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FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT

Thursday, 16 July 2015

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THURSDAY, 16 JULY 2015



The Legislative Assembly met at 9.30 am.

Mr Speaker (Hon. Peter Wellington, Nicklin) read prayers and took the chair.

ASSENT TO BILLS



Mr SPEAKER: Honourable members, I have to report that I have received from His Excellency the Governor a letter in respect of assent to certain bills. The contents of the letter will be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*. I table the letter for the information of members.

The Honourable P.W. Wellington MP
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

I hereby acquaint the Legislative Assembly that the following Bills, having been passed by the Legislative Assembly and having been presented for the Royal Assent, were assented to in the name of Her Majesty The Queen on the date shown:

Date of assent: 11 June 2015

"A Bill for an Act to amend the Criminal Law (Criminal Organisations Disruption) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2013, the Duties Act 2001, the Environmental Protection Act 1994, the Financial Accountability Act 2009, the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, the Payroll Tax Act 1971, the Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002, the Taxation Administration Act 2001 and the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to provide for exhibiting and dealing with particular animals and to amend this Act, the Biosecurity Act 2014, the Nature Conservation Act 1992 and the regulations mentioned in schedule 3 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Heavy Vehicle National Law Act 2012, the Local Government Electoral Act 2011 and the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Act 2011 for particular purposes"

"A Bill for An Act to amend the Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011 and the Industrial Relations Act 1999, and to make amendments to the legislation mentioned in schedule 1, for particular purposes"

These Bills are hereby transmitted to the Legislative Assembly, to be numbered and forwarded to the proper Officer for enrolment, in the manner required by law.

Yours sincerely

Governor

14 July 2015

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 14 July 2015, from His Excellency the Governor to the Speaker advising of assent to certain bills on 11 June 2015 [[799](#)].

PRIVILEGE

Speaker's Ruling, Alleged Deliberate Misleading of the House by a Minister



Mr SPEAKER: On 20 May 2015 the member for Hinchinbrook wrote to me alleging that the Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines deliberately misled the House during question time on 19 May 2015 when he stated that the Water Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2014—

... took away environmental sustainability and also allowed water development options to be taken without any scientific or hydrological proof ...

In his letter to me, the member for Hinchinbrook stated that the act clearly provides for the allocation of Queensland's water resources in an environmentally sustainable way and provides that a water development option requires scientific and hydrological proof.

I sought further information from the minister about the allegations made against him, in accordance with standing order 269(5). The minister disputed the allegation made against him and restated his view that the act removed 'robust environmentally sustainable considerations' and that

'significant issues are created by the non-existence of a legislated requirement by the chief executive to conduct a comprehensive scientific analysis of impacts' prior to the granting of a water development option.

Standing order 269(4) requires that, in considering whether the matter should be referred to the committee, the Speaker shall take account of the degree of importance of the matter which has been raised and whether an adequate apology or explanation has been made in respect of the matter. No matter should be referred to the Ethics Committee if the matter is technical or trivial and does not warrant the further attention of the House. The nature of political debate is that members engage in argument by discussing opposing viewpoints and different opinions.

Taking all the material before me into account, there is an obvious difference of opinion between the member for Hinchinbrook and the minister about the effect of the provisions of the act. In particular, the extent to which the act provides for the environmentally sustainable allocation of Queensland's water resources and requires scientific and hydrological assessment prior to the granting of a water development option.

Given the apparently equally reasonably held differences of opinion about this matter, any potential misleading of the House could, at best, be a technical one. On this basis, I have decided that the matter does not warrant the further attention of the House via the Ethics Committee and I will not be referring the matter. I table the correspondence in relation to this matter.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 20 May 2015, from the member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Andrew Cripps MP, to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an alleged misleading of the House by the Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines, Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham [800].

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 16 June 2015, from the Minister for State Development, Natural Resources and Mines, Hon. Dr Anthony Lynham, to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Hon. Peter Wellington, regarding an allegation by the member for Hinchinbrook, Mr Andrew Cripps MP, that the minister misled the House [801].

SPEAKER'S RULING

Leave to Move Motion Without Notice

 **Mr SPEAKER:** Yesterday two members sought leave to move a motion without notice. I have circulated a ruling clarifying the correct procedure and issues relating to the time used by such procedures. I seek leave to incorporate the ruling.

Leave granted.

Honourable members,

The House, on occasions, dispenses with the need to comply fully with Standing Orders by granting "leave" for a matter to be dealt with in an informal way.

"Leave" means permission of the House to do something granted by its members. The House, while bound by its Standing Orders, is still ultimately master of its own procedures. If a majority of members concur in an action, it would be pointless for the House to feel bound by its own rules to act differently. Therefore, if there is concurrence to a particular means of proceeding, the Standing Orders may be set aside without a motion to suspend them. There is no debate when it is proposed to the House that leave be granted to do something, for there is no motion before the House.

It is not in order, however, for a member to seek leave to move a motion without notice and then state the motion sought to be moved. The simple, first matter to be put is: "I seek leave to move a motion without notice".

Without leave first being granted the member has no warrant to elaborate to the substantive motion—effectively debating the issue.

The other related issue relates to time.

As Speaker, in regulating time I often allow minor variations to the time slot for items of business such as Question Time or Private Members' Bill Introductions should earlier items of business innocently encroach on the time slot.

However, I am generally not prepared to extend time periods because of deliberate attempts to seek leave for unscheduled or unexpected business.

PETITIONS

The Clerk presented the following paper petition, lodged by the honourable member indicated—

Fishing, Proposed Net-Free Fishing Zones

Mr Bennett, from 4,350 petitioners, requesting the House to not support the proposed net fishing bans at Trinity Bay, St Helens Beach and Yeppoon/Keppel Bay and the Fitzroy River [802].

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

Fishing, Proposed Net-Free Fishing Zones

704 petitioners, requesting the House to block legislation that introduces resource allocation through the establishment of net-free fishing zones in Queensland [\[803\]](#).

Petitions received.

MINISTERIAL PAPER**Integrity Commissioner**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.35 am): As required under section 88 of the Integrity Act 2009, I table the final report of the strategic review of the functions of the Integrity Commissioner.

Tabled paper: Report, dated 8 July 2015, titled 'Strategic Review of the Functions of the Integrity Commissioner' [\[804\]](#).

The strategic review is a statutory requirement under section 86 of the act that focuses on the Integrity Commissioner's functions and the performance of those functions—that is, whether they are being performed economically, effectively and efficiently. Professor Peter Coaldrake was appointed by the Governor-in-Council on 15 December 2014 to conduct the strategic review, with terms of reference also decided at that time. Consultation on the terms of reference occurred with the Finance and Administration Committee and with the Integrity Commissioner, Mr Richard Bingham.

This is the first strategic review under the act. My government places a high value on ensuring the integrity regime in place in Queensland is of the highest standard. This review is a key process to make that happen.

The final report contains 20 recommendations which span the Integrity Commissioner's advisory function, regulation of lobbying function, public awareness function, performance and organisational arrangements. In terms of the next step, the final report will be referred to the FAC for examination. Following any recommendations provided to the parliament by the FAC, the government will then have three months to table its response.

I would like to thank Professor Coaldrake for his work on the strategic review. I also acknowledge the contributions of the group who provided support to Professor Coaldrake and the Integrity Commissioner, Mr Richard Bingham, and the former integrity commissioner, Dr David Solomon.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**Barrett Adolescent Centre**

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.37 am): No parent should have to fear outliving their child. No parent should have to wake in the still of the night cloaked with dread that their child's life is in danger and they are helpless to protect them—helpless to offer hope. Yet, that is the peculiar hell a group of families found themselves faced with a little over a year ago. That was when the only facility they were able to turn to in a bid to protect their children who were at risk of self-harm was closed with little in the way of a legitimate reason.

The sequence of events leading up to the closure of Barrett Adolescent Centre at Wacol and the tragedy which followed that decision by the former LNP government is a mystery to the families whose children were in its care. The closure and catastrophic and heart-rending consequences haunt those families to this day. None more so than the families and friends of three teenagers who died over the eight months subsequent to Barrett closing its doors.

Talieha Nebauer was 17 when she died. Will Fowell was 18 when he died, as was Caitlin Wilkinson-Whiticker. These were young lives taken too soon. The loss of these teenagers has devastated their families and their friends and devastated a community. That is why my government promised these families that we would help them find answers. That is a promise that we will keep.

As part of this week's budget my government will establish a commission of inquiry which will investigate the closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre and the subsequent deaths of these three teenagers who were classified as high risk. This was our election commitment and today we honour that commitment. This commission of inquiry will investigate why the previous government made the decision to close the critically important facility. It will investigate how decisions were made, who made the decisions and what evidence was available and considered before the centre was closed.

The government will appoint retired Justice Margaret Wilson under the Commissions of Inquiry Act with the full powers to summon witnesses and call for the presentation of all documents. The inquiry will be held from 14 September this year until 14 January 2016. Justice Wilson served on the Supreme Court from 1998 to 2014 and was also a judge of the Queensland Mental Health Court from 2002 to 2005.

My government and these families want the truth because the families—along with the centre staff, the community and other families impacted by the centre's closure—deserve to know the truth. It will give the families of these children a voice. It will allow these families to ask questions and seek answers about their children's care and about their children's tragic deaths. Its aim will also be to make recommendations for the future care of high-risk teenagers and the provision of mental health services for Queensland adolescents.

The Barrett Adolescent Centre was Queensland's only long-term residential mental health facility for adolescents at risk of suicide. What we do know is that, when the centre was closed in January 2014, there was a promise that other services would be in place. We do not know if that did eventuate.

I want to now quote Talieha's mother, Nicole, who this week described to the ABC her desperation to keep her daughter safe and alive and who has been fighting for the truth since her death in April last year. She said—

You go to bed at a night time and you don't want to fall asleep because you don't know how your child is going to be, you're just always on edge waiting for the next thing to happen.

Nicole also said that she turned to the Barrett centre as a last resort. She said—

I fought hard to get her to go there because I thought that was the last chance of keeping her alive. I just want justice for Talieha. I just want answers.

Today, I vow to Nicole and Talieha, who I had also met on a couple of occasions and listened to her stories quite personally—and all the other families and staff and the community—that we will find those answers for those families.

Queensland Performing Arts Centre

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Arts) (9.41 am): It is also my pleasure to announce today that the Queensland Performing Arts Centre is celebrating its 30th anniversary in style with another year of record attendance. It has just been revealed that 1.4 million people went to a show at QPAC in the past financial year—1.4 million people experiencing the joy of live performance.

QPAC has now welcomed more than 20 million visitors to about 26,000 performances in the past three decades. It had led the way in presenting outstanding performing arts and engaging with Queenslanders. We have seen the record run of *The Lion King* in the past year, and this weekend we will see the final performance of QPAC's latest hit *Dirty Dancing*. More highlights are in store when QPAC becomes the host venue for the Brisbane Festival in September and then welcomes Cameron Mackintosh's acclaimed new production of *Les Mis* in November.

I would like to send my congratulations to QPAC Chief Executive John Kotzas and his team for the wonderful programming and mix of events. QPAC's success helps to deliver direct cultural tourism benefits and economic returns to the state. My government values this, as you will see in this week's budget which delivered \$173 million in funding for the arts—\$28 million of that has been allocated over the next four years to provide upgrades to QPAC, particularly in the wake of its recent heritage listing.

My government's budget reflects our commitment to keeping Queensland as a leader in the arts on a local, national and international level. And QPAC's astonishing attendance figures are a reminder of how much Queenslanders appreciate the arts in this state.

Racing Queensland

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (9.43 am): Later today the interim CEO of Racing Queensland and I will be releasing details of industry wide consultation on the financial stability of the racing industry. On 1 June the government was presented with the MacSparran commission of inquiry report into the greyhound industry. As a consequence of that report, government took the decision to appoint Mr Ian Hall of KPMG to act as the interim CEO. In doing so I have become aware of the troubling situation within Racing Queensland. The Premier has previously announced expected losses for 2014-15 of \$11 million and losses for 2015-16 of \$21 million. Later today Mr Hall and I will be outlining in detail the current extent of the expected losses in Racing Queensland.

It is a fact that in the weeks since those interim assessments the situation at Racing Queensland has been properly revealed and it is far worse than we thought. Despite in-house efficiencies of approximately \$6 million already being made for 2015-16, the expected losses for this financial year at Racing Queensland are now forecast to be in the order of \$28 million. This is most troubling, and action needs to be taken to keep racing on a sustainable, stable and supported path for the future.

Later today Mr Hall and I will be releasing the details of the Racing Queensland financial situation. From today we will commence a full consultation plan that includes all racing codes, trainers, jockeys, drivers, owners, breeders, clubs, key animal welfare groups, other racing stakeholders and unions. If we want to see the racing industry on a strong and sustainable footing, we need to bring industry with us. This is the path that I will outline later today.

Let me be clear: now is the time to act. Revenue assumptions were simply wrong, while expenditure grew unsustainably. In short, there were unrealistic expectations for revenue growth from wagering that did not materialise, along with generous and growing allocations of prize money as well as subsidies across the industry. The decisions made by management to run down cash reserves at Racing Queensland have just made the situation worse and worse. Added to that have been concerning cultural and less than best practice management systems internal to Racing Queensland.

To highlight these challenges, I can advise the House that since the MacSparran commission there have been four cases referred to the CCC involving Racing Queensland. These are separate to the 68 charges laid against 25 people in relation to a number of offences including serious animal cruelty. I will be outlining these changes in more detail during the press conference later today. Additionally, we have uncovered an unhealthy level of poorly framed or undocumented agreements and commitments to further funding increases by Racing Queensland. These combined factors have led to a perfect storm of financial unsustainability.

The reality is simply this: Racing Queensland has been operating at a loss and government and industry need to make some tough decisions. There will be a robust and realistic set of discussions to achieve this. I did not create this problem; the government inherited it from those opposite.

Mr Dickson: Rubbish.

Mr BYRNE: Well, we will see about that. In fact, the former LNP government commissioned its own \$3 million inquiry into the racing industry in 2013 which identified a number of issues including the need to look at the integrity functions of racing. And what was done by the LNP at that time? Nothing, zip, not a thing. But it is now my job and the job of Racing Queensland to join with industry to fix it. This will be difficult but it has to be done.

That is why I will be asking industry later today to work with us in a transparent way so that together we can ensure the sustainable future for Racing Queensland and help return public confidence to what has always been a proud, vibrant and economically important industry in this state. I will be holding a press conference later today to fully detail these matters.

Budget, Infrastructure

 **Hon. JA TRAD** (South Brisbane—ALP) (Deputy Premier, Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning and Minister for Trade) (9.48 am): The Palaszczuk government's first budget has been well received by stakeholders and industry for its focus on jobs and infrastructure. Margaret de Wit, President of the Local Government Association of Queensland, said—

... this Budget has shown a welcome commitment to local projects such as road building and community infrastructure. This Budget contains key signals on the Government's overall economic and political direction, and a healthy amount of spending focuses on job creation and infrastructure.

The RACQ said it welcomed the fact that '\$18.8 billion would be invested in the Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program (QTRIP) over the next four years'. The budget is being well received in the community because it delivers on our commitments and it delivers to Queenslanders what they need now.

I am pleased to also announce that the Palaszczuk government's 2015-16 state budget will deliver \$212 million over the next five years to upgrade key South-East Queensland train stations, improving access and facilities for commuters. The Palaszczuk Labor government will roll out the accessibility and amenity upgrades where they are needed across our rail network. The rollout of the upgrades will support some 3,500 new jobs for Queenslanders.

I can also announce that \$13.1 million is being allocated in 2015-16 to provide for detailed design work to commence at Boondall, Strathpine and Auchenflower stations, and for construction work to begin at Nambour station. The 2015-16 state budget also commits \$20.25 million for the continued accessibility upgrades at Graceville, Newmarket, Alderley and Dinmore stations, with construction expected to commence this year. The Palaszczuk government will continue to improve the accessibility of our city network train stations to ensure all passengers can travel safely and easily.

Budget

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.50 am): On Tuesday on behalf of the Palaszczuk government I delivered a budget for all Queenslanders. The 2015-16 budget is all about jobs now and jobs for the future. It has targeted expenditure for education and health, for infrastructure and for key services. The budget will build on a number of key economic indicators regarding the strength of the Queensland economy. The latest data released last Thursday shows Queensland's trend unemployment rate fell to 6.3 per cent from 6.4 per cent in the month of June, with the May data revised down from 6.5 to 6.4 per cent.

Since the Palaszczuk government took office in February, 23,100 full-time jobs have been created in Queensland. More than 190 jobs are being created each day on average since the Palaszczuk government took office. This contrasts with the more than 6,000 full-time jobs being lost under the Newman government from March 2012 to January 2015, which averages out at six full-time job losses each and every day.

Queensland is the only state in the country to have recorded a fall in trend unemployment data for the month of June. Additionally, according to the official state accounts released last Friday, it is good to see that economic growth in Queensland is stabilising following two quarters of negative growth in the second half of 2014 under the LNP. The negative trend has been reversed and the outlook for growth is positive.

Investor finance for established dwellings in Queensland strengthened in the May quarter of 2015, reaching \$4.4 billion, its highest level since the December quarter of 2007. Investment commitments for the construction of new dwellings also rose to \$645 million in the May quarter. This figure is \$292 million higher than the same period last year. This is an encouraging result which shows that investors have confidence in Queensland Labor's positive economic agenda. It shows that Queensland is open for business, and investors are voting with their feet to grab a piece of Queensland real estate.

Queensland continues to lead the way nationally on business confidence, according to the latest NAB monthly business survey. Business confidence in Queensland rose 2.3 per cent in July against the background of a national fall of 3.2 per cent according to the Westpac consumer sentiment index released yesterday. In trend terms, Queensland is sitting equal first with New South Wales when it comes to business confidence—yet another positive sign for the state economy. Unlike those opposite, we are positive about Queensland's economy. We will not be taking the doom and gloom approach the former government pursued at every opportunity. The former government were so obsessed with picking fights with anyone and everyone that they took their eye off the ball. They were so committed to selling assets that they ignored the groundswell of community opposition right in front of them.

This week Queenslanders have responded well to the positive initiatives in the 2015-16 budget. That is because it is a budget for jobs and a budget which promotes the strengths of our economy and the diversity of our economy. It is a budget for now and a budget for the future.

Ravenshoe, Community Recovery

 **Hon. CR DICK** (Woodridge—ALP) (Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services) (9.53 am): As Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services, I wish to pay tribute today to the role played by Queensland Health and Queensland Ambulance Service personnel in the recent Ravenshoe explosion tragedy. The first responder after the explosion was paramedic Darrell Thompson, who bravely prioritised the treatment and movement of these patients from the explosion area to an area of safety where they were given further emergency care. At 12.05 pm, the Atherton Ambulance Station, the closest station but still 57 kilometres away, received a call for assistance. At 12.09 pm, the first of four ambulances were dispatched from Atherton to Ravenshoe. A minute later, at 12.10 pm, the Operations Centre of the Cairns ambulance notified the Queensland emergency medical services coordination centre of the incident. With that call, what had been an incident on the Atherton Tablelands became a statewide priority.

Helicopters were quickly dispatched from both Cairns and Townsville, arriving at 1.03 pm and 1.55 pm respectively. Then began the largest aeromedical movement of burns patients in Queensland history, as patients were transported to four regional hospitals by air or ambulance. Seventeen people

arrived at Atherton, Innisfail and Cairns hospitals between 3 pm and 4 pm. On the Tablelands, Dr Alan Furness, the medical superintendent at Atherton Hospital, led the medical response. He, Dr Craig Farley and a team of nurses went out to Ravenshoe to support the paramedics on site, returning to Atherton later in the afternoon to treat patients along with the director of nursing, Ann Aitken. Directors of nursing Lesley Harris in Innisfail and Andrea O'Shea in Cairns all had their facilities ready and waiting for the injured patients.

Townsville Hospital received four patients between 5.30 pm and 7 pm who were placed under the care of Dr McCallum and Dr Senthuran. Now the process of transporting those needing more intense surgical intervention in treatment began. The CareFlight Challenger jet made three trips to Brisbane, and five Royal Flying Doctor Service aircraft made eight trips. Ten patients were taken to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and one patient went to the Princess Alexandra Hospital before being transferred to Royal Brisbane. As the patients arrived, the Intensive Care Unit in Brisbane was headed by Professor Jeff Lipman and the Burns Unit was headed by Dr Michael Rudd. I visited burns victims at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital on Saturday, 16 June accompanied by the Minister for State Development, who, as honourable members would know, is a distinguished surgeon. I also met with a patient at the Cairns Hospital on 26 June who spoke very highly of the care she had received there.

While this was a shocking incident, let us be in no doubt that the victims of the Ravenshoe blast received the best possible care and attention from all involved. I will take the liberty of saying that all of us here in this place give our sincere thanks to all involved: the Queensland Ambulance Service; staff from the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital; Cairns, Townsville, Atherton and Innisfail hospitals; the Queensland emergency medical services coordination centre; Retrieval Services Queensland; the Queensland government's air emergency management service; CareFlight; and the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

I have singled out some people today, but there are many more who performed heroically on the day. I had the honour, in the company of the member for Dalrymple, of being able to attend Atherton Hospital, the Ravenshoe Ambulance Station and the Ravenshoe Primary Health Care Centre to thank some of the people who performed so well under pressure that day and in the weeks following and who are still caring for burns victims. The way they responded represents not only the best of our health system but also the best of Queenslanders. I pay tribute to all of them here in this place.

