like to table a document about that issue from the West Moreton Health Board which is a common-sense approach to this cancer cluster.

Tabled paper: Media Statement, dated 27 May 2014, by West Moreton Hospital and Health Service titled 'Update—reports of alleged cancer cluster in Grantham' [\[5364\]](#).

Unfortunately, this has been looked into over a very short time frame and we do not want people to panic about these sorts of issues. We want this to be looked at properly, and the health board is saying, 'Let's look at this properly. Let's see what it is.' In amongst all of that were claims about vegetables being contaminated and that sort of thing.

I am sure that my colleagues such as the environment minister and the DNR minister realise that these sorts of claims are totally irrelevant. They are totally irrelevant. The appropriate food safety processes are in place. It is unfortunate that these claims get made with no real common sense behind them, no logic and no data. Rather, these are panic claims. On other issues, I congratulate the LNP government for funding Royalties for the Regions for improved flood protection of the Laidley township and the Forest Hill township. These sorts of things are great for the Lockyer Valley. It is resilience that we have never had built in before. Unfortunately, during the previous 20 years of Labor governments it was just chaos. It was just absolute chaos. They did not understand those sorts of issues and nothing was ever put in place. I also thank the police minister for the \$1.5 million being spent to upgrade the Laidley Police Station.

Mr Dempsey: We went there together.

Mr RICKUSS: We have been there and looked at it. It will be a great improvement for the area. Extra constables have also come on duty. The crime rate is already low in the Lockyer, but I am sure it will now be much improved. In terms of the Safe Night Out Strategy, I realise that it is more for Toowoomba and Ipswich than it is for the Lockyer, but unfortunately these sorts of things do have that trickle-down effect. If people act incorrectly in the major centres, it does flow down.

A government member: It's been busy at the Royal, mate.

Mr RICKUSS: We have had the occasional punch-up at the Royal and the Imperial in town. About 12 months ago to two years ago, a man died there. They are the sorts of things that we do not want to happen, and the Safe Night Out Strategy really is common sense. The Gatton and Laidley hospitals are going extremely well. The NDIS, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, will be a great improvement for people with disabilities. This is an ongoing issue that needs to be looked at in order to have the appropriate services for these people. It is important that we keep trying to improve their lifestyles. Money is being spent for agriculture and biosecurity. There is \$55 million for investment in agricultural research and \$2.5 million for increased biosecurity preparedness. This is a very important issue and the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee continually looks at these sorts of issues.

This is the only side of politics that is building a strong plan for a brighter future. You just cannot see it with anyone else. It is a really strong plan for a brighter future while some of the other mob who sit in the back of the House struggle to get right a question during questions without notice. That makes you wonder what they could actually do for this state. It is all pure hyperbole. It is ridiculous. With that, I congratulate the Treasurer on doing a great job for the state. I look forward to many years of serving in this place with my colleagues.

 **Mr SYMES** (Lytton—LNP) (4.52 pm): I rise to speak briefly on the Treasurer's Appropriation Bill 2014, which is the third budget delivered under the Newman government. The Treasurer should be commended on a budget that shows a measured and responsible budget for Queenslanders which delivers on our four-pillar economy approach as well as a focal point around the revitalisation of front-line services, especially in education, policing and child safety. Last Friday I went out with the Wynnum police on the beat to see firsthand the great work being done by the men and women in blue. I heard how the extra police alongside increased funding for resources and legislative changes that we have already made have assisted them in getting the job done. Locally I look forward to telling the police in my area that the Newman government has delivered in the 2014 budget a \$3 million second police helicopter which will assist the Lytton electorate as well as many of my southern Brisbane colleagues, especially the member for Sunnybank given that that is where the chopper will be based. Locally, the \$180,000 upgrade of the Brisbane Water Police headquarters at the port will be most welcome by those gentlemen out there who do a great job. Only last Thursday night I had the pleasure to attend the Port of Brisbane Rotary Club emergency service dinner at which these officers receive the recognition that they deserve for a job well done by the Rotary Club, of which I am a member.

Front-line services around addressing homelessness, disabilities and social inclusion were a mainstay in this budget for the Lytton electorate, with over \$4.7 million to help the most vulnerable in our community. Over \$3 million will go into service delivery to help at-risk children and families in our community through child safety grants for the non-government sector to help provide adequate care for the most marginalised and vulnerable in our society—our children.

Schools on the bayside will benefit from the 2014 budget through the Great Results Guarantee initiative which will benefit schools such as Manly West, Wynnum State School, Manly, Lota, Darling Point Special School, Wynnum West, Wondall Heights, Wynnum High and Brisbane Bayside State College with extra resources to help with literacy and numeracy. Brisbane Bayside State College will also benefit from capital works funding in the budget of \$2.7 million for extra classrooms due to the expanding student numbers at the college. In this year's budget the Minister for Education announced to the House that there will be 761 new teachers who will be employed in this financial year, showing our true commitment in revitalising front-line services throughout Queensland.

The Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Health should be commended for the strong, decisive action in rectifying the wrongs of the past in terms of Health funding. The LNP government has a distinctive contrast from those opposite, with a record to boast about. Let us look at the facts. Under Labor we had doctors who were not paid and a \$1.25 billion bungled Health payroll system. Fast forward to 2014, we have the lowest elective surgery waiting lists in the nation, nurses who are actually getting paid for a job well done—and correctly as well, even having a rise in their take-home salary—and no ambulance ramping in Metro South. Well done, ministers and the cabinet! In the 2014 budget Metro South will receive \$1.89 billion to perform the initiatives necessary to improve the lives of many Queenslanders. Only a few weeks ago when I was out doorknocking in Wynnum West I spoke to numerous residents around state matters and the general theme that day from locals was that the dental clinic in Lota had seen significant improvements in the operation of the service over the past two years under the Newman government as well as the performance of the ambulance station in Lota for outcalls.

It would be remiss of me not to highlight that we are on schedule to provide a brand-new Wynnum health precinct on the corner of New Lindum Road and Wynnum Road. The Service Delivery Statements show that the Metro South health board is undertaking a range of new initiatives to improve service delivery, with the Wynnum health precinct the top of the list. It states—

The development of a health precinct on the former Moreton Bay Nursing Site will go to tender with buildings on the site undergoing demolition, which is due for completion in mid-2014.

Locals will see the fruits of our strong decisions over the past two years with a brand-new, state-of-the-art health facility for future generations in the Wynnum-Manly community.

Infrastructure is another great part of the 2014 budget for the Lytton electorate, with upgrades to the Glenora Street boat ramp and Manly Boat Harbour with navigation lighting worth over \$500,000. In my first term as the local member for Lytton we have seen every public boat ramp in the electorate upgraded as well as a new jetty at Fort Lytton. I went to the 2012 state election saying that I would enhance the infrastructure in our great electorate for the boating and recreational fishing community which had been neglected for over a decade under the Bligh-Beattie governments.

Energy infrastructure is much needed in parts of the Lytton electorate. I have been reading on Facebook and in the local paper about a lot of outages in Wynnum North and Wynnum West. I can announce that in this budget there is \$12.9 million for the construction of a brand-new energy substation at Fisherman Islands, which will assist with the growing need for infrastructure at the port with the business expansions as well the northern residential parts of my electorate.

The continuation of the Get in the Game initiative is a welcome announcement for sporting clubs and families in my local area. It has seen nearly 500 families benefit from the voucher system in 2013-14. I am and will always be a massive backer of my local sporting clubs, which help strengthen my community.

I want to speak briefly about the concessions that will assist seniors and people with disabilities to ease cost-of-living pressures. As do all the other members of this LNP government, I welcome yesterday's announcement by the Premier and the Treasurer that we will make up the difference that was left to us by the federal government's cuts to the national partnerships. In the 2014 budget, there was a 9.9 per cent increase to concessions by the LNP Newman government. However, owing to federal cuts, there was a black hole. Yesterday, the government announced that we will make up the difference to assist Queensland seniors. This announcement has already been welcomed in my electorate by the Wynnum-Manly National Seniors Association. Last Monday before coming to parliament I had the pleasure to give the annual prebudget address to that association.

We also have to look at who are the ones who are disadvantaging seniors, and they are the members of the Labor Party. They supported their federal buddies in Canberra who imposed a carbon tax that hurt and continues to hurt seniors on the bayside as well as seniors throughout Queensland by increasing their electricity bills. The residents of the Lytton electorate have a real choice in 2015. Do they want an MP who has delivered nearly half a billion dollars in infrastructure, front-line services and service delivery? I urge residents to continue to work with me in building an even better bayside—one that has a four-point plan, including providing jobs and opportunity, front-line services, community safety and local infrastructure. So far we have seen the fruits of working together in our great electorate, with jobs growth and investment of over \$1 billion in new businesses in 2014. But there is a lot more to be done. That is why I look forward to working each and every day with the good people of the Lytton electorate and this great Queensland government into the future. I commend the bill.

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (5.02 pm): I would like to say to one and all: happy Queensland Day. But now down to the serious business of the budget speech that I must deliver to my Ipswich constituency. I rise to speak to the Appropriation Bill 2014, joining with my government colleagues in congratulating the Treasurer and all others who were involved in this disciplined, insightful and deliverable budget.

A huge debt was amassed by the previous government—\$65 billion in March 2012 and now a massive and formidable \$80 billion. As we have been told by others, if left unchecked, that debt would lead to a massive debt of \$100 billion. We cannot but remember that we have to pay interest on that debt that has been amassed of about \$4 billion a year. We have heard from the various speakers as to how much that is per hour—about \$453,000 per hour. That is a huge amount of money. It is in those circumstances that we need to take measures.

There is no such thing as a land of milk and honey. There is no such thing as a free lunch. There is always a cost that must be paid. Sadly, the milk and honey offered by the previous government is now the opposition's snake oil. Any positive attribute of my government's work will be needed in respect of its capacity to pay off Labor's debt. That will involve the leasing and sale of assets. If we do not do that, then we will be asking our next generation and the generation after that to chip in to pay the debt. In all circumstances, that is entirely unfair.

This snake oil was effectively fortified by the opposition's speeches, particularly the speech of the Leader of the Opposition. I listened intently as to what the opposition was saying. I was listening for a glimmer, I was listening for something that would tell me what solution, what plan, what remedy the opposition has to counter the problems that Queenslanders now face and, in particular, what my

constituents in Ipswich face. While listening intently, all that I really heard that was of some substance was about training young people. A noble thing to do, but do members know what? When you train young people, you have to give them a job. You have to be able to create jobs and creating jobs is just not simple. You cannot artificially create jobs by employing people in the government. You really have to give people something substantial. The only way that you can do that is to encourage business, to encourage small business, because we all know that small businesses create the jobs.

We know how the system works. The larger government grows, the more Queenslanders pay. The more that Queenslanders pay, the less money they have in their pockets. The less money they have in their pockets, the less they spend on businesses—the fewer coffees they have, the less they go out, the less they go on a holiday up to Cairns, Mackay—even to Hervey Bay. The result of it all is that this discretionary spend is—

Mr Cripps interjected.

Mr BERRY: And Hinchinbrook. We need people to go to Hinchinbrook as well. The difference is that, the less money that people have in their pockets, the more difficult it is for business to be able to be robust, to be able to trade in an economy.

But business needs something else and what business needs is certainty. They need a hope. Certainly, they ought to be able to see that the government has the maturity to be able to solve the problems. Most of us on the government side have been in business. We know what it is like to be in a business situation and that when times are tough you make strong choices. That is what business is all about. Sometimes it is about putting some of your staff on a part-time arrangement. Sometimes it means that that computer that you wanted to update cannot be updated. That is the reality of business life. What this budget is doing very directly for Queenslanders is making sure that business is going to be rearmed with the tools that are necessary to get their businesses going and to be able to employ people, because the profits will be there. How we do that is by making government smaller. I am not suggesting that government is not necessary. Of course, we need regulation. As we all know, it is a part of our mixed economy. But in this mixed economy of ours we have a market and that market needs to be vibrant. Markets always look for a strong, decisive, transparent and accountable government. I say to members that all Queenslanders should rightly know that this is precisely what they have.

The budget impressed me in this way. I say to all Ipswichians that this is a very measured budget in the sense that, unlike Labor which previously gave merry handouts, it provides the basic tools that we need in education and health. They are the basics in life that communities need in order to be able to go about their business. This is such a budget. It is responsible and responsive.

I would like to point out to all the constituents of my Ipswich electorate exactly what this budget has for them. Ipswich has a very good hospital. We have a very efficient and effective West Moreton Hospital and Health Service that covers not only the Ipswich electorate but also the electorates of my friend the member for Lockyer and my friend the member for Ipswich West. That service encompasses a lot of hospitals.

It is necessary for that organisation, headed by Dr Mary Corbett, to be effective. We have had some problems. When the hospital service came into being it had a \$19 million debt. In 10 months it got that debt down into the black. Unfortunately, the federal government, in all its wisdom, with its backdating of its budgetary measures, retrospectively cut \$4.3 million out of that health service. It is now getting back into a position where it is again doing great things, particularly under the leadership of Lawrence Springborg, the Minister for Health. He holds up the Ipswich Hospital in particular as being one of the models of which all Queenslanders can be proud. Certainly in Ipswich we are proud of it because we have done so much remarkable work in getting emergency times down, abolishing ramping and there is no bypassing. Fundamental to life, fundamental to communities, is a hospital system that works—and this one works. Quite frankly, while I can praise the Minister for Health, and he deserves all that praise, I also look to the people in the hospital because a lot of the changes made have been changes in attitude and the input of information that allows the hospital to get better. This is in light of the hospital staff decreasing. Let us put the myth to bed: you do not need increased public servants or increased clinicians to make a hospital run effectively. In fact, I would go so far as to say that with the law of diminishing returns it becomes ineffective. I think that is a lesson that can be learned. I think that lesson is, in fact, impacting on our schools. You do not necessarily need to have a great number of teachers. Class sizes are not the only solution. You have to do other things. You have to be smart about how you use your resources.

Ipswich is not an island. I am waiting for Ipswich to prosper. It is on the cusp of prosperity. We are one of the growing cities in South-East Queensland. We have a ready, willing and able population waiting for employment. They are skilled. We have the TAFE college. We are ready to go, but we need that impetus and this budget is doing that for us. It shows that we are responsible and responsive to our community's needs. Health is one of those factors that needs to be the centre of all our lives, as is education. I would like to quickly point out in the few minutes I have left to speak that Ipswich has received a substantial commitment by my government: \$2.7 million under the Schools First Funding; \$1.118 million in public works; operating grants for child safety of \$17.3 million; operating grants for disability services, which is a big part of Ipswich, of \$23.160 million to assist people with disability. There is so much I am able to say about this budget. It is a terrific, innovative budget, one which really opens up the future for us. Once again, Treasurer, thank you so much for delivering this budget. It has been terrific. I join with all my colleagues in supporting its passage through this House.

 **Mr JUDGE** (Yeerongpilly—PUP) (5.13 pm): The budget moves from the current LNP Newman government three-line slogan policy sales technique to a new six-word slogan—that is, 'Strong choices for a brighter future'. In many ways this is the identical plan that deposed Anna Bligh took to the 2012 election and failed. This government has outlined that its key strategy is selling assets. The Palmer United Party quite clearly opposes the reckless sale of assets. I endorse the comments of my parliamentary colleague, Dr Alex Douglas, the member for Gaven. The budget confirms the Premier's obsession with burrowing. He is digging another \$5 billion to \$7 billion tunnel under Brisbane. The Newman government fails to spend on infrastructure such as disability access at Fairfield train station in my electorate. As the Dutton Park train station is going to close, disability access at Fairfield should be given a high priority. The Premier and the Newman government have shown little regard for marginalised people and were effectively shamed into a backflip on pensioner concessions. That is very disappointing. The Newman government has no concept whatsoever of social responsibility. That has been obvious from day 1. That has been one of my biggest disappointments with the Newman government. Those opposite do not understand social responsibility. Good government is about balancing economic responsibility, social responsibility and environmental responsibility. Based on this criteria, the Newman government has proven that it is incapable of delivering good government for Queenslanders.

Enough is enough. People want and deserve the truth. Truth in government is a rare commodity nowadays. The truth is that the Newman government cannot be trusted with Queensland's future. Asset sales are opposed by 54 per cent of Queenslanders. That is based on the government's own research. What sort of political representation is it when such a significant number of Queenslanders—a majority—are being ignored? Clearly the Newman government is still not listening. The Premier and the Newman government still have not learnt the lessons from the Redcliffe by-election. The Premier is clearly incapable of change and he is incapable of decency. The people of Queensland have an opportunity to send a very clear message to the Newman government at the by-election in Stafford and at the state election. I believe the opinions of Queenslanders about asset sales will be well and truly expressed in a loud and clear way to a government that is clearly incapable of listening.

Professor John Quiggin, who was reported on the ABC, states that the Newman government is calculating that its massive majority and the weakness of the Labor opposition will protect it from the electoral disaster that has befallen so many previous advocates of privatisation, particularly at the state level. The obvious question remains, given the clear unpopularity of privatisation, why are governments still pursuing it? The economic reasoning is simple. In general, selling an income-generating asset and using the proceeds to repay debt makes no difference to the net financial position of a household, corporation or government.

In Queensland the new spin is the idea that new investments can be financed with private equity but remain under public ownership. It is called a non-share equity interest—NSEI. The Treasury web page explains its appeal to the government. The state retains 100 per cent ownership of ordinary shares in the network business and assets. The private sector contribution will equate to the net funding for the capital expenditure and therefore represent new capital injections. The NSEI security is debt in its legal form, but classified as equity for tax and accounting purposes. These characteristics give the security its hybrid form. In other words, the government is replacing debt raised by the Queensland Treasury Corporation from the private sector with an instrument that is

almost identical but is classified as equity and can therefore be presented as a reduction in debt. Whatever the accounting treatment, however, an economist's reaction is quite simply, 'If it looks like debt, walks like debt and quacks like debt, it is debt.' It is that simple. In both cases the spin being offered is transparent and it is nonsense.

Why then do governments persist with these policies? The first answer is ideological. Privatisation is a core part of the free market ideology shared by the elite of both political parties. The same ideology has driven the reform of the electricity sector. Confronted with the obvious failure of that reform, its advocates, such as the Productivity Commission, have doubled down, saying that it is the remaining elements of public ownership that are to blame. The second answer is much simpler. If you are a premier or treasurer, privatising assets is a great post-politics career move. One need only look at the lucrative positions currently held by former politicians, including Nick Greiner, Alan Stockdale, Peter Costello and Paul Keating, to see why others would want to follow in their footsteps.

Unlike the likes of the Premier and the Treasurer under these circumstances, over the next few years finding a job is expected to remain a struggle for many Queenslanders with the unemployment rate falling slowly. We all know that times have been tough for those working in the mining industry as the construction phase of many projects comes to an end. Two years ago, 14,000 public servants lost their jobs in the LNP's first budget. When the LNP came to power in 2012, Queensland's jobless rate was five per cent. Since then it has fluctuated, but it reached 6.3 per cent in April this year. Job creation is above average, but so is population growth. We have heard that the Newman government has promised to reduce job—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr JUDGE: We have heard the Newman government promises to reduce the jobless rate—

Mr Nicholls interjected.

Mr JUDGE: Deputy Speaker, I am not taking interjections and I ask for your protection at this point in time. We have all heard the Newman government's promise to—

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Watts): Order! I remind the member that if he names someone in his speech they are entitled to defend.

Mr JUDGE: Sure. We have all heard the Newman government has promised to reduce the jobless rate to four per cent by 2018, but the budget predicts that the Queensland government will struggle to meet that target, with the jobless rate expected to remain at five per cent. The independent ABS data shows that there are 11,000 fewer full-time jobs in Queensland in April this year than when the Newman LNP government was elected. Treasurer Tim Nicholls says that new jobs are being generated. The latest ABS statistics show that Queensland is responsible for over half the jobs created in Australia in the last 12 months. However, AMP Capital chief economist, Shane Oliver, says job creation is not keeping pace with population growth. Queensland faces a real problem here. In Queensland job growth has been well above the national average, but the trouble for Queenslanders is that the population growth is growing at double the national average.

How can the Newman government be trusted to create employment and achieve a surplus? The Premier and his government have failed on both counts. Jobs are at risk after the double whammy of the federal and state budgets. The AMP Capital chief economist, Shane Oliver, said that Queensland had the right to be concerned about the blow-out. He said—

\$600 million of that looks to be explained by softer coal royalties, but even beyond that, you've got \$1 billion that isn't explained.

After more than two years in government, the Newman government is still blaming others. The Premier fails to take responsibility, but the buck really stops with him. It stops with him and the Treasurer. The Newman government has proven it cannot be trusted with Queensland's budget or future, saying one thing before an election—just as the federal government did and just as other Queensland governments have done—but doing another thing after the election.

Queenslanders can be assured that the Palmer United Party will keep its election promises and stand up for all Queenslanders. The Newman government now expects the public to believe that it will achieve consecutive surpluses of \$860 million and \$560 million respectively in the next two financial years. If the Premier could not do it in this environment, he cannot be trusted to deliver it in the fourth and fifth budgets. The real failures in the 2014-15 LNP budget are not just those, but there are wider issues such as failing to understand what a government's role really is. It is ideological when it

needed to be pragmatic. It is full of motherhood statements when it needed to confront the reality, that is, to correctly confront the issues of trust. The Newman government has proven that it simply cannot be trusted and Queenslanders should not trust this government coming into the next state election. They should not trust the government with unprecedented asset sales. The government is convinced that it can condition the public into believing its fraudulent case for leaving it in government. Quite frankly, I think the Queensland public is a little bit smarter than that. I think people have learned the lessons of the past. Before the 2012 election, they heard what the LNP said and for two years they have seen the Newman government in action. I do not think the Queensland public will trust this government with unprecedented asset sales going into the next election.

 **Mr KAYE** (Greenslopes—LNP) (5.24 pm): Today I rise in support of the Appropriation Bills handed down by the Treasurer in this House on Tuesday. Firstly, I congratulate the Treasurer on delivering an equitable, measured and eminently sensible budget in what has been a very difficult two years pulling our finances back from the brink. I also give thanks to the Treasurer's staff, both in his ministerial office and in Treasury. The countless hours of work it has taken to prepare this budget should not go unnoticed. When this government took office in 2012, we were always honest with Queenslanders regarding the challenges we faced in bringing our finances under control. Getting our finances back on track in the past two years has been a difficult process. We have had to rein in our spending and we have had to make some extremely difficult decisions, but we have done this not for our own benefit but because we want the best for Queensland's future. We want everyone to experience the benefits through responsible management of the state's finances.