Early Years Education

 **Hon. KJ JONES** (Ashgrove—ALP) (Minister for Education and Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (9.57 am): The Palaszczuk government is committed to ensuring every child has access to quality early years education. We know that by investing in the early years of learning we can give our young people the very best start in life. That is why we are proud to deliver in this year's state budget more than \$290 million for early childhood education and care including a new \$53 million injection to boost early years learning in Queensland. Most importantly, this funding will target areas of greatest need. Our commitment includes an extra \$14.2 million over four years to better assist children with disabilities to participate in kindergarten. It means that from 2016 kindergarten services will be able to access additional funding to support children with complex multiple disabilities. I know this is something the early childhood sector has been lobbying for, and I am proud to be part of a government that will deliver.

The state budget also includes almost \$40 million in new funding for children and family centres that will ensure thousands of Queensland families including Aboriginal families from Doomadgee, Logan, Rockhampton, Palm Island and Cairns will be able to continue to use these services. This funding will be delivered over the next four years to ensure that these services remain open after the Abbott government walked away from their support despite these services being established in partnership.

The state budget also includes \$11.5 million for capital works. The Palaszczuk government will build four new integrated early years services in Redlands, Inala, Gordonvale and Tara. We will also upgrade 44 early childhood facilities from Yeppoon to Goondiwindi and up to Coen. This budget delivers on our commitment to ensure every Queensland child has the knowledge, skills and confidence to seize the opportunities for the future, and we know this starts in the earliest years of learning.

MyMinesOnline

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (10.00 am): The Palaszczuk government recognises that Queensland's global competitive advantage as a leading resources sector investment destination relies on how industry does business in this state. A government can help by making it simpler for industry to do business by delivering

more efficient services that provide greater certainty, significantly less red tape and much faster assessment time frames. As a result, resource companies will have the tenure and investment certainty to start projects a lot sooner and deliver jobs and other significant economic benefits for Queensland communities. We are doing just that. In this first Palaszczuk government budget, we are investing a further \$9.7 million in 2015-16 to modernise and enhance online services to deliver faster service outcomes.

Mr Cripps interjected.

Dr LYNHAM: I think the member for Hinchinbrook has laid claim to every initiative since TJ Ryan was in charge. We already have the runs on the board—in a project commenced in 2011 by the current member for Sandgate when he was the minister for mines. MyMinesOnline allows coal, mineral, petroleum and gas companies operating in Queensland to lodge online applications for 72 different resource permits and tenures. This is a real game changer for industry compared to the old days when permit and tenure application forms had to be lodged over the counter. It means applications can be lodged, assessed and managed more efficiently, and more than 1,600 industry customers are already using it. For example, exploration permit applications were taking an average of 22 months to process through the old-style, over-the-counter paper lodgement system. Today, with some tweaks to the process, MyMinesOnline exploration permit applications can be dealt with in less than six months if a native title process is not required. A recent application for a mineral development licence was processed and granted in a record five weeks. The average time for permit renewal and transfer has been reduced by an average of 78 per cent. As the resources sector itself acknowledges, MyMinesOnline is now central to Queensland's global competitive advantage. With MyMinesOnline and other online services, Queensland will be ready to take advantage of the next upswing of activity in the resources sector.

Youth Justice

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.02 am): I am pleased to outline to the House the important contribution this government is making towards reinstating diversionary courts. These programs, many of which were axed by the former LNP government, are a key feature of the Palaszczuk government's commitment to investing in the justice system to achieve better outcomes. This government has allocated \$32.3 million over the next four years to get diversionary courts back up and running. These courts help to change lives, and in doing so they help to make Queensland a safer community. Rebuilding specialist courts will help to address the underlining causes of offending and divert offenders from prison by creating opportunities to address offending behaviour.

Yesterday, I had the pleasure of opening the Queensland youth justice forum. I had the chance to meet a group of people who have dedicated their lives to stopping the cycle of youth offending and who are working on a blueprint plan of action to give vulnerable young people the helping hand they need to navigate the criminal justice system. I commend them for their work, and that is why I am so pleased that \$23.6 million was allocated in Tuesday's budget to bring back court referred youth justice conferencing. I am committed to this important aspect of our youth justice system. This crucial conferencing process will give young people greater opportunities to take responsibility for their criminal offending and its effects on victims. It will also give victims the opportunity to be heard and give them some closure.

Putting children in jail will be a last resort under this government. This government has allocated \$8.7 million to honour its election commitment to reinstate the Murri Court and the Special Circumstances Court Diversion program. The Murri Court was established in 2006 in response to the growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who were being incarcerated. After its abolition by the former government, the Indigenous sentencing list has played a vital role in trying to bridge the gap that was left. I am committed to bringing the Murri Court back. I believe a community based approach can result in more positive outcomes for people and their communities. These programs have demonstrated what can be achieved when the courts, the government and local communities work together. This government is staunch in its commitment to support these initiatives and build on them in consultation with the Indigenous community and other justice system representatives.

Our commitment to bringing back diversionary courts goes hand in hand with our commitment to consulting and developing best practice in this space. We will not simply pick up what was there and put it back again. We will look at the lessons learned and adapt the courts based on feedback from the judiciary, the legal profession and community groups. I am very proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government that is committed to reducing crime by investing early. This is what our courts, the legal profession, the police and the community want from a government, and we will work with Queenslanders to deliver on this commitment.

Jobs and Innovation

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Yeerongpilly—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports and Minister for Energy and Water Supply) (10.06 am): I am proud to be part of a government that is focused on jobs and innovation. The Palaszczuk government went to the election with an Advance Queensland plan to support our university sector, invest in groundbreaking research and stimulate new investment. The new Palaszczuk government is creating the jobs of tomorrow and helping make Queensland a state where innovation has become a commercial reality.

We are working to foster a sustainable ethanol industry in Queensland. Industry groups and primary introducers have been consulted about our plan for a two per cent ethanol mandate. A joint Deloitte Access Economics and QUT study predicts biorefining, in all of its forms, fully realised, could contribute more than \$1.8 billion in gross state product to Queensland over the next 20 years, creating more than 6,000 jobs. A vibrant ethanol industry means new ethanol high-tech plants could open in this state, creating the potential to develop new generation biofuels with international opportunities, such as the US naval fleet as it moves towards renewable fuel sources.

This government is also committed to one million Queensland solar rooftops by 2020 as part of our Solar Future program. Labor also has a vision of 50 per cent renewable technology by 2030 and the jobs and investment that will come with it. My Department of Transport and Main Roads is working with the Australian Road Research Board. Successful trials have been conducted for a new type of asphalt—known as high modulus asphalt—which is especially suited to heavily loaded pavements and can reduce costs through a reduction in asphalt thickness. The same team is also working with my department on foamed bitumen stabilising, which addresses cracking issues and provides resilience against flooding.

Transport and Main Roads are also using fibre composite bridges to replace our ageing timber girders. Fibre composite girders are lightweight and strong yet have similar strength as the timber girders they are replacing. To build a bridge of the future, TMR has formed a strategic research partnership with Griffith University, the University of Queensland, QUT and the Motor Accident Insurance Commission. It is known as ASTRA. This \$3 million, five-year partnership agreement—signed when Labor was last in power—is just about to be renewed. We are getting on with advancing Queensland with the research lab—from the road to the rooftop.

National Parks, Management

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (10.08 am): I rise to outline the Palaszczuk government's commitment to proper funding for our national parks and protected areas. These areas safeguard Queensland's unique biodiversity, including much of our threatened flora and fauna species. This is the subject of much discussion amongst my colleagues from the Commonwealth and other states today at the Threatened Species Summit hosted by the federal environment minister and his Threatened Species Commissioner at the Melbourne Zoo. Unfortunately, I cannot be there due to today's parliamentary sitting.

The federal government and the other Australian states and territories are taking protected areas and threatened species management seriously. I wish I was able to say the same for the previous Queensland government. Upon commencing my responsibilities as minister, I quickly became aware of the funding shortfalls left by the previous government for managing our valuable protected area estate. Without an urgent funding bid to the Treasurer, the department of national parks would have been forced to let go of 15 Indigenous rangers who are playing a vital role in the continued management of Cape York's protected areas and are allowing these traditional owners to manage their traditional lands. Other funding shortfalls related to the management of land recently acquired for addition to the protected area estate. Acquiring land is the easy part; it is ongoing management that is the most important. Unless there is adequate funding, the conservation values that led the area to be protected in the first place will be undermined.

Rural neighbours, understandably, get frustrated by the lack of management. Farming weeds and fuelling wildfires, they call it. So I was shocked to discover that the previous government had not adequately funded the management of future protected areas. I am pleased to announce that in this week's budget the Palaszczuk government has stepped in and will resolve these funding anomalies by providing ongoing funding for the 15 existing and seven new Indigenous rangers on the cape and funding in the 2015-16 budget to manage newly acquired areas. Moving forward, the Palaszczuk government is committed to expanding our protected area estate towards the 17 per cent target set by the IUCN. Given Queensland has only eight per cent protected, including private land under nature refuges, there is a long

way to go. However, I am interested to see how the government can work more closely with private enterprise and the not-for-profit sector to pool our conservation dollars and collaboratively and more efficiently deliver a strong, expanding protected area estate across Queensland that is well managed and resourced.

Social Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algerst—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (10.11 am): As the Treasurer said, the Palaszczuk government's budget is a budget for people. We believe that vulnerable Queenslanders such as those in need of social housing are more than just parties to a lease agreement, which is how the previous LNP government treated them. Across Queensland, over \$312 million will be invested in housing for some of our most vulnerable community members.

This government has committed more than \$183 million in capital works, upgrading existing properties, purchasing others and constructing and completing hundreds of other dwellings. These include funding to commence construction of 274 rental units, complete construction of 258 rental units and purchase 32 rental units. I can also advise the House that some of Queensland's most marginalised communities will also benefit from the state budget, with an additional \$190 million allocated for social housing in Indigenous communities. This will allow construction to commence on 60 rental units, complete the construction of 207 others and also upgrade some of our existing social housing stock in these communities.

Throughout this financial year, we will also continue to deliver on our election commitments, including re-establishing a tenant advice and advocacy service. After the LNP abolished the previous tenant advice and advocacy service, tenants were left without an independent body to provide advice and support services in an area where disputes can be complex, confusing and intimidating. We already have an interim phone service up and running but re-establishing the full service will help tenants navigate their way through the tenancy market and help them know their rights and obligations.

We will also continue work on re-establishing a dedicated plumbing industry regulatory body within the broader statewide construction industry regulator. We will undertake a review of security of payment laws for subcontractors, and we are finalising the review of social policies to ensure fairness.

As Minister for Housing, I intend to restore dignity to people who need our support and return Housing to its rightful place, that of a human service. The Palaszczuk government understands that for people to have good health outcomes, good education outcomes and good employment opportunities, the basics such as housing need to be addressed first.

MOTION

Amendment to Standing Orders

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (10.14 am), by leave, without notice: I move—

That schedule 7 of the standing rules and orders of the Legislative Assembly be amended in accordance with the amendment circulated in my name.

2015—SCHEDULE 7—CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

In accordance with Standing Order 181(c), the following table lists entities to which direct questioning of Chief Executives at Estimates is to apply.

Entities to which direct questioning of Chief Executives at Estimates is to apply

Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland	Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service
Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service	Electoral Commission of Queensland
Central Queensland Hospital and Health Service	ENERGEX Limited
Central West Hospital and Health Service	Energy and Water Ombudsman
Children's Health Queensland Hospital and Health Service	Ergon Energy Corporation Limited
Coordinator-General	Family Responsibilities Commission
Crime and Corruption Commission	Far North Queensland Ports Corporation Limited (Ports North)
CS Energy Limited	

GasFields Commission	Queensland Electricity Transmission Corporation Limited (Powerlink)
Gladstone Ports Corporation Limited	Queensland Family and Child Commission
Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Corporation	Queensland Institute of Medical Research
Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service	Queensland Mental Health Commission
Gold Coast Waterways Authority	Queensland Museum
Legal Aid Queensland	Queensland Performing Arts Centre/Queensland Performing Arts Trust
Mackay Hospital and Health Service	Queensland Rail
Metro North Hospital and Health Service	Queensland Reconstruction Authority
Metro South Hospital and Health Service	Queensland Theatre Company
Motor Accident Insurance Commission/Nominal Defendant	Queensland Training Assets Management Authority
North Queensland Bulk Ports Corporation Limited	Queensland Treasury Corporation
North West Hospital and Health Service	Racing Queensland (Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board)
Office of Inspector General Emergency Management	Residential Tenancies Authority
Office of the Governor	Screen Queensland Pty Ltd
Office of the Health Ombudsman	South Bank Corporation
Office of the Information Commissioner	South West Hospital and Health Service
Office of the Integrity Commissioner	Stadiums Queensland
Office of the Queensland Ombudsman	Stanwell Corporation Limited
Port of Townsville Limited	State Library of Queensland / Library Board of Queensland
Prostitution Licensing Authority	Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service
Public Safety Business Agency	SunWater Limited
Public Service Commission	TAFE Queensland
QIC Limited	The Public Trustee of Queensland
QRAA	Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service
Queensland Agricultural Training Colleges	Tourism and Events Queensland
Queensland Art Gallery	Townsville Hospital and Health Service
Queensland Audit Office	Trade and Investment Queensland
Queensland Building and Construction Commission	West Moreton Hospital and Health Service
Queensland Bulk Water Supply Authority (Seqwater)	Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service
Queensland Competition Authority	
Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority	

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Performance

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (10.15 am): Two days after the Treasurer brought down Labor's first budget it is pretty obvious that this government still does not have a plan. It does not have a plan for infrastructure in Queensland, and the Treasurer admitted as much the other day. He said he would keep going with the previous government's plan because he has no plan of his own yet.

It is very clear that this government also does not have a plan around a debt-reduction strategy. All they are seeking to do is to borrow from reserves today in order to set up future generations to pay. Indeed, if one looks at what respected economist Gene Tunney, a former Commonwealth Treasury official, said on radio this morning, it is most instructive. In relation to this year's state budget he said—
It really hasn't done anything to address Queensland's long term fiscal challenges getting down debt and restoring our AAA credit rating. There are a lot of fiddles, a lot of accounting fiddles, in this budget to give the illusion that they're meeting their fiscal strategy ...

Indeed, that is the ultimate point; there is no new money in this budget. There is only more spending using accumulated reserves which have been put there for the specific purpose of meeting the Public Service obligations for superannuation and also long service leave. That means that taxpayers have to pay twice. The money is ripped away today and has to be put in on an as-needs basis some time in the future. Mr Tunney went on to say—

I think we had good fiscal principles in place where we were setting aside money to meet these liabilities that we could foresee, that we knew that we would pay these things at some time. I really thought that was sound ... finance.

He goes on to say—and I think that this is a very alarming point—

I don't think we're anywhere near Greece, but you start down that road, and you don't know where you're going to get to at some point in the future ...

Some 10 years ago when we stood in this parliament who would have thought that we would be facing an \$85 billion debt under the Labor government, that we would be raiding Public Service accumulated reserves for the future? No-one would have even dreamed that that would be the case. You cannot address debt by shifting mum's credit card debt onto dad's credit card debt; the children or someone has to pay in the future. That is precisely what this government did on Tuesday this week.

Liberal National Party

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (10.18 am): Just days after the election, the LNP actually threw out their only plan for reducing debt, and that was asset sales. Within days of the election the opposition leader had a conversion on the road to Damascus. He had apparently realised that selling our income-generating state assets had been rejected by Queenslanders. Then he told crossbenchers that he supported Labor's plan to identify more than \$1.9 billion in offsets and savings. Since that time, the LNP have fallen into a six-month-long policy vacuum when it comes to presenting any type of economic plan—not just a vacuum, but a black hole.

Today the LNP's time runs out. In their budget reply they must reveal their alternative plan for reducing debt in this state. There certainly were not any ideas in the so-called 'real economic plan' that the Leader of the Opposition brought down last week. It was a tired acceptance of their four-pillar strategy. Of course, they decided to add another pillar to follow the Premier's lead on a knowledge based economy.

Now their only plan is to create more jobs for more politicians. What a time to raise that: budget week! Queenslanders have a right to know how the LNP would fund infrastructure, health and education. They said no to asset sales for the time being until they can manage to persuade Queenslanders. They have ruled out sacking more than 24,000 public servants like they did last time; they have allegedly ruled out taxes, fees and charges massively increasing. On the expenses side of the ledger they have crowed about the need for more infrastructure and services and more sweeteners for business. How do they plan to pay for this, I wonder. We may find out at 11.30.

The Leader of the Opposition wants to take the same negative obstructionist approach that Mr Abbott, his mate in Canberra, has taken. He has an obligation to tell the people of Queensland what his alternative is. If the LNP use today's budget reply to do nothing but create negativity and continue to scare public servants, as they did for the last three years, then we will know that they are completely bereft of ideas. The LNP literally stands for 'no plans'. The Leader of the Opposition told his party faithful last week what he was looking for from the Labor Party. He said—

Our opponents who are now in Government promised to Queenslanders that they had a fully-costed plan to build infrastructure, to create jobs, to pay-down debt, to return the budget to surplus without increasing taxes, without selling anything, without borrowing more and without cutting services ... in the LNP we had a plan which wasn't contingent just on Strong Choices, but it was going to be added to by Strong Choices.

This budget delivered on everything the LNP asked for. Everything that the Leader of the Opposition asked for last weekend was in this budget. If they are not going to sell assets, raise taxes, fees and charges—and of course they do not want to sack people—then I will be very, very interested to hear what they say at 11.30.

Budget

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (10.21 am): The more that we look into this budget, the more obvious it is that the Treasurer has been hiding his plans from the people of Queensland since the election. We all know what Labor promised in January. They were unequivocal. They promised to hold onto our assets and to use the dividends from these businesses to pay down debt. They promised to make savings by merging electricity companies together. What the Treasurer delivered on Tuesday did not in any way reflect those promises to the people of Queensland. Instead we have a budget of broken promises and a Treasurer who has come up with some desperate and unprecedented ideas since mid-May.

Make no mistake: taking a contribution holiday was not recommended by the State Actuary, and the review of state finances does not recommend stopping payments into the defined benefit investment scheme. It was an option, not a recommendation, but one seized upon by a rapacious Treasurer. On

Tuesday the Treasurer produced a letter from the State Actuary dated 16 June to argue that investments into the defined benefit scheme could be suspended. The State Actuary was prompted to respond to an email from a senior Treasury official in mid-May.

Members in this place may well remember 21 May when the Treasurer, who was so desperate that he did not know what to do, claimed that the state was in recession—a claim that he quickly rescinded. In the letter the State Actuary makes it clear that the government has sought his advice on suspending contributions, not the other way around. He also talks about the particular proposal put to him by government. He said—

The (Government's) proposal was framed around a contribution suspension, but I would recommend that the process be given effect by Treasury through a time-limited suspension in annual investments with QIC.

This letter from the State Actuary was received less than a month before the budget was delivered. While the Treasurer was running around the state spruiking the Palaszczuk government's budget plans, there were clearly other things afoot. Similarly the report on state finances does not recommend raiding \$3.4 billion of investment put aside to cover long service leave entitlements. The report clearly states—

The pre-funding of long service leave is arguably an extreme application of the basic principle and could be regarded as optional.

That is the ringing endorsement that the Treasurer used to walk away from fiscal principles held by previous Queensland treasurers. With a budget preparation like this, is it any wonder there has been confusion as to the impact of these raids on super and long service leave entitlements from the people affected.

On the day of the budget the Under Treasurer sent out an email saying that the defined benefit scheme is due to effectively cease in 2035. The Treasurer had to clarify this statement yesterday due to the confusion created following a question from the member from Maroochy. He now says the vast majority are due to have retired by 2035. It just shows that this Treasurer does not know what he is doing; he did not tell Queenslanders that they were going to do this; and in the history of Queensland's financial management they are doing unprecedented things. Queenslanders expect better and this government is not delivering it.

Budget, Law and Order

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (10.24 am): Queensland certainly deserves better than the LNP. Yesterday we saw the LNP setting up their own shadow ministers in question time. It started with the member for Everton being given some pretty ordinary figures out of the budget and using them in a question to the Minister for Education. The member for Indooroopilly was also set up with his question which was wrong again. Now, unfortunately, we see the poor member for Mansfield, the shadow Attorney-General, being sent out to the media with incorrect figures regarding their favourite issue. The modus operandi of the LNP, both state and federal, is fear—fear on law and order and crime, and they should be ashamed of this tactic.

The Palaszczuk government takes the issue of organised crime very seriously, and we recognise that organised crime is much broader than just outlaw motorcycle gangs. The shadow Attorney-General has made very serious claims about cuts to funding under the CCC in relation to outlaw motorcycle gangs. They stated that in 2013-14 funding of \$6.7 million over four years was approved for the CCC to support increased CCC activities for organised crime, including criminal motorcycle gangs, and that the \$1.174 million that was set aside for the 2015-16 budget has been cut. That is wrong: just read the budget papers. I want to bring to your attention what the budget papers actually say. Paragraph 8 on page 61 of the SDS states—

The decrease in employee expenditure is primarily due to the expiration of temporary grant funding on 31 December 2014 for OMCG initiatives.

The remainder of the initiatives continue to be funded, and there has been an increase of \$1.569 million in funding to the CCC. That funding is still there. The staff that are gone—

(Time expired)

Health Services

 **Mr McARDLE** (Caloundra—LNP) (10.28 am): There is a minister in this House who is obsessed—one could say paranoid—about CBRC submissions. Today I am here to help that minister. I want to give him all the help I can. A little birdie said to me that there was a submission prepared for

CBRC about nursing pay increases. The next three financial years will see a 2.5 per cent pay increase for nursing staff. Under the LNP it was 3.16 per year. The QNU, the bastion protecting nurses' rights, have apparently rolled over and they will accept this pay increase.