There is still a great deal of work to be done, but we are seeing the recovery of the state's economy and essential services. I can see the results in my community: shorter wait times for public housing, increased police officers on the street with a reduction in crime rates, increased efficiency in our hospitals and a renewed confidence in our schools, thanks to massive funding boosts from this government. I was also pleased to see that there are no new taxes in this budget. There have also been much welcomed increases to the health and education budgets and the vital injection of funding to child safety, following the recommendations of the Carmody inquiry, and also to disability services.

I was particularly pleased to see the injection of funding to build and support our law and order program. I commend the Treasurer for the allocation of more than \$44 million to the Safe Night Out Strategy and I also commend him on his allocation of funding for an additional 267 police officers. This is an important part of the Newman government's strategy for addressing crime and it is much appreciated, particularly by those of us who have come from a law enforcement background. On the point of policing, it should be noted that a police officer gets to see people from all walks of life and all situations and, obviously, deals with crime on a daily basis. A police officer also gets first-hand exposure to the waste and inefficiency that was operating in government, the difficulties in our hospitals and the difficulties in our schools. It is what drove me to put up my hand in the first place. Certainly I am proud to be part of a government that is actually addressing those areas that I witnessed first-hand were broken. What is more, I have many friends and former colleagues who tell me that things are improving.

Whilst change can be difficult, it is not the negative atmosphere that some would have us believe. We have revitalised front-line services and we are empowering the Public Service to make a difference, not just go through the motions. The extra funding to health will be of great benefit to all Queenslanders and I note the \$224.5 million allocated to continue delivery of the Lady Cilento Children's Hospital, which will service families in my community. Funding allocations for community and disability services in the greater Brisbane area will also benefit some of the most vulnerable members of my community.

My schools are big winners in this budget. Eleven schools in the Greenslopes electorate have been allocated more than \$1.56 million in additional funding via the Great Results Guarantee. In addition, three schools have been allocated capital works funding for much-needed additional accommodation and infrastructure repair. Cavendish Road State High School will receive \$2.26 million and my old high school in Mount Gravatt has been allocated \$551,000. Those are two fantastic local schools whose programs are helping so many students to excel. I am proud to have schools such as those in the electorate. Another important funding allocation in this budget is \$901,000 for the rectification of Early Childhood Development Program facilities at the Nursery Road Special School. I am sure the staff, parents and students will be pleased to see that funding allocation.

I am also happy to note that Energex is continuing to carry out replacement works at the Coorparoo substation with a further \$9.8 million to help increase network reliability and capacity. With increased demand in this area, this ongoing upgrade is timely and most welcome.

With housing a big issue in my electorate, I am also pleased with the announcement that \$7.5 million, together with land transfer, has been allocated towards the construction of an additional 57 units in Mount Gravatt East with the Brisbane Housing Company. I believe that will mainly benefit seniors. I note that, under the direction of the Minister for Housing and Public Works, the Greenslopes electorate's waiting list for high-needs housing has dropped significantly and this will further contribute to addressing the problem of housing in my area. Well done, Minister Mander and department staff. This is an important funding decision and I welcome it.

I also welcome the \$789,000 allocated to address the problem of homelessness in the community. It is good to see that this money will be spent not only on housing people who find themselves in the unfortunate position of homelessness, but also it provides a number of innovative measures to prevent people from falling into homelessness in the first place. Programs to assist people in obtaining and maintaining their housing and maximising their capacity to be independent, self-reliant and connected to appropriate social supports are ground breaking and save both resources and time in the long run.

If it were so easy to reduce debt, why did the previous government not do it when they had the chance? If hospital and housing waiting lists were so simple to reduce why was it not done before the 2012 election? We all know the answer to that. Previous governments only knew how to spend money; they had no idea how to manage it. As we saw with the previous government, it is no good to say you care about people if under your management hospital patients waited up to a decade for surgery, desperate Queenslanders waited just as long for housing and the whole time debt levels blew out to unprecedented proportions.

There is much more in this budget that I could speak on, like the second police helicopter based at Archerfield, funding for public library resources and the many other things that members have covered in their speeches. I look forward to communicating the benefits of this budget to the Greenslopes electorate. As a government we need to look ahead of more than just the end of our noses. We need to look long term and think about future generations to come. That is exactly what this government is doing.

I am proud to be part of a government with a strong plan—a plan that will deliver us better roads, better schools, better hospitals and make Queensland a safer place and give us a brighter future. I support the bill.

 **Mr GRANT** (Springwood—LNP) (5.30 pm): I rise to speak to the budget. I attended the final public meeting with the Treasurer, the Hon. Tim Nicholls, on 19 May at Logan City. I was surprised to see the number of people who simply wanted to attack him with allegations and stories of things that have not been done correctly. I admired the manner in which he let them speak their minds, did not interrupt once and then calmly carved up their arguments and allegations and left them speechless.

This evening I specifically want to contrast the budget settings with respect to recurrent expenditure and capital expenditure for the residents of the Springwood electorate. I unashamedly say that this is a year of restraint in capital expenditure in the Springwood electorate, but a year of significant expansion of recurrent funding for services that are so necessary, especially in the areas of education, health, law and order.

We have to be realistic about the fact that every day \$10 million has to be taken out of our budget to pay the interest on Labor's debt. This adds up to \$70 million-plus every week going out to something like 22 countries around the globe to whom the Queensland government has been indebted. Let me say that far too much of this debt is unproductive debt. That portion of our state debt is money down the drain. It is gone—never to be recovered; not producing revenue; not contributing to economic development; not producing useful assets.

We have been left in a situation where we have had to proceed very carefully in crafting our policies and budget measures to support the economy to ensure the undergirding of our revenue. In this way, we have been able to increase our operational expenditure in the following areas, but are facing limited capital expenditure for the year ahead. With regard to operational expenditure we have done very well. The Health budget is up six per cent to \$13.6 billion—\$1.89 billion of this is for the

Metro South Hospital and Health Board. Education is up seven per cent to \$11.8 billion, including \$1.174 billion under the Australian government's funds for the Great Results Guarantee. Some \$44.5 million has been allocated for the Safe Night Out Strategy. How sad that we have to allocate such an amount of money to keep people alive and safe during a good night out. Some \$406 million has been allocated for the safer children program for children and family services in response to the Carmody report. Some \$218,000 in Get in the Game funding has been allocated to the electorate of Springwood.

My school principals are very pleased with the increased level of funding under the Great Results Guarantee, our increased maintenance funding as well as the general funding increases for schools. Under the LNP my state schools have all but caught up with their building maintenance whereas under Labor my schools were allowed to run down. Many school buildings had no maintenance for 20 years. Under Labor the same occurred to our railway infrastructure and our electricity reticulation infrastructure.

I have recently travelled the state for the rail freight inquiry and I recall one presentation by a Queenslander who told the parliamentary committee of a discussion he had with Premier Peter Beattie. He was pleading with Peter Beattie for funding for rail infrastructure to transport livestock. Mr Beattie's answer included, 'No, because cattle don't vote.' I had known for a long time that Labor had pillaged the state during their long term in office and this just gave me the finer details. Travelling the state, as I have, I want to put on the record that Beattie and Bligh plundered the people of the bush in this great state by failing to maintain their essential infrastructure.

I go back to capital expenditure for the Springwood electorate. Some \$5.4 billion has been allocated to Transport and Main Roads across our vast state. Electorates from Springwood to Gaven will share in \$23.5 million for pavement rehabilitation on the M1 motorway. Residents of Springwood will receive benefits from the spending of \$135 million in state and federal funding on upgrades to the motorway to the north of the Springwood electorate. In Springwood we are currently witnessing the completion of capital expenditure projects—namely, the busway extension from Eight Mile Plains to Rochedale South worth \$27.137 million; and an added lane to the M1 motorway through Springwood at a cost of \$12.8 million.

Looking forward, this month we are set to see the beginning of capital works to the value of \$700,000 to widen the service road to the south of Daisy Hill Road. This will include a bikeway link between the council pathway and the southern end of Daisy Hill Road. Any additional dedicated bikeway is an improvement in terms of safety for cyclists. This is a very welcome addition for cycle users.

I wish to commend the Treasurer and his staff for the fine job and work they have done throughout the state in putting this budget together. I am very pleased to support the budget this evening.

 **Mrs FRANCE** (Pumicestone—LNP) (5.36 pm): I rise to speak in support of the 2014-15 state budget handed down by the Treasurer and Minister for Trade, the Hon. Tim Nicholls. This budget is a clear demonstration of our government's actions and commitment to restoring the state's finances that left Queenslanders \$80 billion in the red through Labor's mismanagement.

I commend the Treasurer and his team on the hard work they have put into this budget and the easy to understand documentation that accompanies it. I would also like to thank the residents of Pumicestone for their input into the Strong Choices campaign and their positive feedback to this budget. Our budget provides increases in education, health and community services, and I am proud to be a member of a government that listens to Queenslanders and, importantly, has delivered a budget that does not introduce or increase any taxes nor reduce any services.

I am also extremely pleased to highlight some of the outcomes of this budget for my electorate of Pumicestone. Child safety is a high priority for our government. This is evident through the \$406 million committed to implementing the Carmody report's principal recommendations and the allocation of \$4.3 million to my electorate to provide services that are dedicated to protecting children and young people from harm.

Funding has been continued for the organisations in Pumicestone that provide services for the vulnerable members of our community. I thank these organisations and all of the service providers who have recently assisted me with the Pumicestone directory of services for our community.

For Pumicestone, the urgent need for disability support services has been recognised and will continue to receive funding of \$10.2 million. I am pleased to see that \$371,000 has been allocated to deliver essential support for members of my community who are at risk of homelessness and in need of support.

For seniors, services offered by the Bribie Island Voluntary Community Help Association will continue thanks to the \$205,000 allocated for the provision of the Bribie Island Home Assist Secure service. The Caboolture Home Assist Secure service will receive \$424,000 to continue their excellent services to our community. I would like to acknowledge both Don Pearson from Caboolture and Greg Spencer from Bribie Island and their teams of volunteers who provide these essential services.

I thank the Minister for Education for his strong commitment to better educational outcomes. It is great to see that the schools across Pumicestone will benefit from funding committed under the Great Teachers = Great Results program, the Great Results Guarantee and the much needed maintenance backlog fund that has seen almost \$14 million delivered in Pumicestone over the past two years. Three new schools are currently under construction in Bellmere, Burpengary and Caboolture.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service has received \$2.08 billion to provide enhanced health services to the residents in our district. The Caboolture Hospital car parking congestion has received some slight relief recently with the construction of 91 staff car parks at the rear of the hospital, leaving more parking spaces for patients and visitors. Other improvements to be delivered at Caboolture Hospital over the next 12 months include \$4.67 million in equipment upgrades and \$1.3 million towards refurbishment of the allied health department.

I am very pleased to see that funding is being provided for a second police helicopter for the south-east corner of Queensland. The Moreton Police District, of which Pumicestone is a part, will now have access to a helicopter to assist police and emergency services in major investigations as well as emergency and disaster situations.

Continued funding for the Bruce Highway upgrade of approximately \$80 million will see highway improvement projects such as the Pumicestone Road interchange, Roys Road overpass, Bells Creek Road and Boundary Road overpass continue. I am also pleased to see my community will benefit from the funding for a floating walkway at the Toorbul boat ramp to improve safety, a boost in funding to replenish library resources and funding for erosion and sediment control and revegetation in our catchment thanks to the environment minister and his pursuit of healthy waterways and catchments.

The measures that the Newman government have already taken over the past two years have reined in government spending from an increase of almost nine per cent a year under Labor to just 0.2 per cent in 2012-13. While these measures have unsustainable spending under control, it will not be enough to tackle Labor's \$80 billion debt and \$4 billion a year interest bill. Through the Strong Choices campaign, more than 70,000 Queenslanders gave their feedback on the debt challenge facing us, with almost half voting to sell or lease 11.6 per cent of our assets as opposed to significantly raising taxes or cutting services. This budget outlines our proposal to sell or lease 11.6 per cent of assets, with the proceeds being used to both pay off Labor's debt and invest in \$8.6 billion worth of new assets and investments across Queensland via the Strong Choices Investment Program. This program will not only deliver the new schools, hospitals, roads and infrastructure for our communities but also create 25,000 new jobs.

The residents of Pumicestone have been very busy over the past two years working with me to develop budget wish lists, grants applications and priorities for infrastructure upgrades, and we are very keen to put forward our thoughts on what the \$8.6 billion worth of funds should be spent on. I apologise in advance to my parliamentary colleagues, but I have a well-organised community and we intend on fighting for as much of that funding as we can get our hands on.

Not everyone will agree with the choices this government has made to pay down Labor's \$80 billion debt legacy, but at least Queenslanders know that they have a government who is fiscally responsible and is committed to ensuring that funding is available to meet the needs of our communities. Labor left Queensland an \$80 billion debt to pay off that they racked up through reckless spending and poor financial management. Labor left Queenslanders with the highest debt per person ratio of any state in Australia when they squandered our taxes on poorly thought out projects like the Traveston Dam, the rusty Tugun desal plant, the trains that were too big to fit through the tunnels, the trains that were ordered without seats, the Health payroll debacle, the fake Tahitian

prince and the list goes on. But I am confident that Queenslanders understand the debt and deficit legacy left to us all by Labor and the need to make strong choices and not make this problem a burden for the next generation.

The Newman government is making the strong choices, the smartest choices, to ensure a brighter future for all Queenslanders. I support the bills before the House.

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (5.43 pm): I am very pleased to be able to make a short contribution towards the consideration of the budget bills before the House. There have been a lot of speakers who have spoken in this budget reply debate and it has been gratifying to hear the commendations that they have extended towards the Treasurer. It would be remiss of me not to add my commendations as well to the Treasurer, who has done a great job not just on this particular budget but on the financial situation that we inherited from the Labor Party—and try as they might they cannot get away from that.

Everything that our government has had to do has had to be framed within the gross failure of public administration that will forever characterise the last Labor government. In fact, those of us who have watched politics for a while would argue that it always characterises Labor governments. Labor governments always end up in a financial mess. It has been that way in Queensland but so it has been at the federal level as well. One would be hard-pressed to find an example around Australia in any state or territory where Labor governments have not left a terrible financial mess behind them. But the mess that was left here in Queensland certainly surpasses any other examples that I can think of—\$85 billion worth of debt. Never forget the figure. No Queensland should ever forget that figure—\$85 billion worth of debt. It is within that framework that the Treasurer has had to frame this budget as he has framed the previous budgets.

Within that framework I think one of the most gratifying things is that we have been able to increase expenditure on those important areas of health and education. The Health budget is up six per cent to a total of \$13.6 billion. Health services in Queensland I think have been one of the areas of great improvement since we came to government. One of the fundamentals of state government is to provide services in health and education, not to downplay the significance of other departments. But the Health budget is up six per cent to \$13.6 billion and there is funding for the new hospitals being built—Lady Cilento Children's Hospital and the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital—and the redevelopment of hospitals in Cairns, Mackay, Mount Isa, Townsville and Rockhampton, and the redevelopment of a lot of smaller hospitals as well. Nearly \$10 million is being spent on Biloela Hospital in my electorate. For a local member that is probably more important than most other things, because at the end of the day we are all here to represent our local electorates.

Education is a similar story. I think the education story is untold or unrealised out there in the community in a lot of ways. But \$11.8 billion is allocated in this budget for education—up seven per cent. To have a rise in expenditure in these areas at a time of financial crisis resulting from what we inherited I think is something that we can certainly be proud of. There is \$5.4 billion allocated to Transport and Main Roads. That is a very significant amount of spending. But out of that \$5.4 billion the number that is most significant for regional Queensland is the \$321 million that is allocated to the Toowoomba range second crossing. The Toowoomba range second crossing has become an iconic project not just for the members who are most interested in it—the members from Toowoomba—but for the members in regional Queensland. Everyone in regional Queensland, everyone in south-west Queensland and Central Queensland, have an interest in that second range crossing and are very gratified to see that expenditure in the budget.

Equally, the Bruce Highway is something that every Queensland has a huge interest in. There is \$768 million in this budget to upgrade the Bruce Highway. When I travel up the coast, as I do on a regular basis, I see the work happening on the Cooroy to Curra section A upgrade. It is long overdue and a huge construction task providing jobs for a whole range of people.

The program that I am most gratified to see in the budget and the one I want to thank the Treasurer most sincerely for is the Royalties for the Regions program. This is a program that in regional Queensland has already provided a huge philosophical boost far and away above the amount of money that has been involved. When we came to power we really did inherit a difficult financial situation. So it was a tough sell to put in place a new funding program. But we had

committed, even before the election, to \$495 million over four years for Royalties for the Regions. It is to the Treasurer's great credit that we have been able to keep that election promise and deliver Royalties for the Regions in a way that has been embraced by regional communities right across Queensland. I look forward to working with local communities and all the local members who represent regional Queensland in ensuring that the funds that are left to be allocated from the Royalties for the Regions program continue to bring those economic growth opportunities for regional Queensland.

There are a whole range of other issues in the budget that have been well and truly covered by members in the discussion of the budget bills before the House, and I am sure they will be covered by the Treasurer in his conclusion of this debate. I am very pleased to be part of a government that has been able to deliver a budget such as this. Equally, I am very pleased that we as a government have been able to present to the people of Queensland a proposition that will repair the damage, if you like, that has been done by almost 20 years of Labor governments. This budget will set Queensland up for the future and will go a long way towards ensuring that we do have a sound financial future. The Strong Choices program that the Treasurer has quite ably conducted over the last few months and which has been included with the budget documents is a proposition that will be taken to the people of Queensland, as we said we would, to obtain a mandate for the asset sales that are part of that project.

As infrastructure minister, I am very keen to have a discussion with members in this House and with communities across Queensland about how we might best utilise the \$8.6 billion that the Treasurer has identified will be made available from that asset sales program. There is no question that, after so many years of a Labor government that neglected regional Queensland, the \$8.6 billion will certainly not be enough to rectify all of the infrastructure issues across Queensland. The share that we will be able to allocate to regional Queensland will not be enough to rectify the infrastructure deficit that exists there.

It is particularly noteworthy that the Strong Choices Investment Program that the Treasurer has put before the people of Queensland includes a Rural and Regional Roads Fund of \$1.5 billion. That is the sort of level that we are suggesting should be allocated to rural and regional roads from the \$8.6 billion that is available. It will certainly not solve the problem of rural and regional roads completely, but it will go a long way towards addressing those connectivity issues that are very important to regional communities. For people who live in country towns, the word 'infrastructure' very often just means 'roads'. It is all about being able to get to the regional centres to be able to conduct business, transport product in and out, and access health services. Roads are incredibly important, and they are important in a different way to the roads here in the south-east corner. In the south-east corner, it is about congestion and capacity; in regional areas, too often it is simply just about access. I look forward to the discussion we will have between now and September in relation to how we might make some decisions around the Strong Choices Investment Program. I encourage everybody in regional Queensland to be involved in that and put forward the suggestions they might have.

Equally, the Rural and Regional Economic Development Fund represents some great opportunities for the future, as does the Local Government Co-investment Fund. The Local Government Co-investment Fund is aimed at resolving that longstanding conflict between local governments and developers that was the subject of some legislation last night. I think local governments across Queensland can look at that number that has been put forward as the initial position in the Strong Choices Investment Program and understand that our government is serious about the Local Government Co-investment Fund. We are serious about the state playing a role in investing in catalytic infrastructure that will lead to further economic growth.

As I have indicated a number of times during this budget week here in the parliament, our government has been about economic growth. We were elected on a platform of growing the Queensland economy. We inherited a terrible financial situation which required some very tough decisions, but along with those tough decisions that the Treasurer made, there was also a very deliberate decision to concentrate on economic growth—to grow the economy of Queensland so as to provide the jobs and business opportunities that Queenslanders need not just now but for years to come and for generations to come. Unless we grow the economy, we will stagnate, and that is the challenge that my department has taken up. We are working closely with Treasury to ensure it becomes a reality for Queenslanders.

My own electorate is very much representative of regional Queensland, and this government has been a breath of fresh air for all of the electorates in regional Queensland. I can remember sitting in this House when the former Labor government was in power, and the Labor Treasurer would bring in a budget and we would not find anything at all in it for regional Queensland—there was next to nothing. The member for Warrego and I were reflecting on this at breakfast this morning. We were lucky to get a toilet block at the local school; that was a big event for regional members under the Labor government. The amount of money that this budget allocates to regional Queensland through all of the departmental spending programs stands in stark contrast to what we saw for many years. Regional people very much understand and appreciate the difference that this government has made and will continue to make as we bring programs such as Royalties for the Regions and those other investment funds to fruition and maturity.

I conclude by congratulating the Treasurer. It has been gratifying to work with the Treasurer, the Premier and other members on the Cabinet Budget Review Committee, which is where we make the tough decisions about the budget that is before the House tonight. I remind honourable members that this budget needs to be seen from the perspective of the horrific financial situation that we inherited. When you view this budget from that perspective, you understand the great work that has been done to have it before the House. I commend it to the House.

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (5.57 pm), in reply: I wish to start by thanking all members for their contribution to the debate in relation to the 2014-15 appropriation bills. There was substantially less debate on the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill; nonetheless, I am sure that will excite interest in many parts of the state as well. To all members who took the time to make a contribution—and, on behalf of the Leader of the House, particularly those who made slightly shorter contributions—I must say it was well appreciated. To those who made the slightly longer contributions, I am sure the Leader of the House will have something for you to do as well.

On Tuesday, I rose in this place and laid upon the table of the parliament *A strong plan for a brighter future* and this budget does deliver a strong plan for a brighter future—with economic growth in 2013-14 expected to be three per cent, underpinned by household consumption growth, a recovery in dwelling investment and a significant contribution from exports. Listening to the Labor responses, one could be forgiven for thinking that they want Queensland on its knees. Contrary to what they are saying, Queensland and our economy is expected to be the strongest performing state in the nation over the coming financial year and over the forward estimates period—that is, the strongest performing state in an economic sense in the nation. In 2015-16 we are forecasting economic growth of six per cent, an 11-year high, and that is supported by the ramp-up in LNG exports and that improved domestic economy I mentioned.

If you compare the growth in the opposition's last term in government with the growth in our first term, the numbers speak for themselves. Economic growth averaged just 2.2 per cent in the last three years of the previous government, but in the first year of the LNP government it was 3.6 per cent, and by next year economic growth over the next four years will average more than four per cent. We understand that not all Queenslanders are experiencing the benefits of economic growth, and that is why the government is totally committed to growing the economy to provide all Queenslanders with opportunities and jobs both now and into the future.