But that is not all. I started to walk away and the birdie said, 'Come back, Mark, there is more. There is even a submission in CBRC dealing with MOCA 4,' which is pay increases to junior doctors. We might come back to that one another day. I started to walk away again and the birdie said, 'Mark, come back. There is more to tell.' He or she said to me that eight deputy DGs have had to reapply for their jobs since the appointment of the new DG. The new DG was the man who claimed his greatest achievement was leaving behind a better payroll system. Now there is an icon!

You get a picture of the health minister's office. You have a table in the middle. You have a chair on one side and a chair on the other. On one side you have the chief or the Premier. On the other side you have Max or the health minister. And the cone of silence comes down. The minister is not concerned about that because the minister has changed all the locks. I would not mind betting that in times to come retina ID will be required to get into the minister's office.

We are here to help. We on this side of the House understand the concern of the minister so we have pitched in and have bought a new lock. It even has three keys. If the minister would like to meet with me, I will hand it over.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! We have had a bit of fun.

Mr McARDLE: If the minister would like to meet with me I will hand over the lock—but perhaps not in his office. I also assure the minister that I think our little birdie—male or female—may come back again.

(Time expired)

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (10.31 am): My question without notice is to the Premier, and I ask: has the Premier had a conversation with the police minister about the false signing of any documents since her appointment as a minister?

Ms PALASZCZUK: This is budget week, but all they want to talk about is a matter that is currently before a committee. Yesterday in this House I said very clearly that I understand the matter is before a committee, and that is the right place for it to be. Today the Leader of the Opposition has the opportunity—

Mr STEVENS: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mr STEVENS: The Premier refers to the fact that it has been referred to a parliamentary committee. I would like advice on that matter from the Clerk because our advice is that it has not been.

Mr SPEAKER: My understanding is that the Premier said the matter was before the committee.

Ms PALASZCZUK: As I said yesterday and as I repeat today, my understanding is that that matter is currently before a committee—the right place for it to be. That is my understanding.

This week is budget week. Where is the question from the Leader of the Opposition to the Premier or the Treasurer about matters concerning jobs in this state?

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the Opposition has chosen to ask the Premier a specific question. Premier, it does not relate to the budget so if you do not want to answer the specific—

Ms PALASZCZUK: In closing, I say to this House that the Leader of the Opposition has asked me a question and I have answered the question that he has asked me. But this is budget week and the Leader of the Opposition—

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. My question was very specific. We asked budget questions yesterday and she could not answer them either.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment. Leader of the Opposition, what is your point of order?

Mr SPRINGBORG: My question was very specific: has the Premier had a conversation with the police minister since she became a minister about the false signing of documents?

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition, I have heard your question. The Premier has answered the question. I call the Leader of the Opposition to ask his second question.

Ms Palaszczuk: Is it a budget question?

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I do not think the Leader of the Opposition needs you to assist him.

Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services

Mr SPRINGBORG: My second question is also to the Premier. Will the Premier admit that she continues to harbour her police minister because the Premier is powerless to act as the Labor government is under the thumb of union bosses?

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, members. Before I ask the Premier to answer, we have had a good go this morning. The standing orders are very clear. When a member asks a question there is to be silence. I ask members to now comply with that requirement unless there is provocation. I call the Premier. Are you happy with the question?

Ms PALASZCZUK: Mr Speaker, I will answer the question! Once again I just make it very clear: we are in budget week. I thought the Leader of the Opposition would have gone through the budget papers and looked at the Budget Highlights document—

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, with respect, the Leader of the Opposition has not asked that question. He has asked another question that does not relate to the budget.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is right, and I am getting to that. The Leader of the Opposition—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Members, we have another day and a night to go.

Ms PALASZCZUK: The Leader of the Opposition has the opportunity to ask about the budget but he has asked a question about unions, and I am prepared to address that matter.

I said that my government would be a government for all Queenslanders. It does not matter if you are from the business community, if you are a family in Western Queensland that is struggling with drought or if you are a member of a union. My government is there for everyone in this state. That is why this budget is about growing the economy and creating jobs, not picking fights. Over the past three years the LNP in government picked fights with everybody. That was the modus operandi of the LNP government.

This is a government for all of Queensland. We will govern with humility and dignity because Queenslanders cast their vote at the ballot box in January this year—

Mr SPRINGBORG: Mr Speaker, I rise to a point of order. I appreciate the Premier's broad statement of admiration for every Queenslander, but my question was very specific: is the Premier powerless to act against the Minister for Police because she is under the thumb of union bosses? I was very specific. The Premier can give us a yes-or-no answer and then go on to her broad admiration statement.

Mr SPEAKER: I call the Premier.

Ms PALASZCZUK: That is a ridiculous assumption coming from the Leader of the Opposition in budget week.

Budget, Disability Services

Mr POWER: My question is about the budget which was brought down this week. It is directed to the Premier and Minister for the Arts. Will the Premier advise the House of any budget measures which will assist Queenslanders with a disability?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Logan for his interest about improving the lives of people with a disability in this state. We on this side of the House actually care about people. We want the best for people and we know how important the National Disability Insurance Scheme is for Queenslanders right across the state. That is why we have always stated on the public record that we wanted to see a trial site of the scheme here in Queensland. Unfortunately, those opposite did not agree to have a trial site in Queensland. In fact, Queensland missed the boat under the former LNP government. But once again we have listened to the community.

As we have travelled around listening to people with a disability, they have told me that they wanted this trial site. In fact, it is imperative for a government to have a trial site because when you are rolling out such a large, complicated program you need to test the services and make sure that people can adapt to the changing environment that they will be under. I know the member for Logan has many people with a disability in his electorate and has raised with me on numerous occasions how important it is for people to get those services.

I am very pleased that in this budget my government is proud to announce funding for a trial site of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in the state of Queensland. We will always put people first. We know how important this scheme is. It is going to change the lives of people with a disability. Not only is my government putting in \$1.9 million to establish this site but also our Disability Services budget is \$1.5 billion in 2015-16—an increase of \$82 million on the previous year. Once again, my government is showing its commitment to people with a disability in this state.

As a former minister for disability services in this state, this is a landmark reform. This is a revolutionary reform. This is a social justice reform. It is about improving the lives of people, and my government will always stand side by side with those families who need that extra support and extra help to make their lives more inclusive in this state of Queensland.

Budget, Superannuation

Mr LANGBROEK: My question without notice is to the Treasurer. Following the contradictory advice of the Treasurer and Under Treasurer, will the Treasurer advise the House the exact number of people covered by the defined benefit scheme beyond 2035?

Mr PITT: I thank the honourable member for the question. I am not sure where he is getting the contradictory advice from. He obviously is not understanding the issue here. As members of the House would recall, yesterday I was asked a question by the member for Maroochydore and, as members would know in terms of the way I conduct myself in this House, rather than speaking first and thinking later—as we do get a lot from those opposite—we wanted to ensure that we could provide a proper response to the question.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: They clearly do not want to hear the answer to the question that they have asked. Yesterday I was asked a question by the member for Maroochydore about what happens after 2035. There is a long tail to the defined benefit scheme, as I have said before, and what we know is that the scheme closed at the end of 2008 and going into 2009. There are around 50,000 people in the scheme. What happens is that the majority of people, as is outlined in the review of state finances, will of course be in the scheme until about 2035. After that time there will be others in the scheme still; the scheme will continue to operate longer than that period until the last person retires.

As members can appreciate—I am not sure what their angle is—as the majority of people retire you can tell the number of people in a defined benefit because it is an actual finite number of people that reduces as it goes on so that the state's liability becomes even less as time goes on. This is the whole point: those opposite are completely bereft of any plans. What we know is that those opposite have an opportunity at 11.30 today to tell Queenslanders what they would like to do. If they are not going to be following this government's lead and making sure that we make the best use of our financial assets whilst ensuring that at the same time we can protect Public Service entitlements, they have to come up with another plan, because right now, unless they are willing—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr LANGBROEK: I rise to a point of order.

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

Mr LANGBROEK: My question was a specific question about the exact number of people beyond 2035. I am sure that can be modelled and worked out. The Under Treasurer said it would effectively close in 2035. The Treasurer debated that yesterday.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I have heard your point of order. I call the Treasurer.

Mr PITT: The question is one that is very difficult to know the actual answer to. If the member opposite knows—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr PITT: Member for Nanango, you might want to listen for a change.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: Of course we know how many people are in the scheme right now. We know that the majority of people are expected to retire by 2035, but we do not know exactly how many people will be in the scheme after that time or in what year, because unless Nostradamus over there knows when they are going to retire we do not know the answer to that specifically.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: I challenge any one of the opposition to tell us why they have been running around scaring public servants this week when they really should be getting behind this budget, because I tell you what: without these measures, they are happy to see debt of more than \$2.673 billion on their preferred measure. We are getting on with the job. We are paying that down so we can provide services for Queenslanders.

Mr SPEAKER: Order, members! Before I call the member for Capalaba, I warn the member for Toowoomba North and the member for Coomera under standing order 253A for your continual interjections and obstructing the business of the House. I now call the member for Capalaba.

Budget

Mr BROWN: My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier please advise the House on how this week's budget has been received in the wider community?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the member for Capalaba for his question about the budget. It is great to receive some questions about the budget, because of course the Leader of the Opposition does not want to ask me questions about the budget.

An opposition member interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: No, to me. The Leader of the Opposition did not ask me any questions about the budget. I am very pleased with the way that the budget has been received by the broader spectrum of people across Queensland. In fact, the Treasurer and I had the pleasure of going to a stakeholder briefing just prior to the budget being handed down and the response was very positive in that they could see that this was a measured and responsible budget that was firmly focused on creating jobs now and jobs for the future. For example, the Queensland Resources Council said—

Treasurer Curtis Pitt's first budget is notable for the fact that it delivers on the ALP's election promises while also producing a substantial operating surplus.

The Queensland Chamber of Commerce & Industry said that the budget invests in Queensland's economic future and described Advance Queensland as the jewel in the crown. Advance Queensland is about growing those future industries, about creating those future jobs. The Queensland Council of Social Service stated—

... the budget revealed a broad array of initiatives aimed at improving social and economic outcomes for all.

The Heart Foundation welcomed the budget's focus on preventative health and said the budget was good for the heart health of Queenslanders. The Queensland Teachers' Union said—

The government makes education a priority and we have seen not only the delivery of the promises made by this government but we have seen some additional allocations to a couple of key areas of concern within the Education portfolio.

Well done, Minister for Education! Start-up advocacy group StartupAUS said that our decision to prioritise start-ups would help create thousands of local jobs and contribute billions of dollars to the Queensland economy. It said—

The Queensland government is setting the agenda for other states and territories today with their Advance Queensland policy initiatives aimed at stimulating jobs growth via the local startup community.

The Community Services Industry Alliance said that social benefit bonds were a watershed moment for community services in Queensland that can attract new investment, particularly private investment, in programs that can make a real difference in the lives of Queenslanders. Today is the opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to talk about his alternative plan for jobs in this state, because we know the day after the budget the only plan for jobs that the opposition had was to create more politicians in this House. That was its priority. That was its priority: more jobs for themselves—not for Queenslanders, not talking about training opportunities but creating more jobs for—

(Time expired)

Queensland Investment Corporation

Mr NICHOLLS: My question is to the Treasurer. On Tuesday the Treasurer had a thought bubble to direct QIC to invest in government owned corporations. Can the Treasurer tell the House what the current investment mandate given to QIC is?

Mr PITT: It is great to get a question from the man who wants to be the shadow Treasurer. We will wait and see just how many of his words come from the Leader of the Opposition when we hear his response today.

Overnight, there has been some activity. An article written by Mark Ludlow appeared in the *Australian Financial Review*, which refers to Damien Frawley from the QIC. I think what we have here today is a question that—

An opposition member: What about Joe Branigan from the *Australian*?

Mr PITT: The member is getting ahead of himself. Unlike those opposite, we do not try to come up with secret plans. We tell people what we are doing. That is the kind of government we are. Mark Ludlow talks about what happens in the second part of the approach of this government.

Mr NICHOLLS: I rise to a point of order. Under standing order 118, the question was very direct: can the Treasurer tell the House what the current investment mandate is?

Mr SPEAKER: I ask the Treasurer to make sure his answer is relevant to the question

Mr PITT: Mr Speaker, I am happy to answer the question. The mandate is about ensuring that we get maximum investor returns and there is nothing in this budget that changes that mandate. In fact, what we have said in the budget is that we will do due diligence over the coming months to explore further options for further reductions in our interest repayments in this state. We have a plan that is going to reduce interest repayments by \$1.35 billion over the forward estimates without selling assets, without sacking people, without raising taxes, fees and charges, which the member for Clayfield said was the only plan that we had. Our only choice was to sell, cut, slash and raise taxes. They were the only choices that we were given.

We are waiting to hear from the Leader of the Opposition at 11.30 am. The opposition members will probably champion their old promises, be negative and do the things that we expect that they will do, but I am interested to see what happens. We heard that last week, on the day of the launch of their *A real economic plan*, there was someone out there selling a document. We know that the member for Clayfield is passionate about this matter, because we went looking for the document online and found it hosted on a site called www.queenslandleaders.com.au. This site is still under construction. It is a strangely titled site for an opposition party. But who set up the website? It turns out that the website was from a consultancy that was used by the former treasurer to work on Strong Choices, DeWintern. Here is a picture of the former treasurer with DeWintern at Parliament House.

Tabled paper: Photograph of Mr Tim Nicholls MP with representatives of the DeWintern Group [805].

I am just saying that they are hired guns. If you do not want to take a knife to a gunfight, these are the people you need to have. This is what it says on their website.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr PITT: They should be very worried about knives over there, because after 11.30, if there is no plan, the knives are going to be out for the member for Maranoa. We will just see how he goes with his budget reply.

Planning

Ms GRACE: My question is to the Deputy Premier. Will the Deputy Premier inform the House about the government's commitment to better planning in Queensland?

Ms TRAD: I thank the honourable member for the question. I pay tribute to the fact that the honourable member for Brisbane Central has been a very fierce advocate for her community in trying to get the balance right between increased density within the inner city but also ensuring that livability, sustainability and prosperity are still at the forefront of how our community is shaped and developed.

This government was elected on a platform to consult with Queenslanders. At the election we committed that we were going to deliver a better planning system for Queensland—a better planning system that achieves sustainability, prosperity and livability for our communities, for our neighbourhoods, for our region and for our city, Brisbane. We believe that planning reform can deliver

a much more efficient system that supports investment in jobs, that ensures that there is confidence in the sector, in businesses and also that it does not have to be at the expense of community participation or the role of local government.

I pay tribute to the fact that the former government did start embarking upon the planning reform process. I want to acknowledge that. The problem was that this reform was not backed up with any funding whatsoever—no funding whatsoever. You cannot embark upon a significant reform process in a state as large as Queensland, with more regional locations—more regional centres with a population of over 100,000 Queenslanders, 100,000 people—than any other jurisdiction in this country. When it comes to planning our regions, planning our cities, planning our communities, planning our neighbourhoods, it is important that, when we work with our partners in local government, we put money on the table to assist in the transition and the reform process. That is why I am really proud and pleased about the fact that we have delivered \$59.4 million over five years to make this planning reform real.

This funding has been backed up by third parties. The Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council said—

The Better Planning for Queensland reform proposal paves the way for more outcome-focused, integrated strategic planning, supported by a stronger social licence.

The Planning Institute of Australia said—

We are pleased that the commitment to planning reform is being supported by funding to ensure financial support for system change at the Local Government level and across the sector more broadly.

The Property Council said—

It is pleasing to see the Government committing significant funding to deliver a better planning system for all Queenslanders.

The Palaszczuk Labor government will listen to Queenslanders, will reform the planning system and will fund it make sure that it happens.

North Queensland, Electricity Companies

Mr POWELL: My question is to the Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. Given that Labor's promised merger of state owned electricity companies, including Ergon in North Queensland, was barely mentioned in the budget, I ask: will the minister outline the time frame for the merger and its impact on front-line electricity workers throughout North Queensland?

Mrs O'ROURKE: I thank the member for the question. Firstly, can I say that I thoroughly enjoy getting up in this House and talking about the importance of North Queensland. Can I also say that last week I had the pleasure of having the Premier in Townsville to reopen the office of North Queensland, closed by those—

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, members. The member for Mermaid Beach has a point of order.

Mr STEVENS: It is under standing order 118. The question was very clear in relation to North Queensland and the energy providers.

Mr SPEAKER: With respect, I do not think that the member finished her first sentence.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order. I thought the questioner had a reasonable and appropriate preamble before he went into his question. I think the minister is allowed an opportunity to provide a preamble before going to the answer to the question.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Leader of the House. I now call the minister.

Mrs O'ROURKE: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Can I say, as a very proud North Queenslander myself, that I am very happy to talk about North Queensland. But I remind the member that, in my role as Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, I am an advocate and a voice for North Queensland. I bring that information back to the cabinet, but my role is as an advocate. If the member would like more information with regard to electricity companies, I would refer the question to the appropriate minister.

Honourable members interjected.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Thank you, members. Minister for Education, I do not need you to provoke the opposition.

Budget

Mr KELLY: My question is to a great Labor Treasurer. Will the Treasurer outline how key industry groups and stakeholders have responded to the positive budget initiatives of the first Palaszczuk budget?

Mr PITT: I thank the member for Greenslopes for the question. Before I get to the point of his question, I should say that the member for Greenslopes is a former nurse. I know that, along with so many other nurses right across this state, he is thrilled with what we have seen in this budget. In fact, last Sunday we saw the health minister and the Premier talking about how wonderful it will be to have up to 4,000 new nursing graduates and 400 health navigators. These are all great things.

We talk about what stakeholders think. I can tell members what the nurses think. Nurses are pretty happy. They are very happy. I think it is very important to see that we finally have those ratios right in our health system after many years of trying to get there.

When one looks at this budget it has been well received broadly across Queensland. I am not going to pretend that there are not individual groups or individuals who have some concerns with the budget. That will always be the case because it is a very broad ranging document covering off so many areas. Businesses and unions are basically on a unity ticket backing this budget. We know that the feedback from this budget is very, very positive because what it does, as we have heard the Premier say, is deal with people. It backs people. It is about jobs. It is about ensuring that we focus on the things that those opposite did not focus on for three years. There is more to our economy than numbers. We do not treat people as numbers. We allow the finances to be a tool to ensure that we can deliver for people. That is the difference between this side of the House and that side.

I heard earlier some very positive commentary that came from two very important stakeholders who spoke on ABC Western Radio. One stakeholder said that the \$48.4 million in drought relief funding—new money—was something he congratulates Bill Byrne for. The stakeholder goes on to welcome funding in the pastoral college in Longreach and the ag college. We know who that is: that is the LNP member for Gregory.

Mr Cripps: Mulherin wanted to shut those ag colleges.

Mr PITT: We will say it again, member for Hinchinbrook. He is not the only one. We have the member for Warrego welcoming funding for roads in her electorate. It may have got lost a bit in the hubbub yesterday, but there is another person who I think is a bit of a fan this week. We know that the member for Chatsworth is cutting his hair just a little bit shorter in recognition that this budget is one that is delivering for Queensland. It is great to see that all of those opposite are getting something in this budget. They are getting more in this budget than they were getting out of the budgets under their own government. This is a budget that is delivering for all Queenslanders, including those opposite.

On a serious note, I want to say thank you to the member for Warrego and the member for Gregory. They are taking the politics out of it. When they see it and they call it how they see it, they know this is a good budget for all Queenslanders.

Labor Party, Unions

Mr WALKER: My question is to the Premier. I refer to confirmation that during the election campaign unions paid the salaries of Labor candidates who have now become ministers, and I ask: what probity guidelines exist to ensure ministers making decisions impacting on those unions are not compromised?

Ms PALASZCZUK: I thank the shadow Attorney-General, the member for Mansfield, for the question. As we know, my government is about integrity and accountability. As applied to the former government, our diaries are published online. Any meetings with stakeholders are there for everyone to see. That is about being open and transparent. If the member is talking about donations made during election campaigns, they are actually on the record with the Electoral Commission, which is exactly the right way it should be accounted for.

I do find it ironic that this is the member for Mansfield, the same person who yesterday raised the issue of more jobs for more politicians in this House. That is his response to the budget, obviously set up by the Leader of the Opposition on the day after the budget to talk about creating more jobs for politicians, not about creating more jobs for Queenslanders.

Mr SPEAKER: Premier, I know you are keen to talk about that topic, but I do not think that is the crux of the question.

Townsville, Stadium

Mr HARPER: My question is to the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland. Will the minister please update the House about plans for the new stadium in Townsville and what it will mean for the region?

Mrs O'ROURKE: I thank the member for the question. I know the member for Thuringowa is incredibly passionate about our region and he works incredibly hard every day for the people in his electorate. We understand the importance of attracting visitors to Townsville to see the growing city reach its potential as an economic powerhouse of the north. That is why we have committed \$100 million over four years in the state budget for the Townsville stadium. The project will create more than 500 jobs during construction and a further 1,000 jobs through increased economic activity. As the Premier's appointed champion of the stadium, I will work closely with my cabinet colleagues to make sure our stadium becomes a reality.

I am absolutely delighted to stand here today and advise the House that my federal Labor colleagues have listened. That is right. Federal Labor leader Bill Shorten was in our great city of Townsville yesterday and committed to funding the Townsville stadium.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Pause the clock.

Mrs O'ROURKE: We have committed \$100 million towards the stadium from this state budget, but what have we got from Tony Abbott and his LNP member for Herbert? Nothing! It is the same head-in-the-sand mentality we see from their state colleagues. We have a federal LNP member who does not care about his region and has ruled out his government funding the project. That is despite Townsville Enterprise saying the stadium is strongly supported by the Townsville community, with 72.5 per cent believing the federal government in particular should support the development. The Property Council's Queensland executive director, Chris Mountford, also supports the stadium saying—

The fact the government committed \$100 million to the stadium shows how well the community came together to jointly express their support, and is testament to the amount of work that has gone on behind the scenes to get us this far.

I am a proud North Queenslander and I will not stop fighting for the stadium that North Queenslanders want and the stadium that they deserve. We want to reinforce Townsville's position as a strong, thriving city that will attract visitors, investment and new residents. The stadium forms part of a bigger plan for Townsville with last week the Deputy Premier joining me and Mayor Jenny Hill to open consultation for the Townsville City Waterfront Priority Development Area. The proposed scheme will transform 97 hectares of waterfront land in Townsville into a world-class precinct of apartments, retail, commercial and public spaces.

Mr SPEAKER: Before I call the member for Hinchinbrook, if the member for Surfers Paradise, the member for Clayfield, the member for Kawana, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Education want to have discussions, please have them outside of this chamber.

Budget, Natural Resources and Mines

Mr CRIPPS: My question without notice is to the Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. I note the minister's name appears alongside that of his director-general in this week's budget papers for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, and I ask: given the minister and DG have jointly presented the Service Delivery Statement, does this mean that the director-general of the Department of Natural Resources and Mines has his full confidence and support?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Hinchinbrook for his question. Yes, he has countersigned the document with me, as is appropriate for any director-general to countersign the document with me. It is a pity the member is not going to the content of the document, as I thought he probably should. Has the member read the content of the documents? If he had read the content of the documents he would see that in the Department of Natural Resources and Mines we have had \$4.1 million in rent deferrals, rebate and fee waivers to help ease the financial burden of those affected by drought.

Mr SPEAKER: Minister, one moment. I would ask you to make sure that your answer is relevant to the question that has been asked.

Dr LYNHAM: Directors-general presently in their positions are working closely with their ministers.

Budget, Ambulance Service

Mr CRAWFORD: My question is for the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services. Will the minister advise the House how the Queensland Ambulance Service will benefit from the state budget?

Mr DICK: I thank the member for Barron River for his question. He knows a bit about the Ambulance Service, having served as a paramedic for many years, along with his colleague the member for Thuringowa. They are two members of this parliament who are deeply engaged with primary and emergency care in our community and our budget. We are still waiting for a question from those opposite about the Health budget. They want to talk about bits and pieces and they want to talk about trivia, but let us talk about the budget.

We have a record Health budget in Queensland of \$14.2 billion. We know the Ambulance Service is important. Why? Because of incidents like Ravenshoe, about which we heard this morning. We heard about the emergency response that those great paramedics gave to our state. We value the Ambulance Service, which is why this government is going to provide a record \$633.3 million for the Queensland Ambulance Service this year so that those paramedics can get on with the job.

What does that mean for staffing? This year we are recruiting 75 additional ambulance paramedics, which is a 25 per cent increase on the 60 positions funded by the previous government in its last budget. We are funding 25 per cent more with 75 new ambulance paramedics, enhancing roster cover. This year we will have 155 new or replacement ambulances coming online. We have \$45.4 million for capital works.

The members opposite want to talk about a plan. I will tell them about the construction plan for ambulance services. If the members opposite do not want that plan, if they do not want the new and refurbished ambulance stations in their electorates, they just need to let me know, because as the Premier has said time and time again this is a Labor government that delivers for all of Queensland. What are we doing in capital works? We are going to complete the ambulance stations at Miriam Vale and Russell Island. We are going to complete the design and start construction of ambulance stations at Birtinya—where is that? In Kawana—Rainbow Beach and Gympie. If members do not want it, they can let me know. We are continuing the replacement station and relief quarters on Thursday Island and building new or replacement stations at Bundaberg and Collinsville. We are going to start design work for new stations at Kenilworth and Yandina on the Sunshine Coast and Coral Gardens on the Gold Coast. If the LNP members from the Gold Coast do not want the Coral Gardens station, they can let me know and I am happy to change it.

This is what Labor governments do. We find the money and we deliver the front-line services that people need in this state, which has a growing and ageing population. It is important to us. This government will back our paramedics, we will back our emergency dispatchers, we will back our patient transport officers and we will deliver world-class pre-hospital emergency ambulance care.

(Time expired)

Rural and Regional Queensland, Electoral Redistribution

Mr KNUTH: My question without notice is to the Premier. As the Premier has expressed great passion for rural and regional Queensland, does the Premier acknowledge that, again, three to four of those seats are projected to be abolished in the next redistribution, removing further representation? Will the Premier work with the parliament to ensure rural and regional Queensland is not again robbed of that representation?

Speaker's Ruling, Question Out of Order

Mr SPEAKER: One moment, Premier. Member for Dalrymple, I am going to have to rule that question out of order because, as I understand it, it is the subject of a bill currently before the House. Did you have an alternative question you would like to put?

Mr KNUTH: No, thank you.

Budget, Education

Mr PEGG: My question is to the Minister for Education. Will the minister update the House on the investment being made in this budget for the education sector to accommodate growth?

Ms JONES: I thank the honourable member for Stretton for the question. Along with my colleagues, I had the great honour of opening the electorate office of the honourable member for Stretton. He asked me to go because he is passionate about education. I had the opportunity to meet with many of the P&C and P&F representatives and principals from schools in his electorate. Therefore, it is fitting that today he asks this question about the state budget's record investment in education in Queensland.

That is right! Members opposite do not want to talk about the state budget, but this is another opportunity for me to get up here and talk about how the Palaszczuk government is delivering record investment in Queensland education. Part of that is \$5 million for Calamvale Special School in the electorate of the honourable member for Stretton. I am very pleased to see that that is part of the investment we are making in capital works. There is \$300 million in additional money for maintenance in schools, bringing it to over three-quarters of a billion dollars of maintenance investment in our schools. That is on top of the extra investment we are seeing in our teachers. We are ticking the boxes in every single area of delivering improved services when it comes to Queensland schools.

Members do not have to take just my word for it. The House will be very pleased to know that all of our key stakeholders in education have welcomed the record investment in education. P&Cs Queensland, which represents all the parents whose children go to our wonderful state schools, said—

Most significantly, the announcements of \$152.4 million over three years to deliver extra teachers is a significant approach to answering parents' demands for smaller class sizes and for secondary school teachers who have specific subject expertise.

We deliver teachers and we boost teachers; they cut teachers.

Independent Schools Queensland said that it welcomes the increased funding in the state budget, stating—

This capital investment recognises the important role that independent schools play in the provision of school infrastructure across Queensland and that funding is required for new and expanding schools.

The Premier will be very pleased to hear that Independent Schools Queensland also welcomes the \$180 million Advance Queensland strategy.

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission welcomes the budget. We have heard that the QTU welcomes the budget. The Queensland P&F association welcomes the budget. Even my old mate, the member for Hinchinbrook, welcomes the budget, although, I have to say, he was not happy to see me back in the parliament. I will read into *Hansard* what he has said—

I warmly welcome the announcement today from the Queensland Government that it will allocate \$90 million in the state budget to build a new school on Townsville's Northern Beaches.

This is good news for families on Townsville's Northern Beaches—as the local MP, it's something I have been fighting for five years ...

I am so pleased that I am back here to deliver something that he has been fighting for five years for. I am delivering the school that, despite having three years in government, he could never ever deliver.

A government member: Campbell wouldn't give it to you.

Ms JONES: Campbell did not do it, but Kate is here to help.

Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, Staffing

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: My question is to the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. Can the minister advise if the 138 jobs that Labor has confirmed will be cut from the Department of Agriculture are front-line staff?

Mr BYRNE: Twice in one week I have felt the warm embrace of the opposition. I am absolutely thrilled. What have we seen in the past couple of days? We have seen an opposition that struggles to come to grips with reading an SDS. It struggles to come to grips with reading the budget papers. Frankly, it is a bizarre point of view to be putting forward. I will start from the beginning on this.

There are no job cuts in the Department of Agriculture. There are no redundancies, either forced or 'voluntary', as was much espoused by those opposite over the last term of government. In the budget papers we have seen an accurate reflection of where we sit. I will go into a little bit of background on this. The number of full-time equivalents in the department fluctuates over a reporting cycle as DAF responds to government priorities and changing service circumstances. Over the past four reporting periods, from June 2012 staff numbers in DAF fell by 667 FTEs. That is the record they have across the table. That is what they have been saying across the table. There are no forced redundancies. There are no job cuts; none whatsoever. The requirements for the reporting of staff figures in the

Service Delivery Statement are not the easiest to follow for some, which is clearly evident. The FTE staffing numbers in the SDS reflect nominal thresholds. That is what they are about: nominal thresholds or staffing caps. That is something to take away and think about. They are not about actual positions.

The document states at footnote 7—

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr BYRNE: Go and look at footnote 7. It states that the overall cap of possible FTEs has been changed to better reflect the position within the department. For example, the cap in 2014-15 was set at 2,168 and yet there were only 1,981 FTE positions actually occupied. In the 2015-16 budget we have fully funded all current staff positions and are progressively building our capability and capacity to achieve a revised FTE level.

Staffing levels in Biosecurity Queensland remain stable and in keeping with usual protocols as they are supplemented by labour hire staff to respond to the tropical race 4 outbreak. As members would have seen in the budget papers, there is nearly \$10 million in additional funding. I am sure members opposite would be very appreciative of that funding. Learn to read the SDS!

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Before I call the member for Maryborough, can I counsel the member for Nanango. During that answer you did not rise to a point of order in relation to relevance but you continually spoke during the minister's response. I would urge you not to continue.

Budget, State Development and Natural Resources and Mines

Mr SAUNDERS: My question is to the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines. Will the minister advise the House about the response of his portfolio's key stakeholders to the first Palaszczuk budget?

Dr LYNHAM: I thank the member for Maryborough for his question. I note his keen interest in the resources sector and what it means for regional Queensland. I also know he is a staunch advocate for development in the Maryborough region and wants to see development press ahead for the economic development of his area.

Yesterday three of my portfolio's key stakeholders—the Queensland Resources Council, AgForce and the Local Government Association of Queensland—recognised the budget's contribution to regional Queensland. The QRC's member companies make their profits in regional Queensland and they are aware of the need for critical community infrastructure such as water and sewerage infrastructure, particularly in remote and resource-producing communities.

The QRC were 'delighted to see that the budget delivers the government's \$200 million Building our Regions program a year earlier than promised.' They recognise the value in our move to bring forward funding of \$100 million to this financial year instead of it commencing in the 2016-17 financial year. This step will mean approved projects could begin in regional communities as early as January next year, creating jobs and boosting local economies and infrastructure.

The LGAQ similarly noted the Building our Regions commitment as well as the move by my colleague the Minister for Main Roads to restore funding to the Transport Infrastructure Development Scheme. LGAQ president, Margaret de Wit, said that councils should find a lot to like about the budget and further that this budget contains key signals as to the government's overall economic and political direction and a healthy amount of spending focuses on job creation and infrastructure. A common theme from these stakeholders is that Labor has delivered on its election commitments.

The Queensland Resources Council CEO, Michael Roche, noted that the budget delivered on our election commitments and produced a substantial operating surplus. The important commitment we met for the resource sector was no increase in royalties. However, beyond this the QRC also noted that the budget does not appear to resort to clawback through other taxes, fees and charges.

Treasury officials themselves earned kudos from the QRC which described their assumptions about coal prices and exchange rates as realistic, achievable and conservative. It stated—

The Treasurer has made smart use of the state's financial assets to deliver reduced budget debt and substantial savings in interest costs.

AgForce described the Treasurer's first budget as sound and said it showed the government was listening to people in rural Queensland.

The QRC made one final pitch in its wish list and that was further infrastructure announcements to come. I am sure that we will have plenty to say next year. I know that because this is a government that is focused on jobs—jobs now and jobs into the future.

Budget, Health

Ms BATES: My question without notice is to the Minister for Health. I note that the Health SDS has left blank performance measures for outpatient waiting times, and I ask: why did the minister choose to leave out these vitally important performance targets?

Mr DICK: Because we are investing \$361 million this year into fixing the wait list for the wait list. For the first time ever we are going to look at the entire patient journey. As a consequence, as often happens, and as the member for Mudgeeraba would know—I am not sure whether or not she went through a budget process as minister; if she did she would know—the SDS changes. Performance measures change from year to year to accurately reflect what is happening in government.

In this case, we are going to invest \$360 million into the entire patient journey. That is from when someone goes to a GP all the way through to their entrance into hospital. We are going to be dealing with the 100,000 people who were left behind by your government, member for Mudgeeraba, and left behind by the Leader of the Opposition when he was health minister. One hundred thousand people were waiting for treatment beyond the clinically recommended time. The member for Caloundra has not asked me about this. I have not been asked these important questions. I am yet to get a question from the member for Caloundra on the budget. At least you had the gumption to ask me a question on the budget, I will give you that much, member for Mudgeeraba.

We will invest this amount. It is not a magic bullet. It will not solve all the problems with regard to the waiting lists. I have said all along that we will take a realistic, genuine, transparent and open approach to dealing with waiting lists. We are not going to ignore and leave behind people when we are focused solely—

Mr Springborg: You hid them. You hid them in government.

Mr DICK: I will take the interjection—we hid them. How could we possibly be hiding them when we are investing \$361 million into this project? This is not money that the Leader of the Opposition put in. He did not put this sort of money in. He abandoned them and left them behind. He set up a wait-time gimmick.

While I am on this, I ask the Leader of the Opposition again to release the cabinet papers that demonstrate that the \$500 million that he said was there was there. He said the money was there. He said in this House that the budgeted money was there. Where are the cabinet papers—release them?

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: No, release them.

Mr Springborg interjected.

Mr DICK: You can go to the member for Caloundra because he was in your cabinet when the \$500 million was authorised. Perhaps the member for Caloundra, instead of making cheap shots, can get to the heart of where the \$500 million that you said in this parliament in a debate was funded for that program was. I have tabled my spreadsheet outlining the \$77 million that the department says was allocated and what it was allocated for. You need to come clean, Leader of the Opposition. You have a long history of saying things in this House that cannot be substantiated. I put you on proof to come forward and put up the details.

Mr STEVENS: I rise to a point of order, Mr Speaker. The minister is delivering his answer across the floor. He should be directing his comments through the chair. He has been here long enough now.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. The minister has concluded his response.

Budget, Jobs and Training

Ms DONALDSON: My question is to the Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills. Will the minister provide an update on what initiatives this budget delivers for job creation and training across Queensland?

Mrs D'ATH: I thank the member for Bundaberg for her question. I note her campaigning in the lead-up to the election. I was pleased to join with the member for Bundaberg before the election in standing up for TAFE workers and TAFE staff. I thank her for her passionate contribution last night in the debate on the QTAMA Repeal Bill, which I was very pleased to see go through this House last night.

This budget is about jobs and about investing in skills and training. I am very pleased that for this financial year we will see a \$6.3 million investment as part of our Rescuing TAFE funding and as part of our \$34.5 million commitment over the next five years. We will also deliver \$40 million over the next

four years to establish Jobs Queensland—an independent body made up of experts in varying fields who will come together to give advice to the government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning.

We are also creating an independent Training Ombudsman—with funding of \$5 million over three years. We are fulfilling our commitment to allocate 10 per cent of total labour hours on eligible government funded infrastructure projects to apprentices and trainees, and this will be extended to projects in Indigenous communities and to projects funded by government owned corporations and public-private partnerships.

We are also investing \$60 million this financial year in Skilling Queenslanders for Work. We did not even need to wait for Tuesday's budget before we got third parties coming out saying how great this particular project is. I go back to 8 April and a media release from the Ai Group. The Ai Group put out a press release headed, 'Ai Group welcomes re-instatement of Skilling Queenslanders for Work program.' The press release states—

"Today's announcement of the reinstatement of the *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program is a step in the right direction towards delivering a skilled and productive workforce for Queensland," Australian Industry Group Queensland Director Jemina Dunn said ...

She goes on to say—

"Delivering targeted training to suit the needs of Queensland business is critical in developing a strong economy. Collaborative initiatives such as this not only have the potential to support productivity and growth for industry but also offer individuals, especially the young and long term unemployed, an opportunity to secure their own futures through training and the attainment of meaningful qualifications.

I thank the endorsement from the Ai Group about the initiative of Skilling Queenslanders for Work. It is disappointing though that in the national partnership this year we see a \$2.2 million actual cut in funding from the federal government, but this is what we come to expect from the LNP. Labor will stand up for jobs and for Queenslanders when it comes to investing in training. We know that the LNP just rip the money out.

Mr SPEAKER: That concludes question time.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (Parliament) Bill resumed from 14 July (see p. 1302) and Appropriation Bill resumed from 14 July (see p. 1316).

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (11.31 am): I move—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Mr SPRINGBORG** (Southern Downs—LNP) (Leader of the Opposition) (11.31 am): Just two months ago the Treasurer rose to his feet. With a lame skit worthy of the hammiest of pantomimes, he played amateur magician and extracted a coin from behind the ear of the member for Sandgate. What a sad indictment it truly is that that was all the Treasurer really had. Tuesday's budget proves he is an amateur. Tuesday's budget proves he is hoping to pull a rabbit out of a hat. Sadly for Queenslanders, I again say that the Treasurer has nothing else.

When the LNP was elected to government in 2012 it followed more than a decade of unsustainable public expenditure, exponential growth in government debt and years of deficit. Tuesday's budget puts Queensland back on that path again. A windfall of \$33 billion in revenue during a resources boom and a deceptive sale of public assets netting \$15 billion was shamelessly squandered by both the Beattie and Bligh governments, while Annastacia Palaszczuk and Curtis Pitt sat watching on as debt and deficit continued to spiral out of control.

Queensland Health was the laughing stock of public administration, with enough money wasted on the Queensland Health payroll to buy the aircraft carrier the USS *George Washington* and indeed have a quarter of a billion dollars left over—\$1.2 billion for a system that could not pay hardworking nurses and hospital staff on time and could not pay them correctly; \$1.2 billion wasted as the Nurses' Union bosses stood mute on the sidelines while nurses and their families went without.

There were 230,000 people on a secret waiting list for the waiting list, and every year another 20,000 people were joining their ranks. Thousands of people were waiting longer than recommended for surgery while Queensland Health staff watched as the fake Tahitian prince ran amok with taxpayers' money. That is Labor's legacy in health.

It was not much better in education. There was an exodus of students from state schools as buildings deteriorated in the face of a \$300 million maintenance black hole. There were no new schools being planned despite Queensland's booming population. Parents, teachers and principals—the people who know their children best—had no say in setting the direction of their child's education. School staff were too busy filling out forms as bureaucracy went mad. That is what we were left with in education.

The agriculture and resources sector was also gripped by bureaucratic green and red tape. Projects were stalled and water was diverted from productive farming in the name of rabid green policies that showed no regard for our hardworking Queensland families but satisfied union bosses and their greedy mates who were pulling the Labor government's strings.

They were not forced to pay the double digit public transport fare increases that were driving away commuters from our buses and trains. When passengers ventured on board, the trains were crowded and running late. As transport fares skyrocketed, Labor did not forget to slug the cost of driving on to the family car. Rego hit the roof, increasing by 30 per cent over four years. That is what Labor's former transport minister, the now Premier, left as her legacy.

This Labor government is also returning to its legacy of being soft on crime. When we came to government outlaw motorcycle gangs were terrorising our communities, with family homes robbed and violent crime increasing as they plied their despicable drug trade on our streets. Extortion and standover tactics were rife, as was a whole range of other illicit activity, while the police and emergency services were fighting crime with their hands tied behind their backs without the aid of modern resources such as a secure digital radio network. The LNP was committed to making Queensland a safe place to raise a family.

We were just as committed to ensuring tourists felt safe when they visited. Unlike Labor, the LNP recognised the importance of tourism to the economy. Labor had no cohesive strategy for this critical industry—just a relentless campaign of destruction from the Greens and unions talking down our state's greatest natural asset, the Great Barrier Reef. Labor's only plan for this natural wonder of the world was to dump 38 million cubic metres of dredge spoil on the Great Barrier Reef.

When the LNP came to government we had the task of fixing the mess Labor had left not only on the reef but on the land as well from Cooktown to Coolangatta. After three years of LNP government and tough decisions, the escalating public debt projected by Labor to reach \$85 billion had been slashed to \$75 billion, without asset leases. Front-line services had also been improved. Students were returning to our state schools. Confidence was again building in our state education system. The backlog of maintenance had been cleared. Thousands of parents, teachers, principals and stakeholders sat down to draft a 30-year plan for public education and the accord. But, most importantly, results were improving thanks to dedicated literacy and numeracy plans for each and every Queensland state school.

Labor's secret waiting list for the waiting list was made public and its spiralling growth had been stopped. Surgical long waits had been all but eliminated and ambulance ramping at hospitals had all but stopped. Public transport fares had been reduced and private motor vehicle rego had not increased for three years. Labor's five-year double digit electricity price increases, which were in the high teens, had been reduced to low single digits. The resources and agriculture sector had been given investment certainty and our streets were much safer after tackling organised crime. Property crime rates were also falling. For the first time the tourism sector had a cohesive plan with our DestinationQ strategy. Our reef had been saved with the Queensland government's decision to ensure dredge spoil was redirected on to suitable land, not on to the reef.

The LNP laid out its plan for the state and had an honest conversation with Queenslanders about leasing assets to kickstart our infrastructure plan and improve front-line services. Labor stood up and said it would not lease assets. Labor stood up and said jobs could be created, infrastructure built and debt paid down using dividends from GOCs and through merging state owned electricity companies. Labor stood up and did not level with Queenslanders. Labor has form when it comes to that. They will say anything to get into power. Union bosses will say anything to get Labor into government. But what they did with the treasury bench once they got in was a totally different story. Remember Anna Bligh in 2009? Now people will also remember Annastacia Palaszczuk in 2015. Say one thing; do another.