While the opposition may try to criticise the performance of the Queensland labour market since this government was elected, it is worth putting it into some perspective. From March 2012 to April 2014 employment growth in Queensland rose 2.8 per cent, much stronger than the 1.9 per cent growth in the rest of Australia over the same period. In fact, Queensland accounted for around 27 per cent of national jobs growth over the period—well ahead of our population share. The latest industry labour market data shows a significant switch to more sustainable job creation driven by the private sector. In the two years to the March quarter 2014, those industries and firms predominantly in the private sector increased their employment by 42,000 people. This is in stark contrast to the 1,000-person decline recorded in the private sector in the last two years of the Bligh government. So there were 42,000 more in the private sector under us and a thousand fewer in the private sector under the Bligh Labor government in its last two years. The facts speak for themselves. In the last year more than 60,000 jobs were created in Queensland.

Only this government has made the strongest and the smartest choice to reduce the state's \$80 billion debt and annual \$4 billion interest bill. No matter how hard Labor tries, they cannot escape the fact that since 2006-07 they ran up budget deficits worth \$29 billion with a further \$13 billion in future deficits locked in. That is what has led to the state's debt reaching \$80 billion.

One of Queensland's greatest public servants, a man after whom the former government renamed the Gateway bridges, Sir Leo Hielscher, said on radio yesterday—

It's very, very important to have a balanced book, or it slightly in surplus, a running Budget. The running Budget is like your own Budget at home, if you haven't got it, you don't spend it. And you certainly don't borrow to pay for the goods from the baker or whatever. And you have to borrow for the budget that's in deficit. Which is just it's not right. It's just an absolutely wrong thing to do, to borrow and to put the bill onto the future generation to cover your dinner costs, for example.

Sir Leo then went on to say—

Our problem is our deficit has now reached a size that we can't really afford to pay for. We have to pay it, it's the first thing that comes out of the Budget, is the cost of debt servicing. That's just getting more and more expensive before you start to pay for school teachers and hospital people. So you got to get that debt down somehow or other.

There he is, the former head of the Queensland Treasury Corporation, a 16-year head of Treasury, after whom the former government named the Gateway bridges. Very few people would doubt the financial acumen of Sir Leo Hielscher and what he has done for this state over nearly 50 years of service to the people of Queensland. 'You've got to get the debt down, you can't keep borrowing, you need to run a budget in surplus.' What is it that those over there do not get about it? They could have tuned in to ABC Radio yesterday afternoon and picked up the lesson from Sir Leo.

As we have outlined in our draft plan, with spending cuts and increased taxes in the 2014-15 federal budget it has become even more important to avoid fuelling the cost-of-living pressures felt by Queenslanders. Now is not the time to burden people with taxes upon taxes or to reduce services that have already been made more efficient. That is why the government is now proposing a program of asset transactions. We will do that in a number of ways that have been set out in our Strongest and Smartest Choice plan. I again encourage all members to have a good look at this plan because it goes into considerable detail about the problem and the options and the best way of proceeding to deal with our debt problem and what we will do with the value of the funds released as a result of it, including paying down debt by \$25 billion and releasing \$8.6 billion for the vital infrastructure that a growing state needs. We will ask the people of Queensland how they think that money should be spent, in stark contrast to those opposite. Of course, again in stark contrast, none of our proposals will be put into place until we have a mandate from the people at the next election. Not everyone will agree with all of the choices this government has made about how to pay for the things into the future, but at least Queenslanders now know we will have funding certainty so we can invest in the things we need for a growing and ageing population. Indeed, the strongest choice is the smartest choice.

There were a number of statements proffered as facts by those opposite and some of the crossbench speakers during the course of the debate in terms of electricity bills and the cost of living—and that has been dealt with by a number of people. We know that for electricity bills the single biggest thing people can do is support the eradication of the carbon tax, the thing that tomorrow would make power bills cheaper and cheaper into the future. Labor lit the fire on increasing power prices and now they are blaming the firefighters for what we are trying to do to fix it. They love talking about big projects, big plans and big spending but in the core areas affecting the cost of living—electricity and water—they never explained that consumers would end up paying for the decisions that they made over years and years in the past.

In the area of electricity, massive overinvestment and gold plating of infrastructure has played a key role in increasing the cost of electricity. As the Premier, others and I have pointed out, the former Treasurer in this place wrote to the price-setting regulator, the Australian Energy Regulator, and said, 'We're not satisfied with what you've given us, give us more,' driving up power prices for everyday Queenslanders. In total, around 17 per cent of the typical bill is attributable to green schemes: seven per cent to carbon tax, seven per cent to the Solar Bonus Scheme and three per cent to the renewable energy target. When they approved these schemes those opposite should have explained to the people of Queensland what the long-term consequences were, because they certainly knew it. They had been told what the cost would be, but they did not tell anyone in their rush to get out, make themselves feel good and get those schemes going. This government, particularly through the hard work of the energy minister, has identified capital and operating savings in electricity totalling \$3 billion out to 2019-20.

In terms of water, it was this government again, through the energy and water supply minister, who streamlined the complex institutional arrangements created by the previous government for managing bulk water supplies in South-East Queensland. This has reduced the overheads of the suppliers, which are contained in the bulk water prices. To further reduce pressure on household bulk water prices, we also removed the requirement to construct additional bulk water infrastructure in the near future and we have mothballed infrastructure that is not currently needed. The reality is that, through its ill-conceived extravaganza, rushed and poorly planned water grid projects, the previous government condemned South-East Queensland water users—taxpayers—to year after year of price increases. Those projects were largely funded by debt. For instance, Seqwater holds about \$2 billion in debt for the Western Corridor Recycled Water Scheme and \$580 million for the Gold Coast desalination plant, and the cost of these projects is met by the water users—that is the taxpayers again—every time they turn on the tap.

There were talks about massive cuts to Health and Education. In the education sector we know that the education minister has, in fact, delivered increases every year. There is an additional \$300 million for our school maintenance scheme to fix up the maintenance backlog that those opposite left behind—rusting pipes, windows that did not close, paint peeling off ceilings and toilets that did not flush. It was an abomination that was left behind by those opposite. There is also an additional \$580 million going into our Great Teachers = Great Results program together with the streaming of the funding of \$131 million from the Commonwealth in our guaranteed outcomes program. We know that what those opposite claimed was not the truth.

I turn now to Health. Health funding has grown by \$2 billion since 2011-12, almost 20 per cent in percentage terms in just two years.

Mr Costigan: Great stat.

Mr NICHOLLS: A great stat; I take that interjection. Our health system has been turned around, having gone from being a basket case to having amongst the best emergency department and surgery performance in the country.

There were more untruths about teachers not being employed. It is an assertion that the unions peddle that is quite simply untrue. Since our first budget in 2012-13, the government has allocated funding for 1,700 additional front-line teachers and teacher aides. Labor says they believe in real jobs, but how do they show that? By setting up two new bureaucracies, further increasing government expenses! It is the same old thinking; the 'real jobs' solution that the opposition leader is talking about is more government entities, more bureaucracy. The reality is that 90 per cent of jobs are created by the private sector, the same sector that the opposition spent years trying to kill with red tape and cumbersome approval processes.

Members opposite talk about science and innovation. This year's budget includes \$14.3 million as part of the government's commitment to establish the \$42.1 million Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine at James Cook University and \$2½ million of a \$9 million five-year funding commitment to support critical research into ageing dementia. Let us not forget that it was Senator Kim 'il' Carr from the Labour Party in Victoria who said that they should not be spending that money; they should set it up at a 'proper' university as if James Cook University, a centre recognised world-wide for its expertise in tropical medicine, is not a university for that sort of investment.

With comments like that from their senators, we know what the Labor Party really thinks about rural and regional and northern Queensland. They only want it done in inner urban Melbourne or Sydney; they do not want it done in the regions. Have we heard one word from those opposite condemning those ill-thought through remarks? No, we have not.

In addition to that, our Strongest and Smartest Choice investment program proposes a new \$500 million Entrepreneurial and Innovation Fund for new research and development to ensure we continue to be at the forefront of technological breakthrough, focusing on growing the four pillars of our economy supported, of course, by education and our knowledge based industries. There is \$500 million available through the Strong Choices program for investment into those areas.

The difference between our fund and the opposition leader's statement is that we have done the hard work to identify the funding source. We have it out there; we know where it is coming from and we know where it can be paid from. Those opposite are still just voicing an opinion. It is just another thought bubble with no money behind it.

We have been hearing stories about higher taxes in the 2014-15 budget, and of course there are no tax increases in the budget and no new taxes in this budget. Do you think that if they could have found one, they would not have made mention of it by now? Of course they would have. There are no new taxes and no increase in taxes in this budget, and we will continue to deliver all of the services that we have been.

Total taxation in 2014-15 in our budget is actually almost seven per cent lower than what the previous government predicted in their last midyear economic forecast. They were predicting that taxes would be seven per cent higher than we are actually delivering now in our budget, and the growth in our taxation revenue is driven by growth in economic activity—not taking more out of people's pockets; but by growing the pie. If those opposite had taken the time to read pages 61-63 of Budget Paper No. 2, they could have had a look at all of the charts comparing our relative levels of tax with those of the other states, and they would find that we are the lowest-taxing state in the mainland of Australia.

Those opposite continue to talk about the 1 William Street project. They are, as always, loose with the truth. One William Street does not come at a cost to taxpayers of \$2.6 billion. Any claim by those opposite assumes that the government does not actually pay rent for all of the buildings it occupies now, and of course it does. It pays rent on every square metre of land it occupies now.

Mr Minnikin: It's a complicated concept!

Mr NICHOLLS: It is a very complicated concept, and I take that interjection from the member for Chatsworth—someone who does know something about making ends meet and also about property.

For the benefit of the House and all Queenslanders, here are the facts: 1 William Street is being developed at a cost of \$652 million, funded entirely by the Construction Building Unions Superannuation Fund, CBUS. When I look out from my office window on level 9 of the Executive Building, I see 200 to 300 people in hard hats and reflective vests going to work every day because of the smart decision that this government made. What would they think if the opposition over there had their way? There would be no jobs, no construction and no economic growth in Queensland. It is funded entirely by the Construction Building Unions Superannuation Fund.

The rent payable for the 15-year lease is \$1.14 billion. This is an annual cost per workstation of under \$9,000. At the moment, in the Executive Building the cost per workstation is \$15,000 and at 80 George Street it is almost \$40,000. One William Street will deliver a saving of up to 25 per cent per workstation. If we did not build 1 William Street, what would we have to do? We would have to continue to expend money on our public servants for their existing rundown accommodation, and that expenditure over 15 years would be in the order of \$1.2 billion. So for 15 years we get a new building and we pay rent of \$1.14 billion; if we stay in the old building we pay rent of \$1.2 billion. The maths add up to 1 William Street.

Over the next 15 years, the Executive Building would need an extra \$100 million to keep it up to standard on top of the normal costs of housing public servants. What the opposition does not tell you is that the government will be planning to lease 15,000 square metres of space in 1 William Street to the private sector. They forgot to include this—conveniently, I would suggest—in their calculations. This revenue, estimated to be in the order of perhaps up to \$200 million over that 15 years, will reduce the rent, bringing it down from \$1.14 billion to \$940 million. This is a saving of over \$260 million on the status quo. One William Street is not costing \$2.6 billion.