As we saw on Tuesday, Labor's first budget carried through on virtually none of their election promises. During the election campaign the member for Mulgrave promised to amalgamate the three electricity distribution network businesses of Ergon, Energex and Powerlink into a more efficient network business. The Treasurer was confident he would achieve more than \$150 million a year in savings. Where is that money now? The merger proposal seems to have evaporated. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has stopped short of saying that it would block it, but it got very close. I will quote the chairman, Mr Rod Simms, who said, 'When Queensland folded Tarong and Stanwell and CS, they turned the Queensland generation sector into the most concentrated one in the national electricity market, at least in the mainland states.' That was very worrying and negative for competition. To further consolidate would mean that this entity would create and hold 66 per cent of the electricity market, which would clearly raise grave concerns in relation to competition in the Queensland market.

Here comes the punchline—the sting in the tail. If you decrease competition in the generation market then you can increase the cost of generation, and that can flow through to the consumer. That is right: increased costs can flow through to the consumer. Labor delivers higher electricity prices once again, and what a shock that would be to Queensland electricity consumers.

The Treasurer's plan to use the very same companies and their dividend returns is not going to work very well after the magic debt disappearing trick he attempted on Tuesday. Transferring debt from one government department to another does not make it go away. It simply kicks the problem further down the road. Transferring one credit card debt to another credit card debt does not make the problem go away. Someone has to pay for it in the future, and that is future generations of Queenslanders. Queenslanders are not gullible. When you strip away the segments of this budget, people are starting to get to the truth. Initially people will welcome additional expenditure, but after that dies down those who know the circumstances behind the fabrication of the budget will start to understand that this budget is built on a false premise. This budget is built on raiding reserves. This budget is built on transferring debt to future generations of Queenslanders. The debt is still there—still waiting to be paid off.

I compare the government's approach to the approach of the LNP in government. Despite \$6 billion of writedowns in revenue, despite the fact that there had been serious global economic challenges, the LNP in government was able to reduce the government's debt—the projected Labor debt—from \$85 billion to \$75 billion without selling assets whilst building \$9 billion of infrastructure in the previous state budget and expanding front-line services and investing in the future of Queensland. We did that by prudent management of the resources and reserves of government. That is the fundamental difference between our side of politics and the Labor side of politics. They believe that you fix the problem by growing government. We believe that you fix the problem by making government more productive. They believe that if you cannot borrow and you cannot sell then what you will ultimately have to do after you have dabbled in resources is to increase taxes, and we believe that taxes are an impediment to the entrepreneurial spirit of Queenslanders and the investment that goes with that.

This government will do nothing about productivity, which is fundamentally critical and absolutely crucial to manage expenditure into the future. This government is addicted to the idea that it can just keep spending after it raids reserves, after it borrows, after it sold assets and after it had \$33 billion of windfall revenue.

On 16 January Curtis Pitt said that he would quarantine 66 per cent of dividends raised by government owned corporations for a debt management trust, but there is not one mention of it in the budget papers—not one. What happened to that bright idea? Instead, on Tuesday he saddled them with \$4 billion of additional debt that power consumers will have to pay in Queensland. Then he makes an oblique reference in his speech to now looking at unburdening some of that lazy public servant superannuation money and investing it into increasing debt ridden electricity GOCs. Ask public servants if they think that is a wise investment for the future. Ask them; they are quite astute. They understand that their investments which are being made for them should be on assets which are not burdened by debt and assets that make a high return. They are again setting Queensland public servants up for a two-card trick so that their money can be put into helping this government with its financial incompetence. Am I right in thinking that those were the same companies he was counting on to bankroll his jobs, infrastructure and innovation fund pipedream? Yes, they are. This means that they cannot be.

Anyone running a household budget would not last very long using Labor's accounting practices. You cannot ask a family to take on more debt, reduce their ability to repay it and then beg them to stump up extra cash to buy food and services for their kids. There is no magic money tree as much as the Treasurer would indicate that. We see places around the world that are now struggling with the

reality of that particular fact. That is my fear for this great state of ours. That is all the Treasurer has: crossed fingers, gambling Queensland's financial security on a wing and a prayer, and that is not good enough.

In his own budget projections he expects unemployment to rise and employment and economic growth to weaken. We heard the narrative before the election from the Treasurer. He said that he would bring unemployment down. He said that he would increase employment growth, and economic growth projections in Queensland would all expand. The only thing that has expanded in the budget is this government's projection around unemployment. They are projecting a higher rate of unemployment than what was being achieved and what was projected by the former LNP government in Queensland.

Despite all their protestations about this being a jobs budget, the unemployment rate is not forecast to drop below six per cent over the forward estimates. Employment growth will average 1.7 per cent over the next three years compared to 2.2 per cent forecast under the LNP. Economic growth will also be lower. Already the growth forecast has dropped from 5.75 per cent this year to 4.5 per cent. Despite this, Labor is already planning to spend up big, forecasting a 4.1 per cent general government expense growth across the forward estimates. This compares to 3.7 per cent expense growth projected under the LNP. Our figures show that any expenses growth above 3.7 per cent would mean increased taxes and charges.

They have got to get the money from somewhere, and that somewhere is from the pockets of Queensland taxpayers. For the record, over our three years in government, growth in government expenses was limited to 1.2 per cent. That meant we did not have to increase taxes and charges over and above inflation. In fact, we were able to reduce the costs of buying the family home by more than \$7,000. We froze car registration, and we were able to reduce public transport fares. There are no new major infrastructure projects which were not planned or already being completed under the LNP government in this budget because the Treasurer is still making it up as he goes. His mantra throughout January was jobs, jobs, jobs, and the Premier also said the same thing. What did we get on Tuesday from the member for Mulgrave? We got \$240 million on Skilling Queenslanders for Work, a duplication of a federal government responsibility, and moving people off the unemployment queue to a classroom, so being trained for jobs that do not exist because this Labor government is doing nothing to grow the economy.

Instead Labor is growing government—19 new bureaucracies—and in Labor's first 12 months it will spend \$1 billion on hiring another 3,000 public servants. The LNP did not take the decision to reduce the size of the Public Service lightly in Queensland. It was much debated and considered. Labor's budget throws dirt in the face of those hardworking public servants who took a voluntary redundancy—knowing that previous Labor governments had grown the Public Service to unsustainable levels. Instead of banking those hard-earned savings from the reduction in the Public Service, Labor have spent almost half—that is right, almost half; more than \$1 billion—in their limited time in office. On Tuesday, they bowed their heads and shuffled their feet as the budget paper showed that unemployment is going to remain around 6.5 per cent in the out years.

This budget is a critical breach of the trust of Queenslanders. Nowhere in the government's election manifesto did they mention \$6 billion worth of raids on the long service leave entitlements of public servants or superannuation contributions. This is very bad housekeeping. This is bad policy. This is against the fiscal principles of all governments past—Labor, coalition and LNP. This is against this state's long-held fiscal principles.

The best that we have heard during the course of this week from this government is a rush to the lowest common denominator—an aspiration to achieve what has been achieved in other places. They are not putting this money away in reserve for the future, which is very, very important to ensure that we do not have to increase taxes, we do not have to borrow and we do not have to take from somewhere else in order to pay for the entitlements of Queensland's public sector employees. Now is not the time to be playing with the hard-earned cash of Queensland's public servants. Global financial markets are volatile at best. It is not just Europe and Greece; the stocks of the world's second largest economy, China, have fluctuated considerably in recent weeks and have people concerned.

People join the Public Service and build a career predicated on the knowledge that their superannuation is being managed prudently, in a risk averse way and backed by a government guarantee. The defined benefit scheme was a magnet for many talented workers who tailored their working life around assumptions based on historic patterns. It is prudent financial management but,

Mr Speaker, please do not just take my word for it. Peter Beattie in 2005 said that providing a buffer against periods when the markets are not so strong was a strategic key to his strong balance sheet. In 2001 Terry Mackenroth boasted that Labor had—

... consistently pursued sound long-term policies such as ensuring that not only are employee superannuation entitlements fully funded, but other liabilities such as employee long service leave entitlements are also fully funded.

Even Andrew Fraser told this House that Queensland Investment Corporation money was—

... invested on the market for Queensland ... to meet long-term liabilities such as the superannuation expenses. That money has never been provided or utilised to fund the day-to-day expenses of teachers, doctors, nurses and the other people who work for the state. It is quite a separate provision.

Mr Fraser went on to say—

I will be the first to acknowledge that that provision has been there through generations of strong financial leadership from both sides of politics. In that context, as a state we are uniquely placed to look forward to having that long-term liability fully provisioned. We are unique amongst the states of Australia, unique amongst the governments of Australia and, as far as I can tell, unique in the world in having that benefit.

On Tuesday, Curtis Pitt ripped all that away from Queenslanders. On Tuesday, the Treasurer removed the security of retirement and the guaranteed funding of long service leave for Queensland's public servants, ripping \$3.4 billion from the long service leave fund. I did not hear anything about this in January. I did not hear the member for Mulgrave or the member for Inala telling Queenslanders that they would be raiding their nest eggs as their financial solution. That is because they either did not know or they were not levelling with Queenslanders, and I suspect it was probably a combination of both. This is yet another example of an inexperienced government, amateurs, making it up as they go. If the contingent liability is not funded today, it simply must be paid for by future generations of taxpayers.

Let us clearly understand this: the Labor government are raiding \$3.4 billion, already provisioned in reserve, to fully meet long service leave obligations for Queensland's public sector employees, to pay for their own profligacy, to create a debt reduction illusion, a sleight of hand, and then they will have to tax more, borrow more or take from somewhere else to pay for emergent long service leave liabilities. Taxpayers in effect pay twice. Once the Labor government have opened the way by diverting and spending money earmarked for the superannuation scheme, the next step is for them to do the same as they are doing now for the accumulated long service leave entitlements for superannuation—that is, take the money out and spend it—and promise to fund defined benefit superannuation obligations, as they are required, at the time of retirement.

This is scary stuff, but no more scary and far-fetched than it would have been to suggest last budget or even last week that we were going to see raids on superannuation and long service leave in this week's state budget. This simply opens the door for an attack on the accumulated benefits of Queensland taxpayers and public servants into the future. Some public servants may have a beef with the LNP, but one thing we have always done, unlike Labor, is to fully fund and protect these accrued entitlements.

The true independent judges of this budget, its integrity and where it is likely to head are the ratings agencies. They have not fallen for the trick of operating surpluses or the raiding of Public Service entitlements to give the illusion of debt reduction. These are the same ratings agencies that reduced Queensland's credit rating when Labor was last in power and did not fall for all of their two-card tricks then. They have warned that the debt position will weaken and only take any notice of fiscal surpluses when assessing the strength of the Queensland government balance sheet. Respected ratings agencies Moody's and Standard & Poor's have said things in the last few days. Moody's were projecting a deterioration in its financial performance in the fiscal year of 2015-16 and over the next four years when compared to projections made one year ago in the fiscal year 2014-15 budget. They also warned about a return to uncontrolled public expenditure, weakening our balance sheet. In the words of Standard & Poor's—

These measures are unlikely to have a substantial impact on the government's non-financial public sector debt.

The Treasurer's fancy footwork in claiming to be reducing debt will do nothing to put Queensland back on track to restoring its AAA credit rating. It will probably reduce it even further or certainly put us at risk of reduction. If anything, as I said, it compromises our chances of getting our AAA credit rating back—it puts it further into the future. The message from the ratings agencies is that Queensland has too much gross debt and this budget fails to address that issue. The ratings agencies have also made it clear in their assessments in recent years that debt reduction alone will not get us back on track. They want us to look holistically at our expenditure, our productivity and the way that we manage public finances in Queensland.

They are looking for evidence that government expenses have been brought under control over a sustained period. They liked what they were seeing under the LNP, with expenses reined in to a level of growth Queenslanders could afford, but I am sure they will not like what they are seeing from Labor. This budget puts Queensland back on the trajectory headed towards blowouts in government expenditure. Last November Standard & Poor's endorsed the careful financial management of the LNP government and indicated the AAA credit rating could be within reach in the medium term. I have seen no such indication after Labor's first budget, delivered on Tuesday. What we see with this budget is hope of restoring that AAA credit rating receding even further and at an accelerating rate. That comes at a cost to Queenslanders because it means we have to pay higher interest also on our borrowings. It means less money available for schools and hospitals, teachers and nurses, roads and rail, and more money in the pockets of bankers at home and overseas.

The raid on public servants' entitlements is akin to a one-off sugar hit. It cannot be repeated next year and the underlying problem of debt and deficit will continue. It ensures that this budget has transgenerational consequences. It borrows from the future rather than invests in the future. There are no new public sector reserves; there is simply the raiding of reserves and the creation of future liabilities. Debt increases and cash reserves are depleted to create the illusion of fiscal responsibility and progress in reducing indebtedness. The state is eventually left defenceless against future economic shocks and future generations will be left to pay for this gross financial and fiscal irresponsibility, and therein lies the rub.

In fact, the budget papers already point to debt worsening over the course of this term. Gross debt will continue to rise towards \$80 billion. Despite the raids on Public Service entitlements, general government debt will increase past \$40 billion over the forward estimates. Respected financial commentator Judith Sloan said—

The raiding of the long-service leave provision is also too cute by half.

...

Pitt's first budget is the classic case of financial sleight-of-hand.

My shadow cabinet will be outlining the detailed impacts of this budget, of tricks and raids in their various portfolio areas, but I would like to share with the House some of my fears of what the Treasurer has delivered for Queensland. Instead of coming up with its own infrastructure plan, the government has spruiked private projects that have absolutely no government funding such as the Pacific Fair Shopping Centre. Under the LNP, 90 per cent of projects commenced within four months of their scheduled commencement date. This has slipped to 73 per cent in Labor's budget. That is a significant deterioration and is bad news for business and business confidence in Queensland. Despite Labor's criticism of the LNP's infrastructure priorities, this budget shows that they are good at glossy studies but cannot provide any funding to build public transport infrastructure projects like the Gold Coast Light Rail or the north coast line duplication. Labor scrapped the BaT tunnel, but there is not one cent in the budget for a replacement, leaving Brisbane commuters staring down the barrel of more horrific congestion in the future.

Capital purchases are down by more than \$800 million, comparing last year's budget to this year's budget. Similarly, capital grants are also down by \$500 million. Despite promises of spending more, the Queensland government is spending less and the community is getting less—much less—under this government in the area of critical capital works and those sorts of projects which are supported by that area of the budget. The budget also slashes statewide infrastructure programs including the boating infrastructure minor works program from \$18 million to \$9.5 million.

This Labor government claims to be pro jobs, but nearly every project underway had already started under the LNP government. There are also projects along the Bruce Highway, the Toowoomba second range crossing, the Gateway Motorway north upgrade and the next generation rolling stock program, which are leftovers from the LNP's time in government. Queenslanders voted for a jobs focused government. Tuesday's budget has left them very, very seriously let down.

Last year the LNP increased the Health budget by seven per cent. This year the Treasurer has only provided another 4.1 per cent. We have heard much from the health minister about record budgets but nowhere near the record increase of last year. Without proper expenditure properly focused with proper productivity, I have grave concerns about what this means for Queenslanders accessing our public health system. In return, the health minister wants a productivity dividend of 2.5 per cent. It will be interesting to see how that is delivered.

Before the election, Labor promised to stop outsourcing in Health, but on Tuesday the Treasurer revealed it would be allowed to continue. The member for Woodridge has been given \$361.2 million over four years to reduce waiting times for outpatients, but there are no performance measures. That is where they went wrong in the past: increasing expenditure in Health in their previous iteration by 43 per cent over six years and improving outcomes by only 17 per cent. Improving productivity by 17 per cent and expenditure of 43 per cent—it just does not stack up. They have done the same with children's health. Despite increasing funding, they also expect sick children in Queensland to wait longer for care than ever before. They are happy with eight in 10 people being seen on time, a significant deterioration on what we were achieving in government. Pity the poor child who is left waiting for their procedure or in the emergency waiting room.

Labor has slashed grassroots environmental programs. The LNP delivered \$12 million over three years through the Everyone's Environment grant scheme. Labor has ripped half a million dollars out of the Heritage Protection program, with no money set aside solely for koala protection. Instead, this money has been put into another climate change bureaucracy. So there is more bureaucracy and less protection of our koalas in Queensland under this Labor government. Labor is going to spend an additional \$100 million on the Great Barrier Reef and water quality initiatives, and I can understand why they think they would need to. The Greens and various ragtag groups mounted a relentless campaign of falsehoods and negativity aimed at getting the reef on the endangered list and because of our hard work in government, we were able to avoid that. Despite this campaign, run with calculation but without regard for the thousands of Queenslanders whose livelihoods depend on the tourism industry based along this great natural wonder, UNESCO recently acknowledged the hard work of the LNP and also acknowledged that protection would avert its listing.

Labor is also phasing out sandmining on North Stradbroke Island, with just \$20 million over five years to develop the North Stradbroke Island economic transition strategy. This is completely insufficient. By extending the mining leases for Enterprise Mine from 2019 to 2035, the economic gains could include extra mineral production of \$1.5 billion—value added to the Queensland economy with another \$950 million, royalties to the state of around \$75.7 million and approximately 107 full-time-equivalent jobs and the flow-on jobs that could be created there. Let us see how the greenies feel about that, watching on their television screens which was made possible by the products that are mined on that island.

Let us look at a smaller example with QRAA. These are the hardworking men and women who process disaster relief for Queenslanders at their most vulnerable after being hit by Mother Nature's fury. Labor plans to cut staff by 10 per cent. So in their hour of need Queenslanders will be waiting longer. The Treasurer says that it is okay for eight out of 10 disaster payments to be processed on time. Bad luck if you are one of the two who are left waiting while your house has no roof, the power is off and there is no running water. Eighty per cent is good enough for him, but it is not good enough for us and it is not good enough for Queenslanders. The LNP made sure that 97 per cent of disaster payments were processed on time. That was our promise to Queenslanders and we met it.

For months the Minister for Tourism has been scaremongering that tourism was going to fall off the cliff under the LNP, tossing around amounts like \$180 million was required to stem the flow of supposed cuts by the LNP. In fact, the LNP's final budget deliberations had not been determined. The minister has been scaremongering on Treasury modelling and not using real figures. Instead of continually talking down this magnificent \$23 billion industry that relies upon the amazing icons of the environment of Queensland and saying that the sky is falling, the minister should start promoting our great attractions from Coolangatta to the cape and out west to the vast outback. If the quantum of funding is all that matters, the opposition thanks the Abbott government for contributing more than half of Tourism and Events Queensland's budget.

The federal government is contributing \$85.5 million compared to the state's contribution of \$77.2 million. If we are elected or are called on to form government in Queensland, we in the opposition know that the real work of government is about delivering outcomes and value for money. While in government the LNP committed to a whole-of-government approach. Under the LNP's DestinationQ strategy, the entire tourism industry was brought together to chart a course for its own future success. This year's budget has created doubt about the government's intention to implement the plan in full. A lot of work by the industry has gone into the DestinationQ strategy, and where is Labor's commitment to follow it through?

Something that is emblematic of this is the government's failure to announce the successful tenderer for the Queen's Wharf integrated resort development, which would generate up to 10,000 jobs over the next decade, completely renew a significant part of Brisbane and make us an amazing

destination for the rest of the world. The former LNP government had done all the hard work for the development, and Labor is still simply stalling. The LNP was committed to growing both the tourism and construction sectors, and the Queen's Wharf project was front and centre of this plan. With construction identified as a key economic priority, an alternative LNP government would do more to facilitate the construction of new accommodation stock and its superior economic management would mean more investment in the transport infrastructure on which tourism relies.

Labor continues with its soft-on-crime approach, particularly when it comes to rolling out the red carpet for criminal gangs. Some \$1.8 million over the next two years has been cut from the Crime and Corruption Commission. This was the additional funding the LNP had provided to tackle criminal gangs in Queensland. They are cutting seven jobs. Remember that this is the same Labor government that told this House that all public sector workers were front-line workers and that no front-line workers would lose their jobs under Labor. Well, you cannot have it both ways.

Labor has ripped out \$24 million from the Safe Night Out Strategy, despite the fact that this was a comprehensive plan with 60 initiatives to address alcohol and drug related violence which was drafted by Queenslanders through two phases of considerable public consultation and has much public support and gets the balance right. While there is mention of money in Labor's budget to address alcohol fuelled violence, no-one knows what they intend to do with it. When it comes to policy formation in this area, the Attorney-General has been caught out recently by the *Gold Coast Bulletin* simply making it up as she goes: spruiking one policy in the morning, wasting police time by having them breath-testing law-abiding patrons around a bar or in a lounge who may just want to have a drink with dinner at a restaurant on Saturday evening, and then ruling the idea out in the afternoon after intervention by the Premier's office—yet another harebrained scheme pulled out of the air by this amateur Labor government.

I am pleased to note that Labor is continuing our JP QCAT trial program of using justices of the peace to hear minor civil disputes in QCAT. This is a program that has been acknowledged by both sides and which has ensured that the time for minor civil disputes to be heard by QCAT has almost halved.

They have promised \$145 million over four years to recommission the Borallon Correctional Centre to provide an additional 492 beds. In contrast, we allocated \$127.6 million over five years to recommission Borallon and provide for a total of an additional 650 beds across other centres around Queensland. Nothing exemplifies Labor more than 'spend more, get less'. To be precise, Labor will spend another \$17 million for 158 fewer beds. That does not add up and is a typical Labor return to the past. They are cutting money from critical services like \$15.7 million to help problem gamblers and \$3 million over the next two years for a sex offender rehabilitation program aimed at reducing future risks to the community. This is a Labor government continuing its soft-on-crime past.

Labor is continuing the LNP's promise to deliver 267 more police; however, we hope this means it will be over and above attrition, completing our commitment of an additional 1,100 police. But there is no mention of direct funding for Crime Stoppers and Neighbourhood Watch, despite the LNP providing \$2.5 million per year for two years as reward money through Crime Stoppers for information on criminal motorcycle gangs.

Let us also move to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander matters. Labor says its first strategic objective is more jobs and career opportunities, yet in the service standard area we see that the number of jobs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people facilitated by the department is to be half of what it was last year. We delivered 832 jobs; Labor wants to deliver only 400. That hardly sounds like any sort of a commitment to job creation in Queensland. They are also cutting housing to ATSI residents in targeted communities.

The LNP targeted education after decades of Labor malaise. For the first time students were flocking back to state schools and NAPLAN results were showing positive trends. But on Tuesday, in another dispiriting example of Labor's inexperience and lack of a plan, the Treasurer cut the Great Teachers = Great Results initiative that was focused on three crucial areas: professional excellence in teaching, boosting school autonomy and student discipline. I am glad to see they have continued our program of maintenance in schools, but would it not be good if they continued down the LNP path of concentrating on results, focusing on student outcomes, listening to parents and teachers and making sure our schools are safe, inclusive places to learn.

Let us now turn to the state's food and fibre industries. The fact that the Treasurer did not use the words 'agriculture', 'fisheries' or 'forestry' once in his budget speech shows Queenslanders exactly where this Palaszczuk Labor government places this vital sector. It is clearly not interested in delivering front-line services, despite the continued rhetoric to the contrary. This is evidenced by the

announcement in the budget papers for the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries around staffing. The LNP's commitment to the sector while in government saw it re-establish the department of agriculture. From staffing levels in 2014, Labor has seen that there will be 74 fewer people in agriculture, 60 fewer people in Biosecurity Queensland and six fewer people in fisheries and forestry. Corporate services has seen an increase in positions, which is also vintage Labor. Corporate services and bureaucracy are the critical focus of Labor, not the delivery of front-line services.

Commercial fisheries suffer from decreased funding of the voluntary net fishing buybacks program, which is now the compulsory closure of fishing zones. They have turned their back on rural landholders in Queensland, with vegetation management laws that will have a major impact on future productivity and investment services for agricultural Queenslanders.

When it comes to the Government Wireless Network, the Labor government could only find \$1.1 million which was rolled out from the LNP budget. In contrast, the LNP had committed to spending about \$50 million on the network this year as part of a \$457.3 million commitment to that program. This program is vital for improving communications safety and security for Queensland public safety agencies and emergency workers.

This budget provides nothing but reviews for the state's public housing tenants. The operating position is a deficit of \$80.4 million, which means the maintenance costs are insufficient to meet full depreciation costs for social housing portfolio assets. For a party which pretends to stand up for society's most vulnerable, Labor's record is completely and utterly disgraceful. When the LNP came to government there were almost 32,000 Queenslanders on the public housing waiting list, and when we left office it was just over 20,000. This is not through any contribution of Labor; this is through the contribution of the LNP in an area which Labor traditionally claims to be its own. It says one thing but it does not achieve what it says.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr SPRINGBORG: Where was the former member for Greenslopes at a critical time when public housing tenants in his former electorate—and probably his current electorate—were out there screaming for a place in public housing? He said absolutely nothing. He did not stand up for them, and his legacy of administration in that area is quite appalling.

Labor indicated in Tuesday's budget that it was considering outsourcing public housing, despite saying that it would not. One has to ask: if there was a public housing union, would the planned outsourcing continue? I doubt it. Here again we see the sneakiness of the Palaszczuk Labor government. Remember the 'no asset sales' mantra spouted during the campaign? Then it was 'no major assets', or maybe 'no strategic assets'. I have lost track of the backtracks. But now this budget tells us that it is getting rid of general purpose residences no longer required by government for employee housing. That is a sale by another name.

Let us contrast the ALP's tricks with the LNP and what it is proposing. We have been active. We have also been out there talking to Queenslanders. We have listened to the messages delivered to us by Queenslanders on 31 January. The Labor Party has not. The Labor Party did not level with the people of Queensland. We did. The people of Queensland chose another way. Indeed, I think they would be very surprised by what they got in this budget, because it is not consistent with what Labor took to the electorate. We have been active. We have been out there talking and listening to people across Queensland, and we have also had the opportunity to set our direction for the future. Much of it is based on the achievements of the past which have been left as a positive legacy for this government.

We have a plan. We actually had a plan before this government had a plan. That is the outline of the framework which we will use—a real economic plan for jobs and the strategic direction for Queensland into the future. Indeed, it is interesting to see that this Treasurer has plagiarised from that plan. I announced that we would be moving towards social benefit bonds. What did the Treasurer do? Around a week later he said that Labor would also be having social benefit bonds. I said that we would be moving and building on what the LNP did with regard to unsolicited proposals through a portal, along the lines of what we did in Health when I was the minister. The Treasurer said that he will do the same thing. So even from opposition we are leading the way with ideas for this lazy, lethargic Labor government that does not have any real plans for the people of Queensland.

We saw an interesting attitude from the now Treasurer when he was in opposition. When he was asked whether he would put out any of his plans he said—

I'm not going to take any suggestion that this LNP government is doing one thing and that we should have to provide an alternative.

Well, he did not. And he waited until after the election to provide an alternative. That was the attitude of the now Treasurer in opposition. His attitude does not seem to have changed. Labor still has no plan. Instead, they want Queenslanders to fall for a budget of tricks and raids. We have said over and over that that is no way to manage the state's finances or the Queensland economy. What is needed is a clear, consistent, considered plan that is stuck to over the long term.

Our plan is a positive one. It is a plan to grow the economy by focusing on the five key priority areas, including services and knowledge based industries. We acknowledge the work that the government is doing in that area.

We have a plan to cut taxes for small business. It is a plan to make it easier to do business in Queensland by continuing our strong efforts to cut red tape and regulation. It is a plan to really invest in regional Queensland—to work with the federal government and access the \$5 billion it has put on the table as a part of its Northern Australia development and investment vision.

It is also a plan to strengthen Queensland's financial position, to continue doing what we did in government: maintaining control of expenses growth, delivering fiscal surpluses, working with the private sector to build infrastructure and deliver better services for Queenslanders, and paying down debt through responsible economic management.

It is no fluke that this year debt will be almost \$10 billion lower than previously forecast by Labor, despite almost \$6 billion worth of revenue write-downs and all of the other issues I have mentioned. Despite the raids, despite the debt shifts, despite the smoke and mirrors, the budget reveals that debt will continue to increase. This is just one of the many broken promises that this budget hands to the people of Queensland. Queenslanders deserve the truth and they deserve to be levelled with. They deserve not to have to face governments' long-term obligations because of their profligacy into the future.

The LNP has a plan for the Queensland economy that will deliver the security we all want now and in the future. We will focus on growing a more diverse economy which delivers jobs and looks after those who are less fortunate. We are focused on agriculture, tourism, resources, construction and manufacturing, and knowledge based industries.

We need to enhance agricultural production and take advantage of the opportunities being offered by the growing middle class in Asia. Enhancing agricultural production does not mean that the environment suffers. Farmers are environmentalist at heart, and they need the ground that they work on to be rich and productive. It is their investment. It is their future. It is what they own. We are also now on the right track for tourism, and we will continue that as a matter of course.

We will continue to stimulate the construction sector through proper planning, land releases and reforming planning laws to reduce red tape and cut the associated costs. I commend the shadow minister for planning for bringing to this parliament a very positive bill in that area which continues the transformational work the LNP did around reduction in red tape and also having a better planning framework.

It is also our chance to shine as an exporter of services and education. Many of our near neighbours are looking for our expertise in training and in a range of service industries, from financial planning to aged-care nursing, with world-class offerings available here in Queensland or available to be delivered offshore. There is more that the government can do. We can certainly help to expand those industries. When we were in government we worked hard to put Queensland finances back on track. Because of that, we were able to deliver better services and investments.

We also would make a number of very significant commitments to the people of Queensland. We would lift the freeze on infrastructure imposed by Labor. Infrastructure is absolutely critical. It is completely and absolutely unacceptable that the government will not have an infrastructure plan for this state for the next 12 months. That will cost this state investment and, indeed, will drive investment over the border into New South Wales, which does have an infrastructure investment plan. If this government did not want this plan, it should have had its own plan. But it did not have its own plan.

We would create jobs through our plan to reduce payroll tax for business, the biggest employer in this state. We would increase the threshold at which payroll tax commences to be collected by \$100,000 every year for the term of the parliament.

The LNP recognises and applauds the diversity of our regions and rural centres. We would establish a Queensland regional finance and insurance corporation to assist rural farming and other small business enterprises finding it difficult to maintain viability to invest in improved capacity and enable these businesses to plan and deliver improved returns over the medium to long term.

The LNP would re-establish the Royalties for the Regions program, which Labor is trying to axe. This would ensure investment in regional Queensland, with a guaranteed percentage of funds quarantined to ensure a fair share of revenue is invested back into the relevant resource area or supporting resource area.

The LNP would introduce Australia's first wait-time guarantee for public hospital patients—not because it is the policy of the LNP but because it is the direction of this parliament.

The LNP stands by the groundwork it laid in the fight against the terrible scourge that is domestic violence. We would continue to work with the government to implement the recommendations of the task force into domestic and family violence which was so ably chaired by Dame Quentin Bryce and established by us in government and being carried forward by our successors. Already we have proposed a bill aimed at protecting victims of domestic violence through a proper, open process of the disclosure of the past history of the most serious of offenders.

The LNP would reinstate the \$1.78 million that Labor is ripping out of the Crime and Corruption Commission as part of its soft-on-crime approach.

The LNP has a real economic plan for this great state—a real vision that sees more Queenslanders in jobs with a growing economy and big infrastructure projects underway. Our plan means our society is safe, our education system is world class and as a government we have the ability to give a hand up to those who most need our help. Those are the values of the LNP and I stand with my colleagues to ensure that those values which we brought about to improve the underlying status of Queensland can again be implemented for the benefit of Queensland. I would say that this government should look towards that as a path forward as it has already done with many of the proposals that were outlined in that document from Monday of last week.

 **Mr CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (12.29 pm): As the first government member on my feet after the opposition leader, I acknowledge his speech and thank him for his very comprehensive speech and also for his recognition of the areas of the budget that he does have some agreement with. I rise to support the budget and also to congratulate the Treasurer on delivering this 2015-16 budget in a professional, measured and responsible fashion. I was a public servant and I did have a beef with the LNP. This budget delivers on all of the election commitments made in my electorate during the 2015 campaign as well as delivering for Far North Queensland and the regions around my electorate. In particular, it delivers on one of the most frequently canvassed items in the 2015 election campaign—that is, the progression of the Bill Fulton Bridge at Redlynch. This bridge is currently a two-lane highway on the Western Arterial Road and has been outgrown by a fast developing housing and community network on the Northern Beaches. It requires duplicating of a bridge and approximately half a kilometre of highway connecting Redlynch to the city of Cairns. I thank the Minister for Main Roads for his time in visiting the site recently with me and discussing this important missing link in our road network. This budget gives a kickstart to the much awaited work to develop the plan, the costings and the design for the upgrade that our region requires and it will be warmly welcomed by the Barron River electorate as well as the surrounding electorates as a clear sign of intent by this government to action this bridge.

This budget delivers for Cairns and the Far North region the core services that are needed to exist in the Far North, with continued investment in our schools, our hospitals and our emergency services. In the campaign the No. 1 issue identified by Barron River voters was access to public health care and the ongoing future of services available at the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service. I am delighted to see a six per cent increase in the Health budget for health services in Far North Queensland. I am delighted to see the funds in the budget for the commencement of the Cairns Special School and, along with my parliamentary colleagues the member for Cairns and the member for Mulgrave, the Treasurer, I warmly welcome this important asset to our region. A special school has been something on the agenda for a number of elections now in the Cairns region and it is a true Labor government that will deliver this in the Far North.

I have spoken many times in this House about tourism in Cairns and the importance of the Great Barrier Reef. In the 2015 election we promised \$100 million towards water quality on the Great Barrier Reef and I welcome the commencement of that funding injection into this budget. The reef is key to Cairns and the Barron River economy. Those on our side of the House get it. Those on the other side seem to lack that vision. Importantly, this budget addresses the constant rhetoric from those opposite that a Labor government cannot manage debt by forecasting a surplus in our 2015-16 year. I congratulate the Treasurer on his debt management strategy. He has my full support in its delivery. This government can deliver a debt management strategy without sacking thousands of workers and without flogging off the state's assets to bolster the books like those opposite. Those opposite have

asked for a plan. Well, now they have it and I refer to my copy—everyone has it in their budget pack—of *Jobs now, jobs for the future* for Far North Queensland. I want to highlight a couple of sections, the first one being \$892 million for our Health budget. As I said before, that is a six per cent increase. There is also \$61 million for maintenance of our Far North Queensland schools.

Ms Jones: Hear, hear!

Mr CRAWFORD: I thank the education minister for her interjection. There is \$81 million for disaster relief. Those who live in the north know that we are ground zero for disasters in Queensland. Almost every year without fail we will see anywhere up to six large cyclones circling off our shores, sometimes crossing the coast. We are used to it. We deal with it all of the time and this disaster relief funding in partnership with the Australian government is a welcome sign.

There are a few small things kicking around in the Far North but nonetheless important to the voters. There is money towards tourism and events; money towards aviation investment to bring planes into Cairns, particularly from Asia; and money into stolen wages. The electorate of Barron River includes Kuranda, and a number of Indigenous Australians there will qualify for stolen wages. There is also money towards saving the reef, as I mentioned before; money towards social housing, particularly for the Kuranda area of Barron River; and money towards homeless people. There is also money towards disaster recovery, Indigenous arts, Indigenous rangers and Panama disease. Earlier it was said that there has been no statement about agriculture by this government, but the money for Panama disease is an incredibly important announcement for members such as the members for Cook, Dalrymple and Mulgrave who have a number of banana plantations in their electorates. There is money for school capital works, money for Indigenous land rangers and money for Indigenous sea rangers.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr CRAWFORD: I was quiet when they were talking. Unfortunately they cannot do the same in return. There is also money towards the Cairns Convention Centre refurbishment and mountain bike tracks in the Smithfield area. I could go on and on and on. This is a successful budget. I could not help but notice when reading the *Courier-Mail* this morning that it made reference to the fact that this is a vanilla budget and that Labor MPs have found it to be a vanilla budget. Not this one. I do not agree that it is vanilla. I find this budget to be a statement of what this Labor government is about and what the people of Queensland have asked for and can now look forward to without fear of reprisal and without fear of the fancy websites, slogans and jingles we saw from Campbell Newman. We promised jobs for the electorates and it is jobs they will get with a range of initiatives and advancements being rolled out, and it is these jobs that we need to address the high unemployment rates in the Cairns area. We promised jobs, and jobs we will deliver. I commend the Treasurer, the Premier, the Deputy Premier and all cabinet members on a well structured and well balanced good Labor budget. I look forward to the next 12 months along with all Queenslanders as we manage this state in a responsible manner. I support the bills.

 **Mr LANGBROEK** (Surfers Paradise—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (12.37 pm): Prior to the 2015 election campaign, Labor's shadow Treasurer stood before the people of Queensland brandishing Labor's flimsy fiscal strategy saying, 'Trust me.' After waiting three years for a plan from Labor, the member for Inala and the member for Mulgrave finally outlined how they were going to pay for their promises, what they were going to do to strengthen Queensland's budget position. In launching that document, the Treasurer made a series of promises to the people of Queensland. He promised to pay down debt, to deliver the same budget surplus as the LNP had promised, to target full funding of long-term liabilities and he promised not to sell assets. Tuesday's budget does not deliver on any one of those promises—not one, zero from four. The budget papers reveal that debt will increase each and every year over the forward estimates. The budget papers reveal that the three fiscal surpluses forecast by the LNP have evaporated. The budget papers reveal a short-term cash grab on long service leave and superannuation entitlements and the budget leaves the door open to asset sales by stealth, although we have already had the Premier and Deputy Premier weaselling their way out of that with terms like 'no strategic asset sales' and 'no major asset sales'. In my speech today I want to clearly outline how this Treasurer and this Premier have misguided the people of Queensland. This budget in no way reflects what people voted for in January of this year. Labor has betrayed the trust of Queenslanders who put their faith in it. Labor has walked away from its promises and, in doing so, has misled the people of Queensland.

What did the member for Mulgrave say going into the election? He promised to pay down debt using the dividends of the electricity companies. He would establish a debt reduction trust and quarantine two-thirds of these dividends to pay down debt by \$1.5 billion a year. He even proclaimed

that his debt pay-down schedule was conservative, to use his words, as it assumed no growth in revenue from state owned electricity companies. This was the key part of his fiscal plan—the plan that he took to the people of Queensland. But it did not even rate a mention in Tuesday's budget. Not one line mentioned a debt-reduction trust. This key promise was nowhere to be found.

The budget shows why this plan was simply not to be believed. The dividends of the electricity networks are forecast to fall by more than 50 per cent over the next four years. The dividends of the power generators are \$230 million lower than previously predicted. Tax equivalent payments are forecast to fall by almost \$400 million. Quite obviously, this plan was a dud and the Treasurer knows it.

The other part of the Treasurer's debt-reduction plan was a proposal to merge our electricity companies—as the opposition leader mentioned in his contribution, to merge CS Energy and Stanwell and to merge Powerlink, Ergon and Energex. So what about that idea? Again, it barely rates a mention in the budget papers, other than a few obligatory lines. The \$150 million in savings each and every year? They are nowhere to be seen.

For months, this plan has been criticised by independent experts, including the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission. The budget confirms that those critics were right—that merging the electricity generators would lead to higher electricity prices and that merging the networks will not deliver any real cost savings. That is what Labor's smoke-and-mirrors fiscal plan was based on and the budget has pulled the rug out from under the Treasurer.

What did that leave him with? Limited options. Every promise, every policy taken to the people of Queensland at the last election, has fallen flat, leaving the Treasurer struggling to find something—anything—to keep up his budget mirage. As the *Courier-Mail's* Steven Wardill put it, Labor's pre-election strategy was a two-card trick. What has this forced the Treasurer to do? To pull a rabbit out of a hat and claim that he is paying down debt by shifting \$4 billion of it around. He has taken it off the government books and passed it over to the electricity companies—those same companies that he was relying on to pay down debt. Independent economists called it an accounting trick. Rating agencies saw through it. The only thing this trick achieves is negatively impacting the returns that these businesses make back to government. In the long term, it could impact on service provision and leave Queenslanders paying more.

The Treasurer's other debt reduction option was a short-sighted raid on public servants' superannuation and long service leave liabilities. The Treasurer claimed that he was raiding long service leave because Treasury recommended it in the *Review of state finances*. But as with everything that this government says, it pays to read the fine print. This is what the Treasurer's much vaunted *Review of state finances* actually says—

The pre-funding of long service leave is arguably an extreme application of the basic principle and could be regarded as optional.

'Arguably' and 'could be': those are the words that the Treasurer used to argue the case for ripping \$3.4 billion out of Queensland's fully funded long service leave fund. Those are the words that the Treasurer used to walk away from his own fiscal principles. But he was not content to stop there. The Treasurer also wants to stop making payments into the defined benefit superannuation scheme for the next five years. The Treasurer argues that he has received actuarial advice giving him the green light. So I would like to refer to the last actuarial report, which was released last year—a report that was free of government intervention—

I recommend that this surplus be carried forward and that, whilst there is considerable flexibility due to the strong funding position, the existing contribution rates ... be retained.

I want to repeat that—

... the existing contribution rates ... be retained—since:

- the surplus will provide a buffer against adverse investment returns;
- consistency with the contribution rates in the Accumulation plan will be maintained;
- stability in budgeted contribution rates for employers is beneficial; and
- the more stringent solvency position recognised in the Government's financial statements showed an actuarial deficit at the valuation date, although this is expected to be broadly offset by subsequent strong investment returns.

Of course, the Treasurer has ignored this 150-page report. Instead, he has pointed to a letter from the past couple of months in which the State Actuary has been prompted to consider a proposal put to him by the government—a letter received less than a month before the budget. On that basis, the Treasurer is going to suspend payments into the defined benefit investment scheme for five years, a time period far in excess of the findings of the State Actuary's triennial report into the scheme.

What does John Battams from the Queensland Council of Unions say? 'That's okay. It's Treasury advice.' Could members imagine what he would have said if an LNP Treasurer had done this—an action unprecedented in Queensland's history? Surely, Queenslanders must see through the Labor-union mutual admiration society and the inconsistency of the position of the union fat cats. But his mate Alex Scott of the Together union was not so charitable. He said—

I believe that it is in members' best interest that the scheme remains fully funded and I believe the proposed five-year 'contribution holiday' may be too long.

We will be aggressively seeking a review of this proposal since five years is too long to be complacent about such an important matter as protecting entitlements.

I look forward to the aggressive campaign from the Together union. I think I will be waiting a long time.

But it is not just Mr Scott saying that we should not be complacent. For decades, the full funding of long-term liabilities such as superannuation and long service leave have been key fiscal principles in Queensland. We have heard from the opposition leader that former treasurer Terry Mackenroth, the man who helped the Premier and her ministers make the transition to government, consistently pursued it. Even Andrew Fraser, the lieutenant to Anna Bligh, acknowledged that funding those entitlements was strong financial leadership. Premier Peter Beattie said that it was a key to a strong balance sheet. Curtis Pitt, the Treasurer, now says that it is a lazy balance sheet. I know who I am more inclined to believe.

This Premier and this Treasurer are going where no other politician has dared to go before and, in doing so, they are breaking a fundamental promise to the people of Queensland. No other state government in Australia, or even the federal government, has had the proud record of fully funding superannuation and long service leave entitlements. That is why in 2006 Peter Costello set up the Future Fund—to invest, to save for the future, to make those commitments for our hardworking workers. Just because everyone else is engaging in poor practice is no reason to ditch a best practice.