The opposition talked about the cost benefit analysis of major projects. It is now being done, but it was not being done up until 25 March 2012. The hypocrisy of those opposite when they talk about infrastructure and major projects is breathtaking. Where was the value in the white elephant that is the \$1 billion Tugun desalination plant or the failed Traveston Crossing Dam in the Mary Valley? Where was the value in the \$1.2 billion Health payroll system? Where was the cost benefit analysis for the children's hospital, which started at \$680 million and has now cost \$1.5 billion? They can talk the talk, but they cannot walk the walk.

The opposition's claims that the Safe Night Out Strategy is pumping money into the alcohol industry is not only a ridiculous assertion, but it is insensitive to those people who have not only suffered the effects of unsafe practices in Safe Night Precincts which have not worked, but it is a slap in the face for all the hard work done by all of the community groups that made a contribution. The Safe Night Out Strategy is Australia's most comprehensive action plan to stamp out alcohol- and

drug-related violence. It is about changing the culture, changing the law and changing the environment in these precincts. What is the opposition's answer? As always: more regulation and more red tape.

Then, in a bizarre combination after hearing about cost benefit analysis, we had the claim that Cross River Rail was fully funded. As part of the former government's last budget in 2011-12, the then government announced that the Cross River Rail project had been rescheduled. At that time the estimated cost of the project was \$8.2 billion, with \$3 billion expected to come from the federal government. We have not seen that yet. However, at the time no commitment was made by the federal government, and at no time did the forward estimates include a funding provision for the Cross River Rail. You would have to say that that one was an epic fail. I note that the opposition leader needed to come into this place last night to correct the record. I am not sure which parallel universe the Labor Party is living in, but it is clear their Cross River Rail solution was never funded and they have now actually had to admit the truth of that fact.

For the last two years the opposition has said that we should be using net debt and reporting an operating surplus. The opposition's preference for net debt and the operating surplus as its fiscal measures were the very same measures they were using when their credit rating was downgraded from AAA when they racked up the debt, lost the AAA credit rating and then had to embark on a surprising program of asset sales in 2009. It does not matter what measure they use; it is what they do that is important. Even using that measure they went into deficit, they racked up the debt and they lost the AAA credit rating. It does not matter what measure they use; their addiction to debt and deficit is the same. When the world said 'stop' and the ratings agency said 'This is wrong', what did they do? They kept spending. They locked in deficits and debt so that we were heading towards over \$85 billion.

The use of the fiscal balance rather than the operating surplus is necessary precisely because we have the debt problem. It measures everything that goes out, whether it is capital or whether it is the deficit on the operating expenses. It is the best measure that you have to measure debt, and in fact it was very closely aligned to something called the fiscal trilogy. The fiscal trilogy was put in place and was actually used here in Queensland as a measure of controlling budget expenditure by both sides of politics. It was only the former government who abandoned it when they found that they could not manage their expenses.

The right fiscal measure depends on the circumstances, and the circumstances that we are in are very different from those in New South Wales and Victoria. What is the big difference? They have not lost their AAA credit rating. In fact, they have still got their AAA credit rating and they are still investing in infrastructure because they did not have the debt and deficits that were built up by the former government.

They also talk about continuing to use net debt because it takes into account the assets that we hold, but what are those assets that we do hold? It is the funds that we hold to meet the superannuation obligations of our public servants.

What those opposite are saying when they say that we should use net debt is that we should say that we have the funds that we have put aside to fund superannuation—the only fully funded superannuation scheme in Australia—and use that to pay down debt. They want to raid the savings of superannuants from the Public Service because that will be available to pay down the debt as they continue to rack it up. Such an approach clearly lacks balance. It clearly lacks balance. Any raid on the superannuation funds of public servants to pay down general government debt will significantly weaken our budget position because we will have to put the liability back on our balance sheet.

The claim that our fiscal position would have been better under the previous government is absolutely laughable. To compare fiscal balance estimates from 2011-12 to the 2013-14 budget assumes that the world has stood still, that the previous government could actually deliver on what it said it would and that there would be no revenue write-downs. The coking coal price is now no longer \$200 a tonne as it was when it was in power—it is down around about \$75 or \$80 a tonne—and revenue estimates over the period 2012-13 to 2014-15 are \$5.3 billion less than those contained in its last midyear economic forecast. The Commission of Audit seriously questioned the capacity of the previous government to accurately predict on that 2011-12 midyear forecast because both the revenue and the expenses were overly optimistic. Those opposite expected that their expenses would come down to something in the order of three per cent after a decade of nine per cent on average

year on year expenses growth. Under this growth, expenses, as I said in the budget speech, have dropped to 0.2 per cent in 2012-13 and 2.2 per cent in 2013-14—the lowest levels since accrual accounting was introduced in Queensland. The reality is this: the fiscal balance would have been \$7 billion worse off without the decisions of this government.

I need to say a quick few words about the good folk of Clayfield, because they have also benefited from this budget's strong plan for a brighter future. I welcome the additional \$3.5 million in education funding for nine local schools, including the Kedron State High School and the Nundah State School. Some \$143 million is committed to commence the Gateway upgrade north project, which is not quite in my electorate but just to the north of it. That is a very helpful bit of funding that is available and I thank the transport minister for that. There is \$13.6 million for widening lanes on the Gateway Arterial south of Nudgee Road. Some \$19 million is committed to Disability Services funding to assist people with a disability and their families to access support in the northern region and there is \$1.95 million for child safety services. Stafford-Wavell Heights Home Assist Secure will receive \$444,000 and almost \$500,000 of funding is committed for non-government organisations to deliver specialist homeless services throughout the Clayfield electorate. The local health service, Metro North, based around the Royal Brisbane Hospital, will receive over \$2 billion as part of that record funding we put into delivering health services.

I need to say thank you to a number of people. Budgets are a team effort. The budget would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of my ministerial colleagues, and I particularly thank the Premier, the Deputy Premier and each of the ministers who have sat on CBRC with us—initially the Attorney-General and subsequently Minister McVeigh and now Minister Mander—for their assistance and support. I could not have done this without their ongoing support, collaboration and teamwork. People should understand that this government is a team—a strong, united team. It always has been and it will remain a strong, united team. The decisions that we make are decisions that are the result of good teamwork, vigorous debate and discussion—no doubt about that—but also an understanding that what we are doing is in the best interests of Queensland. To my other parliamentary colleagues, your ongoing support, community advocacy and dedication to our strong plan for a brighter future is a source of great strength, particularly during the times when we have had to make strong and tough decisions. So I thank you, colleagues, for all of your support.

Despite what people say, Queensland Treasury is a wonderful organisation full of dedicated people and hardworking staff under the leadership of our Under Treasurer, Mr Mark Gray, and the Deputy Under Treasurers, Alex Beavers and Liam Gordon. A special thanks goes to those officers at the coalface who took on additional responsibilities this year. Putting together a budget is no easy task. It is a masterpiece of planning. It must all work absolutely like clockwork. The only thing that really puts a spanner in the works is the Treasurer's speech, but not this year. I can relay to you that it was done early, on time and weeks in advance. Those people who were in the Executive Building late on Sunday night must have been doing other things! I want to particularly thank this year's coordinator, Allison Mew, who did an outstanding job as the budget coordinator.

I want to make special mention this year of one of the Assistant Under Treasurers who has announced his intention to retire after this, his last, budget—Mr Walter Ivessa. Walter joined Queensland Treasury in 1981. Sir Llew Edwards was then the Treasurer and since then he has seen off 11 Treasurers and six Under Treasurers. Normally that would make 34 budgets but, as he pointed out to me last night, sometimes governments like budgets so much that they do two in a year. So we are not quite sure whether it is 31 or 34, but Walter has been around for all of them. Being in Treasury does not always make you popular. However, Walter's judgement and calmness under fire in dealing with some of the most complex areas of public policy is universally regarded and respected. He has also made a significant contribution to the development of staff at Treasury through his sharp intellect. Many a young Treasury official has been 'Waltered'—that is what I am told it is, but I am not quite sure what that means—and made to rethink the logic of their arguments and they have come out the other side the better for it. I am sure I join with many in wishing Walter the very best and trust that his skills will not be totally lost to the Queensland government and Treasury post retirement. I note those on the other side who know Walter, a dedicated officer.

Once again my office has shown itself more than capable of delivering for this government, and I would like to thank my staff. I start off with my Chief of Staff, Gerard Benedet. Gerard is a great Chief of Staff who also had his second baby two weeks ago. You have done a great job, Gerard. Thank you Robbie Whelan; Russell Silver-Thomas; Kirk Stubbs; Emma Timms; Tim Braban—Timmy B who does all of the questions—Stephanie Fairley, Jasmine Smits, who leaves us today to

take up another office; Kim McInnes—of course the great Kim—and our liaison officers Vikki Paroczai and Catherine Hall who do a great job. I would also in this week particularly like to thank my small but dedicated media team who, throughout the lead-up to and during this week, have assisted greatly in delivering our strong plan for a brighter future and also in making sure that the strongest choice is the smartest. To Maree Lacey and Anna Hilton, I say thank you and I am sure many members here who have been liaising with them also do so. I also want to thank my family. Again, they bear the brunt of the time that we spend away, as I am sure they do for all colleagues. They unfailingly and uncomplainingly put up with long absences, late nights and a cranky dad. So I send my thanks to them, and I have not seen them apart from lunchtime today. As I said on Tuesday—

The LNP Government was left a legacy of debt and deficits by the previous Government.

We do not intend to leave an ongoing debt legacy for our children and grandchildren.

Now is the time for decisive action and new investment to build a brighter future.

This is what the LNP Government pledges to the people of Queensland—A Strong Plan for a Brighter Future.

Question put—That the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill and the Appropriation Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bills read a second time.

Referral to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly and Portfolio Committees

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): Order! In accordance with standing order 177(2), the bills stand referred to the Committee of the Legislative Assembly and the portfolio committees.

Second Reading

Question put—That the Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Consideration in Detail

Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill

Clauses 1 to 64, as read, agreed to.

Clause 65—

Mr NICHOLLS (6.29 pm): I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 65 (Amendment of s 736 (Functions))

Page 93, lines 27 and 28—

omit, insert—

Section 736(2)(a), after 'other than'—

insert—

I table the explanatory notes to my amendment. The amendment is a very straightforward one. It just corrects a simple clerical error in the production of the bill.

Tabled paper: Revenue Legislation Amendment Bill 2014, explanatory notes to Hon. Tim Nicholls's amendment [\[5365\]](#).

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 65, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 66 to 84, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (6.30 pm): I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Long Title

Hon. TJ NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (6.30 pm): I move—

That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Leader of the House) (6.31 pm): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Tuesday, 5 August 2014.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr STEVENS (Mermaid Beach—LNP) (Manager of Government Business) (6.31 pm): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Lyon Mrs A

 **Hon. AP CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (6.31 pm): I rise to offer my condolences to the family and friends of Ann Lyon, who passed away in Ingham on 9 May this year, aged 85 years. Ann Lyon was born in Townsville on 14 April 1929. She began her life as a tin miner's daughter and, while she started school in Townsville, in 1939 her family moved to Charters Towers where her father was mining tin, so she continued her education via correspondence.

At the age of 16, Ann won a scholarship and went to Brisbane to attend teacher's college. Her first teaching post was back in North Queensland in the Herbert Valley, at Macknade State School. It was here that she met the love of her life, Bill Lyon. In February 2010 in this House I paid tribute to Bill Lyon, who passed away in January that year. For the past four years, Ann has been without Bill. They had married 59 years before in January 1951. Ann and Bill had four children, Elizabeth, Robert, Christine and Stephen.