Whether it was conservative or Labor, the Queensland government has always put money away to fund its future liabilities. Like householders, each week we were putting money aside so that when the electricity bill came in, or the registration bill came in, there would be enough money to pay it straightaway. This government has decided that it will spend every pay cheque and, when the bills come in, it will pay them as it needs to. This government has decided to live from pay cheque to pay cheque. In one fell swoop, it has spent the savings of a generation. The problem is that, when the rainy day comes—and it will—we will not have that money set aside. In that case, we will have to borrow to pay the thousands of Queensland government employees who have made financial and career decisions based on an expectation that they would receive hard-fought entitlements.

Today, respected commentator Joe Branigan said that Mr Pitt—

... has rejected the advice of the International Monetary Fund, the OECD, Australian state and federal budget honesty acts, numerous audits of federal and state finances, and the fiscal sustainability metrics of the ratings agencies, not to mention the bitter experience of Victoria and South Australia in the 1990s and various southern European countries this decade.

It is no coincidence that those Victorian and South Australian governments to which he was referring were Labor governments. Mr Branigan goes on to state—

Queensland—like Greece—thinks it's a special case.

Curtis Pitt thinks that government corporations are a giant ATM. But this is not the only promise that the government is breaking. Despite all the talk about paying down debt, the budget papers show that, in Queensland, debt is increasing each and every year over the forward estimates. Debt will still edge up towards \$80 billion. During the election, Labor promised to pay down general government net debt. But net debt continues to increase each and every year over the forward estimates.

Despite the \$4 billion debt shift, general government debt will continue to increase between 2015-16 and 2018-19. Moving the debt from one credit card to another does not reduce the debt. This budget also delivers more deficits. The three forecast fiscal surpluses are gone, replaced with fiscal deficits totalling \$5 billion over the next four years. The forecast operating surplus of \$3 billion this year has shrunk to just over \$1 billion. Operating surpluses will be \$4.2 billion weaker over the next four years under the Palaszczuk Labor government. Expenses growth is also higher, returning to over four per cent when over the last couple of years we have been able to limit that to an average of two per cent. But most importantly, this budget is bad for jobs and bad for growth. The Premier and Treasurer's claims about jobs are not reflected in their own budget papers. Quite clearly, unemployment is higher than previously forecast. Employment growth is also lower than previously predicted. Where

employment growth was forecast to average 2.25 per cent over the next three years under the LNP, it is forecast to average 1.7 per cent under Labor. Employment is forecast to stay above six per cent each and every year over the forward estimates. Queensland will continue to have a higher unemployment rate than the rest of Australia. Our plan was and is for jobs in the economy; Labor's plans are for jobs in government.

Economic growth this year is also weaker than forecast. This reflects the fall in business confidence since the election of the Palaszczuk government, a fall in business confidence that has been reflected in surveys from the Property Council, CCIQ and Sensis. How can business be confident in a Treasurer who claims Queensland is in recession one week to make a political point and then says we are out of recession the next? How can small businesses be confident in a Treasurer who will not provide them with payroll tax relief even though it has been costed and factored into the budget? And how can businesses be confident in a Treasurer who is more interested in providing paybacks for his union mates than making it easier to do business in this state? That is what it all comes down to at the end of the day: confidence. Quite clearly, the people of Queensland cannot have confidence in this government. It is a government that is not delivering what it promised.

On this side of the House, as we have heard from the opposition leader, we have learned a lot from the election result. We have been out there talking to Queenslanders about what they want. We want to be a government that delivers for all Queenslanders no matter where they live. That much is reflected in our real economic plan, a plan to secure Queensland's future with a sustainable and growing economy. We have been open and up-front about our plans. We have been actively engaging with people about the type of Queensland they want to see. They want a diversified economy, which is why we are focusing on key growth areas. They want a government that makes it easier to do business in Queensland, not harder. Business owners want to spend less time filling in onerous paperwork and more time growing their businesses. That is what an LNP government would deliver. Business owners want to see lower taxes so that they can get on with the job of hiring more people. That is what an LNP government would deliver. People living in regional Queensland want to see a government that invests in regional communities. That is what an LNP government will deliver through an enhanced Royalties for the Regions program. That is what an LNP government will deliver by working with the Australian government on the development of Northern Australia. Queenslanders want a government that can responsibly manage the budget. Our record in government clearly illustrates what the LNP can deliver. Debt this year is going to be almost \$10 billion lower than previously forecast. But it is forecast to go up under this profligate Labor government. But most importantly, Queenslanders want a strong and prosperous economy, an economy that provides jobs now and into the future. That is what an LNP government would deliver by restoring business confidence and by actually investing in job creating infrastructure projects that unlock the economic productivity of our economy.

In contrast, this is a government that has not delivered on its promises. This is a government that has not been up-front with the people of Queensland. This is a government with no plan to grow the economy, create jobs or pay down debt. This is a government with nothing but tricks and sleight of hand. Queenslanders cannot afford anything other than confident, experienced and careful management of the economy.

I want to reflect on where we have come from in 2012 and where we are today. The LNP was elected with this advice from Treasury: Queensland's fiscal position and outlook is unsustainable and restoration must be an urgent priority for this term of government. This is in stark contrast to what the Treasurer inherited following the 2015 election. Queensland is in a much stronger financial position today because of the hard work of the LNP government. We will continue working to ensure this hard work is not eroded by a government that has walked away from its promises to the people of Queensland.

In the time left available to me I want to refer to the issues in my electorate and my city of the Gold Coast. It is of great concern, and we have already heard it mentioned by the opposition leader today, that the Crime and Corruption Commission is being affected in terms of staff numbers to assist on matters such as Task Force Maxima. Those of us privileged enough to have been in cabinet understand the effect criminal gangs were having on the Gold Coast and across Queensland prior to the LNP coming to government in 2012. There was that terrible incident that happened in my electorate in September 2013. One only has to look at the statistics that come out of Task Force Maxima: 2,270 arrested on 6,654 charges. The Gold Coast is a place where we are full of optimism and prepared to do the hard work. It is the home of small business. People on the Gold Coast are happy to have a hand up; they do not want a handout. That was reflected in the confidence that was placed in us at the election in 2015 where we actually won the seat of Gaven. It is of great concern that putting out the welcome mat, as I fear Labor is doing for criminal gangs, will potentially affect the people amongst

whom I live, the people who come to visit us and our children and our grandchildren. It is of great concern to me that Labor is walking away from the commitments that we have made to ensure the safety of our citizens, which should be at the forefront of the mind of every member in this place.

Finally, in relation to the Commonwealth Games, I want to acknowledge the bipartisan support that I have provided ever since the former premier Anna Bligh made the bid for the games. There is certainly great optimism on the Gold Coast about what the games will deliver in just under three years. We know that it will create up to 30,000 jobs. With less than 1,000 days to go the momentum is certainly building on the Gold Coast. I want to thank all of those involved in providing the infrastructure that I know is being rolled out. There is certainly renewed confidence in the economy. We want to see a successful games. I give my commitment to bipartisan support for them.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Due to the time and so as not to interrupt the next speaker, the House will rise and resume at 2.30.

Sitting suspended from 12.57 pm to 2.30 pm.

 **Miss BOYD** (Pine Rivers—ALP) (2.30 pm): Today I rise to speak in support of this, the first budget from the Palaszczuk government. This is a budget that focuses on the things that matter to ordinary Queenslanders. The story of this budget is a story of responsible but compassionate government. In my electorate, the centrepiece for this budget is the upgrade of Strathpine train station. I have been an advocate for this as a candidate and also here in this place. The upgrade has focused on accessibility. If we are going to have a train station, we need to ensure that everybody in the community can use it. Currently, Strathpine station's platforms are not independently accessible without the use of stairs. That was illustrated to me recently when I was fortunate enough to go to Strathpine station with Shelly and see firsthand the challenges she and others can face at the station. Shelly relies on a mobility scooter to get around and she wanted to show me the challenges associated with getting around the Strathpine station. I will admit that there were many challenges that I expected to see when I set out with Shelly, but I was alarmed when we inspected the level crossing, which is the only way to cross the three platforms. It was standard and dangerous. It makes life just that little bit harder than it has to be for people with limited mobility or even for people with wheeled luggage. I am pleased to say that the upgrade will help address that problem and will include a lift for each of the three platforms.

For a station in my part of the world, Strathpine station has a very large number of passenger movements per day. The figure I have been quoted is 12,200 per week. For so many it is a vital artery connecting people to school, university, work, friends, family and recreation. The station is centrally located near major shopping and government offices. It is a vital piece of transport infrastructure in my electorate and will grow in importance with Labor's soon-to-be-delivered Moreton Bay Rail Link. The Palaszczuk government's massive \$15 billion investment in upgrading Strathpine station is a timely investment. Beyond the lifts, there will be new disability car parking upgrades, additional platform shelters, improved toilet facilities, improved lighting, CCTV installed and improved at the station and accessible signage and way-finding tools. In Moreton Bay, this contrasts with another station upgrade where we have seen half-baked improvements from conservatives, such as at Dakabin station. The Dakabin community is crying out to see their station properly upgraded and I am backing my good mate and strong local member for Kallangur, Shane King, in his campaign to clean up the LNP's mess. The Strathpine station upgrade will support around 250 good local trades jobs and materials will be sourced locally wherever possible as well.

As members can tell, I am very excited about this station upgrade, but the station is not all that Pine Rivers gets. Locally, my electorate will see \$14 million in disability services funding, which is money that demonstrates the commitment from the Palaszczuk government to assisting people with disabilities to access support services through different stages in their lives. This funding dovetails very nicely with the station upgrade theme of my speech, as it addresses the point that we need a deeper level of support to ensure universal inclusion in our community life. \$185,000 will be dedicated to family support services to work with vulnerable families to help improve parenting skills and give parents the support they need to prevent problems from escalating to crisis point. Before in this House I have spoken about my tour of the DVConnect facilities and my concern at the statistics they told me about, so I am very much welcome this funding.

Funding of \$660,000 for community care will provide basic support to assist locals under 65 or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples under 50 years of age with a disability or condition that restricts their day-to-day living so that they can stay living in their homes. Just shy of \$1 million will be invested locally in child protection for out-of-home-care placement services to ensure children and young people in need of protection are supported and safe. \$367,000 will be invested in Pine Rivers to combat homelessness. This funding will go to non-government organisations to deliver specialist

homelessness services aimed at reducing both the number of homeless people and the people at risk of becoming homeless in Queensland by assisting people to obtain housing, maintain their housing and maximise their capability to be independent, self-reliant and connected to appropriate social and community supports.

North Pine Dam is in beautiful Lake Kurwongbah. It has been a major piece of essential infrastructure since 1976. This dam is just shy of 200,000 megalitres and is home to a diverse range of birdlife, sailing and paddle craft enthusiasts and many species of fish, including my personal favourite, the Saratoga. This is essential infrastructure for our region and communities. I look forward to working with Seqwater, particularly on the projects that are funded through this budget. All told, there will be nine upgrade, refurbishment and improvement projects for water infrastructure for the people of Pine Rivers. Our water infrastructure is in desperate need of attention and this budget addresses this. Some examples include the \$647,000 injection to commence the refurbishment and renewal works of the North Pine pump station and \$300,000 will kick off the North Pine spillway bridge upgrade project.

Dayboro, our town of yesteryear, will also be receiving a complete auxiliary fire and rescue station. Although already announced, under the previous government only \$50,000 was ever provided. This budget allocates \$650,000 to complete the replacement and get it done properly. The beautiful Dayboro Showgrounds, used by campers for the annual show, the Dayboro Pony Club, the Dayboro Trail Riders Club and the Dayboro Rodeo, will benefit from \$367,000 for the Dayboro Showgrounds flood mitigation project. This is a capital infrastructure program for identified community needs, as well as for flood mitigation projects, flood mapping and other resilience measures.

The budget also funds \$637,000 for the Aussie rules football field already announced in Brendale. Located at the South Pine Sports Complex, it is a major facility for the Hawks. The field construction will include a full-sized AFL field with irrigation, lighting, multi-user clubhouse, storage, meeting and office space, kitchen and canteen, function room, ancillaries and gymnasium, access road, car park and footpaths.

Labor builds things and Labor is about fairness. It is just our values. It is who we are and, importantly, it is what this budget is all about. For the people of Pine Rivers, this budget is about key service delivery and making sure our community needs are met. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Mr WALKER** (Mansfield—LNP) (2.38 pm): I am pleased to rise to again speak to a budget presented to this House. It is always an important occasion for me because, when I decided shortly before the 2012 election to leave a career that I enjoyed and was finding fulfilling, it was because Queensland was suffering financially and was falling behind the rest of the country. I believed it was time for people to stand up, to come into this place and help fix a dreadful mess. I was very pleased to be part of the Newman LNP government that did so much in financial repair with respect to Queensland's finances.

Members will recall that when Campbell Newman and Tim Nicholls went into the briefing session, having been elected in 2012, that the briefs provided to them said two important things: first, that the financial situation of the Queensland government was unsustainable and needed urgent attention; secondly the debt that Queensland was facing was taking the state into uncharted waters. It was a pretty frightening situation for them to find themselves in at that briefing—and remember that the briefing was from the outgoing government's advisors. We need to commend the former premier and former treasurer for the tremendous work they did to repair that situation.

Members will recall that at that stage, based on the outgoing government's own estimates and predictions, debt was heading towards \$85 billion. The independent Commission of Audit said that unless changes were made it would go to \$100 billion. We have heard in the debate today that the figure eventually came down to \$75 billion. A significant dent was made in the trajectory of that debt. It is important that the efforts that need to be put into keeping that debt under control are not forgotten by this government in particular.

The situation is that in terms of government debt, on average per Queenslanders we still owe the banks twice what other Australians do on average per Australian. That is not an acceptable state of affairs for this state. This state obviously cannot progress while that is the case. People in this state are paying \$450,000 per hour in interest to the banks. As our AAA credit rating has gone, we have to pay a higher interest rate.

As a minister in the former government I know that I could have done a lot with \$450,000 each hour in the areas in which I worked—in science, IT, innovation and the arts. I was not able to do that. I was a minister in a government in a AA credit rating situation not a AAA credit situation. We need to focus on regaining our AAA credit rating if we are to have any sense of proportion within this budget.

We had the debt situation back to a manageable level. We had the government spend year on year almost balanced. Under the previous Labor administrations for the decade prior to us coming into power expenditure had been increasing by 10 per cent year on year. It was hardly surprising that the financial situation was, as the outgoing government's advisors were saying, unsustainable.

In my area of ministerial responsibility in the former government we were able to do a lot of things despite the tight economic situation. We made sure that the little things were done properly. We did things like ensure that we printed on both sides of the paper and rationalised telephone plans. Over my two years as IT minister we were able to save \$30 million just by doing those simple things. That was good housekeeping for the people of Queensland and a good lesson for any government.

At the other end of the spectrum, the big projects were still able to be done. I was proud to be responsible for the \$42 million in funding that went to the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine. This was matched with a similar amount by Tony Abbott's federal government. We see that that is now progressing. The three campuses of JCU in Townsville, Cairns and the Torres Strait that will host that institute are now moving forward with that funding in place.

There was \$9 million that went into dementia research. Millions of dollars went into our accelerate programs in science and innovation. This was able to be done despite the constraints on the previous government.

It is disappointing to see that the overall position that this budget will leave Queensland in is not nearly as happy. As has been said, this is a budget that is bad for jobs and bad for growth. The budget is bad for jobs and growth because employment growth is down. It is minus 1.75 per cent cumulative over three years. Unemployment is up—2.5 per cent cumulative over the next three years. Economic growth is 0.5 per cent lower over the next three years. So there is no happy news in this budget when we look at the overall parameters despite how it is being dressed up.

A key Labor election promise was to pay down debt. Under Labor, debt in every year of the budget will continue to increase. It is a key promise that has been broken by this government and they need to address that.

The long service leave fund is an area of particular criticism in relation to the budget. Firstly, it was not part of what was put to the Queensland people at the election on 31 January. It is a significant provision. I believe it is unacceptable. The government needs to be condemned for having pulled it, as the Treasurer did, out of the ear of the person sitting next to him and suddenly have it as a centrepiece of the budget. Despite the weasel words that have come from the Treasurer, \$3.4 billion will come from money that was going to go into the long service leave fund. That is a decade of savings gone as a result of Labor's irresponsible budget. They did not tell people they were going to do this prior to the election. The Treasurer has been good at tricks. This is one of his sneaky ones. The people of Queensland will not have it.

I wanted to speak about those areas of the budget that particularly touch on the portfolio areas that I am responsible for as shadow minister. The first point I want to make is one of congratulations to the government. I think we need to give credit where credit is due.

In my area of responsibility as shadow minister for justice and shadow Attorney-General, it is encouraging—and I commend the Attorney-General for this—that we have kept the JP QCAT trial going. It was introduced by our government. My experience in my electorate when I meet with JPs, as I fairly regularly do, is that it has been well received by the JP community. It has provided us with a method to deliver common-sense justice for people in QCAT at a much more affordable level.

It has helped with the turnaround times of cases in QCAT to have justices of the peace whom we all know from our own electorates are good, common-sense members of the community who can be trusted in their judgement to sit in that tribunal and assist with the disposal of small matters. I think it is a tribute to the government that they have continued that trial. I commend them for it.

That might be the end of the congratulations because there are some areas of interest to me where I believe this budget does not deliver. We heard this morning from the Attorney-General about the issues regarding the budget for the CCC and the investigations into criminal motorcycle gangs. The Attorney-General made the point that she felt I had made an error in the assessment I had made of the budget papers. I am always one to believe that if you have made an error you own up to it and admit your error. I hope the Attorney-General will do that when she sees where she has made an error in responding to the comments we made today. There have indeed been cuts.

To look at the overall situation we need to move back a step. It explains exactly why the budget is framed as it is. We have to go back to this government's chopping and changing attitude towards the motorcycle gang laws. Members will recall that these laws were supported by the then opposition when they were passed through this House. Then they were going to repeal them. Then they were going to review them. In the end, we have ended up with a task force.

The task force chair, Mr Wilson, was interviewed by Steve Austin when he was first appointed. He was asked about the terms of reference for this task force. Mr Wilson said that the announcement of his appointment had been delayed a little because he was talking to the government about the terms of reference. The interesting part about the terms of reference is how prescriptive they are. They start off with these words—

The Taskforce will note the Queensland Government's intention to repeal, and replace the 2013 legislation, whether by substantial amendment and/or new legislation and will advise ...

Mr Wilson said that the legislation might need some tweaking. That is not a guideline. It is confirmed in the first line of the terms of reference that the task force is asked to make recommendations on—the recommendations should advise how best to repeal and replace, by substantial amendment, the 2013 legislation. I table those terms of reference.

Tabled paper: Department of Justice and Attorney-General webpage titled 'Terms of reference—Taskforce into organised crime legislation 2015' [806].

It is clear from the terms of reference where the government is heading. That is no tweaking. Mr Wilson said, when asked when he was to report on his terms of reference, that it was before Christmas and that he was planning to give the government a Christmas present. He will be giving the government a Christmas present. It will be the answer in the terms that the government wants—the repeal of these important laws.

Getting back to what the Attorney-General said this morning, I wish to table some other documents. From last year's budget papers, in terms of the provision we had made for the response to criminal motorcycle gangs, in 2014-15 we allocated \$3.368 million; in 2015-16, \$1.174 million; and in 2016-17, \$639,000.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Farmer): Order! I ask the Attorney-General and the member for Nanango, if you wish to have a conversation, to take it outside the chamber. I call the member for Mansfield.

Mr WALKER: As I was saying, in 2016-17, the allocation was \$639,000. I table that document from last year's budget.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland State Budget 2015-16: Budget Measures—Budget Paper No. 4, p. 26 [807].

Let's have a look at this year's budget, and the two points that we made in respect of the expenditure on this issue was that staff was decreasing and funding was decreasing. I refer the House to note No. 11 on page 61 of the relevant Service Delivery Statement. It talks about the variations between the 2014-15 estimated actual and the 2015-16 budget. It says that there are going to be some increases in grants. That is the first sentence. Then it says—

These amounts have been offset by a decrease in grant funding for OMCs—
that is, the outlaw motorcycle gangs—

in the 2015-16 financial year.

So the document itself talks about a decrease in grant funding for this purpose. I table that document.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland State Budget 2015-16: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Justice and Attorney General, pp 60 and 61 [808].

The other issue is staffing in this area. Again, I refer to page 56 of the Service Delivery Statement which refers to the staffing in this area. The estimated actual staffing for 2014-15—what we finished with under our government—was 348 people. The budgeted staffing for 2015-16 is 341 people—348 minus 341 is seven fewer people.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I ask the member for Kawana and the member for Ferny Grove and anyone else who wishes to have a conversation across the chamber to please take your conversation outside. The member for Mansfield has the call.

Mr WALKER: So there is a difference of seven—seven fewer people are budgeted for to work in this area now than were working under our arrangements at the end of the last financial year. I table that document.

Tabled paper: Extract from Queensland State Budget 2015-16: Service Delivery Statements—Department of Justice and Attorney General, p. 56 [809].

The other point I want to make very quickly in relation to my role as shadow Attorney-General is in relation to the appointment of the next Chief Justice. I make this point in a budgetary context because it has been said by this government that they must confine their search for a new Chief Justice to existing members of the court because they cannot afford to put another judge on, with the former chief justice having not retired from the court but having moved to another role. I table an article from the *Courier-Mail* just this morning by Dr Mark Lauchs from the Queensland University of Technology School of Justice.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Courier-Mail*, dated 16 July 2015, titled 'Public short list key to new chief' [810].