When the Abergowrie area was opened up to expand the sugar industry, Bill Lyon secured an assignment and he and Ann moved there and began farming. Bill and Ann were pioneers of the Abergowrie area, with Bill working the land and Ann raising four kids and making a home for the family. Ann was always sewing, embroidering and knitting, cooking and gardening. When I visited Ann in the Ingham Hospital towards the end, she was still pursuing her handicrafts.

Ann was involved in many community organisations, her church, the schools attended by her children, Lifeline and the Country Women's Association. Ann missed Bill terribly after he passed away in 2010. However, she refused to move off the farm into Ingham. This changed when, in February 2011, Cyclone Yasi made a mess of the family home. Ann enjoyed her time living in Ingham, but at age 84 she was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Of course, Ann carried on valiantly, undertaking chemotherapy in Townsville. Ultimately, this was unsuccessful and in October last year Ann became a patient at the Ingham Hospital.

Ann was tenacious, but eventually she moved again, this time for the last time to the Palms Aged Care Home in April this year. She celebrated her 85th birthday on the weekend Cyclone Ita dumped its flooding rains on North and Far North Queensland. Eleven months after her diagnosis Ann slipped away quietly.

Along with her husband, Bill, Ann had joined the then Country Party in 1961 and had been a long-serving and loyal member of the National Party and then the Liberal National Party for many years. Ann and Bill supported our party and its candidates, including myself in recent years, through the successful periods and through the difficult periods.

To the Lyon family, my thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time. Ann will be sadly missed by all, but she has left behind a wonderful legacy and many happy memories for those who had the privilege to know her.

Brusasco, Mr I

 **Hon. TS MULHERIN** (Mackay—ALP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (6.34 pm): I rise on Queensland Day to remove a blemish on the reputation of not only a great Queenslander but a Queensland Great. On 7 June 2012, the Premier rose in this place to advise he had removed Ian Brusasco as chairman of the Gladstone Ports Corporation. The Premier advised there were two reasons for the dismissal of Mr Brusasco. The first, he stated, was environmental mismanagement. Yet, since then both the Deputy Premier and the Environment Minister have stated, on numerous occasions, the Gladstone Harbour remains in a very healthy state despite a major dredging project. This fact was confirmed by the federal independent review into the management of the harbour for UNESCO released late last year.

On 7 June 2012, the Premier went on to gloat that the other reason was financial mismanagement. He used an example of the 20011-12 budget for sponsorship, advertising, corporate entertainment, donations and other related activities. He claimed a 36 per cent blowout in the budget, which was widely reported on radio and TV news. The only problem is that the claim was patently untrue. As usual, in true LNP style, the Premier did not give all the facts. He did not reveal that the extra expenditure related to additional expenditure requests to the Gladstone Ports Corporation from its coal shippers and the LNG project proponents, which were fully reimbursed. Those additional fully reimbursable expenses were not undertaken until they were approved by the Treasury's Office of Government Owned Corporations. This fact would have been easy to check for an incoming government. Indeed, I am advised that the 2011-12 expenditure on corporate entertainment by the Gladstone Ports Corporation was a mere \$23,000. I challenge the Premier to find a corporation with revenue of over \$300 million that would spend such a comparatively tiny amount on corporate entertainment.

The saddest part is that when the corporation pointed these facts out to the government it did nothing to remove the smear it placed on a great Queenslander who has served this state in numerous capacities. Ian Brusasco has had a distinguished career in local government, having served on the Brisbane City Council for a total of 14 years. He has served on numerous corporate and community boards, including WorkCover Queensland, Port of Brisbane Corporation, Brisbane Strikers, and radio stations 4TAB and 4KQ. He has been a leading light in sports administration, especially for his work in promoting soccer.

In 2008, Ian Brusasco was named a Queensland Great as part of Queensland Day celebrations that year. In 2012, he was named an Officer in the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for distinguished service to the community of Queensland through leadership roles in business, politics and sport. Even at the age of 84 he continues to serve the state as the chair of the Foodbank organisation that collects re-usable food products from industry and retail outlets and provides them to charities and others supporting disadvantaged families and individuals. Foodbank helps more than 60,000 disadvantaged Queenslanders each year.

There was no environmental mismanagement or reckless spending by the Gladstone Ports Corporation under the chairmanship of Ian Brusasco and under the stewardship of the then chief executive officer, Leo Zussino. Both have records that show they are people of integrity.

(Time expired)

Battle of the Coral Sea and D-Day Anniversaries

 **Mr RUTHENBERG** (Kallangur—LNP) (6.37 pm): A few weeks ago, on 10 May, I had the privilege to join my parliamentary colleagues the Treasurer, the Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs and Minister Assisting the Premier and the Member for Logan, as well as surviving veterans, at the 72nd anniversary commemorations of the Battle of the Coral Sea. As a member of the Pine Rivers RSL Subbranch, I cherish every opportunity to pay respect on behalf of myself and our community to all of those who, in our nation's darkest hours, answered the call.

Between 4 and 8 May, 1942, naval forces of the Commonwealth of Australia and the United States of America engaged in a ferocious battle against naval forces from the Empire of Japan. The Coral Sea, located between Queensland's pristine Great Barrier Reef and the Solomon Islands, saw the first major naval battle of the Pacific War in which Australian and American forces fought side by side. Building on a kinship that first came about in the muddy trenches of the Western Front during World War 1, the Battle of the Coral Sea was another example of the common values of freedom and democracy that these two great nations share and the level of sacrifice that both nations continue to endure to secure our way of life. This strong bond continues today in conflicts and operations around the globe.

The battle claimed the lives of 656 Allied and 966 Japanese sailors, with heavy losses inflicted on both sides. The battle was crucial to the defence of Australia and our shipping lanes. The battle's close proximity to Queensland brought home to many Queenslanders just how close the war was to our great state. The battle was also a turning point in the war that would ultimately lead to the Allied victory over Japan.

The Battle of the Coral Sea was by no means the last engagement of the war which banded us with our Allies. Today, June 6 is another date in history that changed the world. In 1944, once more the Allied nations stood side by side as we stormed the beaches of Normandy to rid Europe of Nazi tyranny. In Operation Overlord, 2,500 Australians participated throughout all aspects of the campaign. Australian soldiers and airmen joined our Allied partners in what was, at the time, the largest military operation undertaken in modern military history. Australia's reputation as fierce and hardened warriors throughout the North African and Italian campaigns was reflected by British General Sir Freddie de Guingand, then Chief of Staff, Allied Land Force Headquarters, Europe. On D-day he said, 'My God, I wish we had the 9th Australian Division with us this morning'. The 9th Division was more commonly known by its infamous nickname, the Rats of Tobruk.

The Member for Logan's Uncle Ray served with those who landed on the beaches of Normandy 70 years ago. I think about what they fought for. They fought for a world free from oppression, a world where we control our own destinies and a world with a brighter future. As individuals, as a community, as a state and as a nation it is our responsibility to ensure that the bright future so many sacrificed their lives for comes to fruition. To all veterans, past and present, I thank you for your service.

(Time expired)

Woodridge Electorate, Festivals; Campbell, Mr G

 **Mrs SCOTT** (Woodridge—ALP) (6.40 pm): The joys of an harmonious, multicultural community can never be fully captured by words, but I stand tonight to give this House a glimpse of some of the festivals and events during these past few weeks in my fantastic electorate. A visit to Woodridge Primary School on Harmony Day is an absolute must. With a high percentage of students from a refugee background from many lands, most in their national dress, they perform their songs and dance with such enthusiasm. Some of the children had only been in Australia for six weeks but had learned their songs in English, much to the enjoyment of all.

Kaleidoscope is Logan's major annual multicultural festival and attracts a vast number of visitors to the area. There is entertainment, food, market gardeners stalls and many information stalls from our service providers. It is a colourful, vibrant day where our community comes together to celebrate all the benefits and the feeling of being connected to the world from our own backyard.

A new festival in our Logan Gardens was planned by the Gospel of Power Church and featured free food, rides, animal farm, pony rides, and many of our local service providers, while a free concert of very professional artists kept the crowd entertained. It was a great afternoon. Many of our Aboriginal and multicultural families joined with our long-time residents for a day of fun and entertainment. Thank you to all those volunteers who planned and helped out on the day.

Just last week I again attended Woodridge Primary School for their Pukapuka language school featuring Cook Islander students from a number of local schools. Each student from age four to year 12 students spoke in the Pukapuka language to the great delight of all.

On Friday evening last week, Access Services held a cultural showcase at our Butterbox Theatre. This showcased the huge talents of our young people through song, dance, drama, bands. It was a magnificent evening. We laughed until we cried, we marvelled at the agility and grace of the many dancers who performed, we shook our head in amazement at our wonderful 11-year-old Samoan vocalist and a spoof of Cinderella showed up some fantastic talent.

Let me conclude my speech on a very sad note. On the 26 May hundreds of our Logan family gathered at our Metro Sports Stadium at Browns Plains to bid a sad farewell to Gary Campbell who had been involved in the planning of the centre and had managed the centre—no, more than managed the centre; he was the heart and soul of the centre. Logan City Council employees from our council chambers and the many facilities they operate throughout the city as well as the many sports men and women he encouraged, businesspeople, community leaders, elected representatives and so many others all came to honour this remarkable, full of life, vibrant, friendly man. The shock of losing someone of his stature who has played such a pivotal role in the life of our community was there in the faces of all. Our prayers and thoughts are with his family. Gary, you have left a gaping hole in our community and the hearts of many.

Bomber Command Commemorative Service

 **Mr BERRY** (Ipswich—LNP) (6.44 pm): It is certainly an honour for me to be able to stand before the House and speak about the Bomber Command commemorative service held at the Royal Australian Air Force base at Amberley on 1 June 2014. I would like to thank Commodore Tim Innes for his kind invitation. It was a ceremony that was duly witnessed by the Governor of Queensland, Ms Penelope Wensley, whose duty to Queensland, for which we thank her very much, is drawing to a close.

There is something about the Bomber Command that we need to know and put on the record. Some 10,000 Royal Australian Air Force personnel served in the Bomber Command. Australia lost 3,486 airmen and some 546 were killed in training. The total involvement of air service personnel was 125,000 and 55,000 were lost. This was a huge loss to the Allied forces. There were 24 Victoria Crosses awarded.

What really fascinated me was the address of two 93-year-olds. One was Joanne Adair and the other was Mr Ron Hickey DFC, Distinguished Flying Cross. Joanne Adair served as a secretary in Winston Churchill's war room. She started as a secretary but ultimately graduated to typing statistical information. She gave us a couple of clear stories about what life was like. She is writing a book, which I am looking forward to reading. One story was that she went out one evening and she was being bought drinks. She surreptitiously put the drinks into a pot plant. As it turns out these people were from a German spy ring. She was not drunk but acted as though she was. They kept asking her questions about what was happening in the Bomber Command. In the end she went back and reported it and they were all arrested. It was a great story.

Ron Hickey flew 35 sorties in four months. This was an incredible story, particularly given the odds of coming back alive.

We as Australians and we as Queenslanders on Queensland Day have to thank very much those personnel who have served overseas in war zones and have protected us and the rest of the world from the tyranny of oppression. I take my hat off to them. I thank them very much for the sacrifices they have made.

I would have to say that I never heard more interesting speeches than those given by Joanne Adair and Ron Hickey. He did not have a note. At 93 years of age and he made a 20-minute speech from memory. He was absolutely impressive and a man I will never forget.

This is a service I love attending. The next time I go I am going to invite my good friend the member for Algeester. I think he is a man who would really enjoy a ceremony like that. I think he might even buy Joanne Adair's book. Happy Queensland Day to all.

(Time expired)

D-Day, 70th Anniversary

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (6.47 pm): 'Ok, we'll go.' With these words General Dwight D Eisenhower, the supreme allied commander, unleashed the largest, most complex seaborne invasion in the history of warfare and the most crucial day in the Allies' long and painful pursuit of

victory in the Second World War. On the success of Operation Overlord rested the outcome of the Second World War, the swift liberation of Western Europe and the ending of tyranny that had menaced the civilised world for five long years.

Had the landings on those Normandy beaches failed 70 years ago today, Hitler would have unleashed even more long-range V2 rockets against Britain with lethal effect, the atomic bomb might well have been deployed in Europe and perhaps, most significantly, the Red Army could have advanced to the Rhine or beyond with incalculable consequences for the Western world when the war was over. Indeed, without a Western Front being established from D-day, the course of the modern world after the Second World War may have been vastly different, with many of the basic democratic freedoms that we take for granted today simply unattainable.

More than 3,000 Australians fought in the campaign with approximately 2,500 airmen and around 500 naval personnel involved. Some 18 Australian men were killed in action during D-day. I honour their sacrifice here today.

Many of us recall the harrowing opening scenes of the movie *Saving Private Ryan*. As realistic as this was with its gruesome portrayal of coming ashore, it was still a Hollywood movie and if it was not for the courage and sacrifice of the brave personnel involved on that overcast morning 70 years ago today the outcome of the battle may have turned out differently along with the fate of the Western world.

What makes a man continue to storm ashore or run out of a trench when sheer hell is breaking out all around him? I can never answer that question from actual military experience as the lives laid down that day allowed future generations such as mine the blessed ability to live our lives free from the tyranny of oppression and totalitarianism.

I was fortunate to visit the Normandy beach heads with my family a couple of years ago. It was a very sombre experience to visit the war cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer with the immaculately kept green lawns and headstones all gleaming in white and in perfect alignment. Before visiting this hallowed site, we walked along Omaha Beach, which was the site of the fiercest fighting on D-day. I confess that it was difficult to hold back tears when one stood in the footsteps of those brave fighting men who undertook this massive task 70 years ago today.

My ability to get up and deliver this address as a democratically elected representative, with all the associated freedoms that come with living in a democratic society, owes an enormous debt to the efforts that took place along that windswept Normandy coastline 70 years ago. There is an inscription in the US Military Cemetery at St Laurent Normandy which states, 'Think not only upon their passing; remember the glory of their spirit.' Lest we forget.

Gold Coast, Environment; Queensland Health

 **Dr DOUGLAS** (Gaven—PUP) (6.50 pm): With declining natural birdlife habitats on the Gold Coast, I am outraged, together with many from the Gold Coast racing fraternity, that the Gold Coast City Council is engaging in yet another environmental disaster only minutes from Surfers Paradise. At the Gold Coast Turf Club, where a large lake has been home to a vast array of hundreds of birds, ducks and swans—some even with eggs on the hatch—plans were well advanced this morning for this waterway to be bulldozed and filled in to allegedly make way for a car park to accommodate patrons of the Gold Coast Show. The Gold Coast Show do not seem to know about this. A group of trainers and those involved in the racing industry formed a human barrier to stop trucks coming into the dam to fill it in, apparently working under instructions of the council. There are hundreds of wood and brown ducks, black swans sitting on eggs and other birdlife that are going to lose their homes, all apparently without any environmental study or any plan for their future. This is environmental lunacy.

It was only yesterday when the Gold Coast's leading trainer, Gillian Heinrich, received advice in the mail that the lake was going to be abruptly filled in. Mrs Heinrich was outraged that the council could act so irresponsibly and without notice to the racing fraternity, but most of all with no respect to the wildlife of the area. She said trainers had always been told to comply with strict environmental rules when using the lake, but now in one quick swoop the lake is being filled in without care for the environment to accommodate parking for three days over the show.

I call on the divisional councillor Lex Bell, a former member for Surfers Paradise, to step in to stop another environmental disaster on top of that which has already occurred at the show's former Parklands site, one of the last large greenfields on the Gold Coast, which has been demolished to

make way for the Commonwealth Games athletes village. Add this to what will be a monumental disaster on the Broadwater if the cruise ship terminal and casino go ahead right in the middle of the Broadwater, which will be seven times the size of Wavebreak Island, and all is not well for the environment on the Gold Coast.

I turn now to another disaster: Queensland Health. Queensland Health recently took out full-page advertisements in Queensland newspapers spruiking that it was meeting targets. In essence, it was showing the public how efficient it was. But at the coalface there is a different story. Take, for example, one of my Nerang constituents who is on a disability pension and last October applied to the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service for his patient records to meet Centrelink obligations. He took quite a time to complete a right to information and information privacy access form only to be told more than six months later that his application had been lost in the system.

The reason they gave him was that the hospital is working through a significant backlog of requests due to it moving from the old Southport Hospital as well as other factors beyond its control. Now he has been told he can apply for an external review, even though it is outside the time frame, but there will be further delays because under the act the hospital will be given further time to deal with the application. Otherwise he can sit down and make a new application. What I am saying is that what is happening in the hospital is slightly different to what our health minister is spruiking to the public. Not only do we have applications getting lost; we are now told there is a significant backlog in dealing with applications and significant client disenchantment with such delays.

Queensland Day

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (6.53 pm): As we have heard from other members, today we celebrate Queensland Day and all that is great about not only this wonderful part of the world we live in but also the community that we have built over the past 150 years. We are indeed fortunate to live in a state which offers so many lifestyle choices from the reef to the rainforest, from sandy beaches to desert dunes and everything in between. Queenslanders have proven many times over the past century and a half that we are strong, resilient and innovative and well able to face the challenges of this new century.

I may be biased, but I believe that the Gold Coast, and particularly my electorate of Burleigh, offers the best of what the best state in Australia has to offer. This week we heard in the news that Sea World has been voted Australia's most popular tourist attraction and that Dreamworld, Movie World and Wet'n'Wild also featured in the top five attractions. It was no surprise to me, as a local, but I congratulate all our Gold Coast theme parks. They do a fantastic job in providing great venues for international and interstate visitors and locals alike.

I also congratulate Minister Stuckey on her work in this area, promoting Queensland and ensuring that our tourism industry is vibrant and relevant in the 21st century. Tourism is, after all, one of the four economic pillars of the Newman government and it is a major source of employment for many people living on the coast. Ben Pole from Gold Coast Tourism is quoted in the news this week as saying that the coast attracts almost 12 million visitors every year—that is more than half the population of Australia—making it Australia's holiday capital. The same article points out that international visitors to the coast increased by 10 per cent last year—more than double any other region in Queensland.

These kinds of results do not happen spontaneously and they do not happen in a vacuum. It is the work of the Premier and the Treasurer and, indeed, it is the work of this government as a whole, that creates the right environment for business and industry to grow and flourish. I congratulate the Treasurer on his third budget delivered this week. Our strong plan is ensuring that we are delivering on our commitments. This budget clearly outlines our plan to secure our finances by making the strongest and smartest choices to reduce debt so that we can create the right environment for business to flourish and so that we can sustainably invest in the schools, hospitals and infrastructure that Queenslanders need into the future. Now we just have to win the current State of Origin series!

Thuringowa Electorate

 **Mr COX** (Thuringowa—LNP) (6.56 pm): As one of the few regional members here tonight, along with the member for Hervey Bay and the member for Maryborough, I take this opportunity to comment on my local paper, the *Townsville Bulletin*, and its decision to run for three days in a row

stories in its paper accusing our government of selling out on our city. I want to point out that that is far from the truth. I have given my speech on the budget and in it I thanked the Treasurer. I ask that my paper takes on the same attitude that it expects others to have and be a good corporate citizen and fight for Townsville, to go to our community and ask what it is that we need built in our city that would inject life into our economy and get us off the flatline situation we are in. Quoting from an article in the *Townsville Bulletin*—

Townsville leaders had expected a rock-solid guarantee the city would receive a significant percentage of revenue gained from putting the Port of Townsville and Mount Isa rail link to market in a 99-year lease and the potential sale of Ergon's retail arm.

There are then about five pages of comments. There are comments from our business leaders who have congratulated the Newman government on their choice. They have accepted the fact that what we are looking at doing with Strong Choices is something that the city and the people of Queensland need. The article then goes on to state that the sale plan will hurt the north. I will read some quotes that the paper decided to put alongside the same story. One is from Treasurer Tim Nicholls in March 2014—

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?

This is a pet project of the paper, not necessarily the people of the north or Townsville, where they are promoting the building of a stadium. I have said all along that if that is what the people in North Queensland wish for that should be one of the things that we look at. In December 2013, Premier Campbell Newman said—

Do we want to hang on to some of these assets, or do we want to take the opportunity to sell some selected assets after going to an election, reduce the level of debt but also plough some money into some important infrastructure projects?

In March 2013, in relation to surplus assets being sold by state government, I said—

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

I ask that my paper listen to the community and that when it decides to write stories on this government it at least prints the whole story and reports on what the people of my region would like to see. In the same paper there is a letter headed, 'Our debt is not a joke', written by a regular writer the paper obviously thinks writes good letters that the people would like to see. I thank the Deputy Speaker for the opportunity to come out and defend the regions.

Toowoomba Second Range Crossing

 **Mr RICKUSS** (Lockyer—LNP) (6.59 pm): It is great to see a North Queensland like my honourable colleague from Thuringowa standing up for North Queensland. I rise to make a comment about the Toowoomba second range crossing. What a great project this is. I congratulate our side of government. This is a project that we have lobbied for long and hard—at least for the 10½ years that I have been in parliament. My colleague in Toowoomba, Ian Macfarlane, has done a great job in finally delivering this project. It is a lot of money for a major road. It does not have the volume of traffic that Ipswich Motorway has of 100,000, but it has 25,000 to 30,000 which includes thousands of trucks. It is a crucial piece of infrastructure. A major proportion of the produce that comes to the Port of Brisbane comes down the Toowoomba range. There are also a lot of other trucks coming from the coal seam gas and other industries. It is a vital piece of infrastructure that is needed.

I am sure that this government will manage the probity around the project. My staff and I have had probity meetings to understand the technicalities of the issues around the \$1.8 billion project. It is highly important that that is done. From my understanding, all the Toowoomba members have had those meetings, as well as the Toowoomba Regional Council. It is vitally important that these sorts of issues are managed and handled well so that the community has confidence in the process.

While I am speaking about that I would like to bring up the future LNP member for Condamine, Pat Weir. He will be the next member for Condamine. He is doing a great job filling in as surrogate member while the member for Condamine has deserted his people. We recently had a federal divisional council meeting. Pat has been the chairman of the divisional council. Over 70 people turned up for that council meeting. It was a great celebration day for Pat Weir. One cannot help but praise Pat Weir. He is a great bloke. He will do a great job for the community there. Mr Hopper will hop off into the sunset, I think. There is another analogy you can use: he will be like a hopper in the headlights—stunned. I would say that in the seat of Condamine he will get 10 per cent of the vote.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 7.02 pm.

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, 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