He says—

The government has also claimed it can only choose from current judges because they need to keep the numbers on the bench stable. But this has to be weighed against the value of accessing the best pool of candidates.

The additional cost of an extra judge would only be required until the next retirement.

And I make the point that that next retirement is due in November 2016, which is not that far away in terms of the need to appoint a permanent new judge. The article continues—

The new Chief Justice would be in the job for a decade. Unless there is a significant argument to the contrary, the value of a good appointment should outweigh a temporary additional cost.

It is important that we have an appointment that everyone can stand by.

I make the point that this government's own policy is about the establishment of a protocol for the appointment of judges. The Attorney-General in this place on 27 March in answer to a question from me assured me that such a protocol would be in place and assured me that I would have a part in that protocol. I wrote to her, and I table my letter to her of 1 April, offering—ready, willing and able—to be part of getting that protocol together.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 1 April 2015, from the member for Mansfield, Mr Ian Walker MP, to the Attorney-General, Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills, Hon. Yvette D'Ath [811].

There has since been absolute silence. Now of course it is too late, we are told, for that protocol to be put in place. So we have no protocol for the appointment of this important position and we have an unbelievable abrogation of responsibility by this government to say, 'We will only look at 26 people, not the best people in the world.' It may be that one of those 26 is the best person, but if they are they should be tested against the best in the world. This government is throwing out the possibility of getting the best Chief Justice for us by these self-appointed guidelines as to how they are to proceed—no consultation and the smallest pool possible.

I want to spend the rest of my time talking about arts and the provisions that this budget makes for the arts.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I will ask the member for Mansfield to stop again. I have asked the Attorney and I have asked the member for Kawana that if you wish to have a conversation with each other please do so outside the chamber. I will not ask again. I call the member for Mansfield.

Mr WALKER: The period we had in government saw vibrant and very substantial growth in arts activity here in Queensland. We tripled rural and regional touring, and that was an important thing if you lived in Muckadilla or if you lived in Roma or if you lived on the cape to be able to see the best in Queensland and in fact the best in the world as we see just by going to South Bank.

Our Super Star Fund, you might recall, Madam Deputy Speaker, brought the likes of Bernard Fanning, one of our own local superstars, to come and work with Indigenous kids; Michael Attenborough, the director from England, to give the Queensland Theatre Company their best ever box office with *Macbeth*; Professor Brian Cox to come here and do 'Journey through the Cosmos' with the Queensland Symphony Orchestra; Tamara Rojo and Carlos Acosta—great dancers—to come and dance with our ballet company and give it the best box office it had ever had. We had a South Bank that was thriving, a South Bank that was jumping.

Screen was not lost on us. The period prior to our coming into government had seen the studios on the Gold Coast at Coomera empty. Yet we had Angelina Jolie here doing *Unbroken*.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr WALKER: I do like speaking about that one. I have the photo in my room if anyone wants to come up and see it. We had Dwayne Johnson doing *San Andreas* and now of course the *Pirates of the Caribbean*—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr WALKER: I am taller than Angelina Jolie, by the way, Treasurer. *Pirates of the Caribbean* is the biggest movie ever made in Queensland and exclusive to Queensland. I went to the studios only a week or two ago to see how things were going and the situation is not bright. The pipeline of films has once again dropped away. We need to continue to invest in screen if we are to keep that vibrant industry going. American films are not the be-all and end-all. They are the means whereby people are able to be kept in employment so that we in the end can tell our own stories about Queensland. But they are an important part of what we do.

The point I do want to make is that the provision given to our very important South Bank under this budget is short term and fails to look at the long term yet immediate problems facing us there. You will recall, Madam Deputy Speaker, that we had put out a 30-year plan for that precinct. Remember that 30 years ago it was vacant property and in 30 years look at what we have there now. We have to plan for what is going to be there for the next 30 years and we have to fund that.

We had put out a plan for public discussion. It had attracted vibrant discussion and that was great. We were going to assess what had come back. What is missing in this plan is a commitment to develop that site and to make sure that it continues to attract the biggest and best of the arts for Queensland. There is a choice you have to make. On that site you either go wider or you go up or you go somewhere else, but you have to make the choice and you have to invest and you have to start doing it now.

Natalie Bochenski in a recent article in the *Brisbane Times* pointed out that we are going to miss the first time around of *Jekyll and Hyde* because it just cannot fit into the theatres that we have. A casino project may deliver a theatre for us—let's keep our fingers crossed. But, apart from that, our museum needs to double in size. We need a science centre. There is room there for another cultural building of some kind. This budget provides no planning for that, nor any money. Our election commitment of \$100 million towards an arts infrastructure fund was just the sort of thing that was needed for that to occur. Once again, the budget misses that point.

 **Mr KELLY** (Greenslopes—ALP) (2.59 pm): I am pleased to have the opportunity to rise to speak in support of what can only be described as a great Labor budget and what I consider to be a real win for the people of Greenslopes. The people of Greenslopes will welcome the first forecast surplus since 2006-07. This has not been achieved at the expense of the jobs of 24,000 public servants. This has not been achieved by flogging off assets. The Treasurer, a good friend and former member of the Greenslopes branch of the Labor Party, has demonstrated that there is a better way for Queensland. The Treasurer has demonstrated that the budget can be managed in a manner that grows the economy and jobs.

This budget not only delivers a surplus but also delivers on our measured election commitments, fully funded. A record investment in education and health will be welcomed by the people of Greenslopes. Our government will establish nurse-to-patient ratios—something which nurses have advocated for for decades, and this will save lives. My electorate, being close to major universities and teaching hospitals, is home to many nursing and midwifery students. They will be particularly pleased that we are using this budget to fund 4,000 new nurse graduates over the next four years.

The allocation of \$19.8 million to establish the Princess Alexandra Hospital as the first digital hospital in the state will continue Labor's long and proud commitment to investing in health care so that our professionals can continue to deliver cutting-edge, world-class care to our community. Those opposite want to talk loudly about waiting lists but they do not want to talk about the waiting list for the waiting list. We do not want to talk about it either; we want to do something about it. I know the people of Greenslopes will be thrilled that \$361.2 million is being allocated over four years to reduce the number of people waiting longer than the clinically recommended times.

The electorate of Greenslopes has many fantastic school communities that will be applauding the major investment in school maintenance. No doubt it will be pleased that Labor has honoured its commitment to invest in letting teachers teach. This means more teachers, more curriculum coordination time, more teacher release time and more specialist teachers in high schools. This will help the great school communities of Greenslopes become better.

Of course, education does not finish at our high school gate. Our government is committed to Rescuing TAFE. I applaud the measures in the budget that will help to maintain the valuable TAFE services in our community. Of the many cuts from the previous government, at a time of growing youth unemployment the all-out attack on TAFE was viewed by many people in my electorate as completely and utterly illogical. Our government will restore TAFE to its rightful place as the provider of vocational education and training—the provider that is focused on delivering education to our entire community.

Youth unemployment is sitting at 14 per cent in Greenslopes. That is why this budget's jobs plan Skilling Queenslanders for Work will be a welcome relief for many families in the electorate. The establishment of the independent statutory authority Jobs Queensland will ensure that we engage in proper long-term workforce planning.

I am pleased that we are focused on the welfare of those in our society who have made so many great contributions over so many years to building our community. Pensioners will welcome the \$347 million for Queensland pensioner and concession cardholders. As we have done so often in the past in the Labor Party, we will stand with the most vulnerable—\$31.3 million over four years will say to the people of Greenslopes that we as a government are serious when we say not now, not ever to domestic violence.

I stood in front of thousands of members of the Metropolitan Districts Netball Association as they cheered for the mighty Queensland Firebirds in my electorate, and they will cheer even louder when they hear of the new state netball centre—a centre that will help members of the MDNA become the Firebirds of the future.

There are so many people in the electorate who care deeply about our natural environment, and they will welcome our \$100 million funding to protect the Great Barrier Reef. I could continue ad infinitum about this budget. There is more funding for arts, police, ambulance officers, infrastructure, sporting facilities and a huge boost for tourism—all things that will be of great benefit to the people of Greenslopes. This is a great Labor budget. It is a budget that delivers a surplus, delivers our election commitments, protects the reef, invests in health and education, rescues TAFE, protects pensioners and puts some real funding into domestic violence prevention.

This budget could stand on these things alone, but I have saved the best for last: the Advance Queensland strategy. Like every member of the Palaszczuk government, I have jobs as my first priority. We are absolutely committed to creating the jobs for the future. The Greenslopes electorate is surrounded by fine teaching and research hospitals, both public and private. It is in close proximity to three great universities and is a short bus ride to great research institutes like the Queensland Institute of Medical Research, the Gallipoli Medical Research Foundation and Translational Research Institute. It is the place that many people who work and study in these fine institutions choose to live and raise a family. These people will particularly welcome the visionary Advance Queensland strategy and its \$180 million in funding.

The Best and Brightest Fund, the future jobs strategy and the business investment attraction package will enable our state to become a leader in research, development and commercialisation of the industries of the future—a future that is rushing upon us. This government has the vision to be ready for that future.

This is a budget that is a win for the people of Greenslopes but it is also a win for our entire state. The Premier and her team have laid out a fully funded plan for the creation of jobs now and jobs for the future. I commend these bills to the House.

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (3.05 pm): In rising to speak to the appropriation bills, I congratulate the Treasurer for the work that he has put into the budget. Budgets are not easy things. They cover the whole of Queensland. A lot of work has been put into this budget. I am not saying this is the greatest budget I have ever seen, but it is a good budget, particularly for the first year of a new government. As governments come into power we are so used to being given a cut-smash type of budget. That is particularly what we see from a government in its first year. I commend the Treasurer because there are no cuts or smashing going on. We have seen an increase in the nurse-to-patient ratio. I believe that is a very good thing because nurses are the most trusted profession and the most needed. This definitely has to be commended.

I notice that there will be 13 extra teachers for the Dalrymple electorate. I know that will be very much appreciated. Over the years in Moranbah—and I am greatly honoured to have represented that area for the last 11½ years—we have been pushing for an upgrade in the air conditioning in the three schools. I think some were put in 30 to 40 years ago and are old evaporated air conditioners. I have visited those schools a number of times and have spoken to the students and all you could hear was noise but you would just get wind blowing and that was about it. We have received \$13½ million for those three Moranbah schools—Moranbah East, Moranbah State School and Moranbah State High School. I spoke to the mayor this morning, who has also made a number of submissions. I congratulate past P&Cs, present P&Cs, the local Isaac Regional Council and the community that has lobbied so hard. It is 40 degrees and sometimes 45 degrees in Moranbah. This will no doubt benefit this community, and the feedback is they are absolutely rapt. We are very appreciative.

In regard to the Gregory Developmental Road, I have been pushing this issue for a long time. We received \$150 million over five years. That first push came from me, the transport industry and the Charters Towers Regional Council—the Dalrymple Shire Council at the time. That money is spent. We were hoping to get more out of that budget. We received \$3 million for this upgrade but the \$3 million was for preparation work to upgrade Cape River Bridge. Cape River Bridge is a bridge that stops all the traffic travelling from Charters Towers right through to Clermont. This is probably a good sign. It is preparation work to finish off, I believe, the remaining 37 kilometres between Lyn Junction and Charters Towers. There are about 37 kilometres. This is a section that we really need to see upgraded. What that will do is secure the upgrade from Lyn Junction right through to Charters Towers. Once we upgrade Cape River Bridge, there will be virtually no stoppage from Charters Towers to Clermont. It is important that bridges such as Hann Creek, Snake Creek, Stockyard Creek, Basalt River and Clarke River are upgraded. We are looking for infrastructure development to drive the economy of Queensland. It is important that we upgrade the highway and relieve traffic congestion from the coast. This gives tourists an opportunity to use the back way, breathes life into country towns, there are fewer accidents and it creates jobs for the region.

Hopefully, out of that \$3 million we give the Charters Towers Regional Council, there is that opportunity to tender for the preparation of that bridge at Cape River—likewise for the sections that are about 25 kilometres south of Greenvale and likewise from the Bluff Downs turn-off to the Hervey Range turn-off. That is definitely much appreciated.

I also acknowledge the \$6.45 million for the disability and family support service at Charters Towers. That is big dollars well spent. Charters Towers has one of the highest number of people with disabilities per capita across Queensland. We have some wonderful service groups in Charters Towers, particularly the neighbourhood centre, and I know they would be rapt at the moment to receive that \$6.45 million of funding.

I also acknowledge the \$2.2 million of funding that goes to fire safety at Eventide. Fire safety is a big issue. We have clusters with independent living units in place, but many of those units have not been able to be occupied because of fire safety issues. We have people in the Charters Towers Hospital at this present time who are waiting to get in to Eventide, and one of the big issues is fire safety in regard to the clusters, so that is very, very important. There is also \$650,000 for drought preparedness at the Spyglass research station, and that is appreciated.

My electorate stretches from Moranbah, west of Mackay, to the Tablelands, west of Cairns. Since I was elected as the member for that area in 2009, I think it was—my seat was abolished in the previous redistribution—we have been pushing for that Upper Barron Road. It is an inland road that cuts across from Malanda to the Kennedy Highway and saves about 30 or 40 kilometres off the drive to Moranbah, and likewise sometimes to the Tablelands. That road is used by the timber industry, the milk industry and tourists going to the Bromfield Swamp. That is a beautiful swamp which was formed as a result of a volcanic eruption that occurred so many thousands of years ago. There are five kilometres of that road that need to be sealed. During the wet, it is virtually unusable and people have to travel an extra 30 or 40 kilometres around it because they just cannot drive it. I have to say that I very much appreciate the fact that that road will be sealed, at a cost of \$5 million or \$6 million over the next two years. That will seal and complete that section. The feedback I am getting is that the Tablelands people are very rapt about that funding, so I thank the Treasurer very much for that. I acknowledge that he has provided that support; it has been so welcomed and very appreciated.

The budget has \$1 million to support the Jumna Dam, which will be servicing the town of Irvinebank. There is no doubt that the dam is an important part of that Irvinebank community. The budget has nearly \$19 million for the disability and family support service on the Atherton Tablelands, and that is well appreciated too. We have had good feedback in regard to that funding. The Ravenshoe early childhood centre receives \$300,000 for the upgrade of that facility, and the Milla Milla early childhood centre receives funding too, and I know they are very appreciative of that.

We also very much appreciate the \$159,000 that is being provided to support the community centre at Ravenshoe. The House would be aware of the recent events in Ravenshoe which I brought up in parliament this week, and I pay tribute to all those who spoke on behalf of the Ravenshoe community this week. They are still recovering. A lot of people are in shock, so this funding will help the community in regard to counselling services, support services and ongoing support. I have received some good news because I have been provided with information in a letter from the Premier to say that they will be getting a community development officer, and that is something I have been pushing for as well. That person will help drive certain events and be available to support the community. They will get

someone who is proactive in the community to hear their concerns, work with the community and coordinate events. I think this is a great thing that will continue for the next 12 months so that is much appreciated.

Jobs are very important in rural and regional Queensland. We have unemployment and we need every bit of support we can possibly get. Over the next few years, we will continue to push for infrastructure development and road funding. We do appreciate the \$60 million increase for the transport infrastructure development fund, and I know that will help the local councils. One of the main focuses is ensuring that we give local councils the opportunity to tender for local jobs because that is very, very important. I say that because we are sick of seeing Western Australian companies tender for local jobs and do the work that locals should be doing. It is important to look after your friends, look after the locals and support the people who are there. We really need to ensure that funding is going to the locals.

We will be pushing for other issues. There is a need for an upstream weir at Charters Towers to provide water so that landowners can irrigate and grow sorghum, grow crops, feed the cattle, fatten the cattle and keep them alive during drought. At the same time, the council is working on constructing a meatworks, so it is very important for that water infrastructure to be put in place.

As I said earlier, this is the government's first term. Most governments come in here and smash Queenslanders in the first term, so I have to give credit to the Treasurer and the government for the presentation of this budget. I do not want to say it is perfect, but I do say that it is a reasonably good budget.

 **Ms DONALDSON** (Bundaberg—ALP) (3.16 pm): I am very pleased to stand in the House today to speak about the budget delivered by the Treasurer this week. I would like to congratulate the Treasurer on his budget that delivers for all Queenslanders. In my electorate, we have been doing it tough for a long time. Under the previous government, we watched the unemployment rate in Bundaberg rise and we watched front-line services being decimated and confidence in our local economy plummet. The first budget by the Palaszczuk government has been a refreshing change for my community and it has been welcomed with open arms by all sectors.

Whilst the benefits to my electorate of beautiful Bundaberg are too numerous to mention in the short time I have today, I would like to mention a few of the highlights, whilst not forgetting about the rest of the benefits to my community. Firstly, I would like to mention the record health spending and the benefits this will have. One of the biggest concerns from people who come through the doors of my office relates to health. With the median age of my constituents above the Queensland average, there is a heavy reliance on our health system.

The previous government ignored the health needs of people in my community. They sacked 320 nurses in the Wide Bay health district and they slashed vital preventative services. I am pleased to receive \$2.2 million to establish a cardiology service in Bundaberg and \$4.9 million for a new ophthalmology service as well. This will mean that people will not have to take the long journey to Brisbane and back again to receive these services. This is a huge relief to residents, particularly older residents, who can now receive those services in their own home town.

This is in addition to the extra nurses we will see as part of our election commitment to restoring front-line services and increasing nursing graduates. For people with complex health issues and those needing extra assistance in our health system, nurse navigators will help ease their journey within our hospital service. I am also pleased to see \$5 million set aside for rehabilitation of the Burnett River bridge in Bundaberg. There is an \$11.4 million instalment of the \$23.1 million upgrade of the spillway at Paradise Dam as well. Paradise Dam was a great Labor infrastructure project and brought water security to agriculture in my area.

I am pleased also to see an additional 11 teachers for schools across Bundaberg to help reduce class sizes, continuing the great Labor tradition of supporting public education. This is also apparent in the \$210,000 for maintenance at Bundaberg Special School.

Building the regions and Advance Queensland are fantastic initiatives that will mean our regional council and business will be able to apply for funding for local projects that will benefit Bundaberg. Projects identified by council as priorities will now have a potential funding source to which they can apply. I look forward to working closely with our regional council to assist in getting job-creating community infrastructure projects to our beautiful city. It is just a shame that my neighbour the member for Burnett is not interested in actually working with me for the benefit of our region and that he is only

interested in picking fights with me and talking down our beautiful area. I have extended a number of invitations to the member for Burnett to meet with me, to work with me, to look at the bigger picture, but he is only interested in the politicking and nay-saying.

People who know me know how passionate I am about supporting the vulnerable in our community and I am delighted that there is additional funding for Bundaberg of \$1.4 million for supporting children in out-of-home care as well as a further \$1.3 million for local organisations to support families to safely care for their children. I would like to thank the Minister for Child Safety for her recent visit to Bundaberg to meet with local organisations. I would also like to thank both the Minister for Child Safety and the Minister for Education for their joint funding of the Bumblebees Therapeutic Preschool Service when the federal LNP cut their funding and left vulnerable children out in the cold. Her concern and genuine care for these families in my community is a breath of fresh air.

The previous government forgot about Bundaberg—no new jobs, just cutting of services, cutting of jobs and more interest in themselves rather than the small business, growers and families who look to government to lead the way. I am proud to be a member of the Palaszczuk government who is listening to people in Bundaberg and getting on with creating jobs and working to right the wrongs of the previous government.

I know I have not spoken about what a financially responsible budget the Treasurer has delivered, but those on this side of the House already know that. If those opposite need help reading the pie charts showing that revenue is greater than spending, I am sure someone here would be happy to oblige. Thank you. The budget delivers for all in my community and I am very pleased to support it.

 **Mr MANDER** (Everton—LNP) (3.21 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2015. I want to explain to the House why this budget fails for the hardworking families who live in my electorate of Everton, fails for the people who live in my wider region and fails for Queenslanders regardless of where they live. Let me first focus on the electorate of Everton and why this Labor budget has manifestly failed them.

Apart from delivering absolutely nothing for them, it was even worse because it did nothing to address the issues that families in my electorate battle with day in, day out. This government says it is all about jobs. In fact, the Treasurer mentioned the word 'jobs' 40 times in his budget speech, magically thinking that mentioning it enough times will actually create jobs. His own budget forecast tells us that unemployment will remain high, at 6.5 per cent. The only job creation initiatives that were outlined in this budget were 3,000 new Public Service jobs, a 5.3 per cent increase in the size of the Public Service which will amount to an extra \$1 billion expense to the budget. One would think that with the history of debt from the previous Labor government, mainly through increasing the size of the Public Service, they had learnt their lessons from the past.

Another huge issue in my area, which I know is an issue in many Brisbane suburban electorates, is that of traffic congestion. In my electorate there are a couple of very bad bottlenecks which mean that more and more people are spending more and more time in their cars, whether they are dropping the kids off at school or going to work, wasting valuable family time as well as wasting petrol as they are in the car on the road so much. It really troubles me that in this budget nothing whatsoever has been allocated to the roads of Everton, particularly Old Northern Road, which runs outside my electorate office, which is situated on the corner of South Pine Road and Stafford Road. If honourable members have not noticed it before, there is a lovely picture of me there. This has to be one of the most congested areas of Brisbane. This would be one of the worst bottlenecks in Brisbane and not one bit of money has been allocated towards that. That is something that my electorate will remember and something that I will remind them about.

Let's talk about the schools in my electorate. Going through the booklet showing what capital expenditure has been allocated to the schools—surprise, surprise—I note that not one school in my electorate has received any allocation of funding, and I know there is a number of LNP electorates in the same situation. I hope it is only coincidental that 60 per cent of the capital funding for schools has gone to Labor electorates when they only hold 48 per cent of the seats. I am sure that is a coincidence. I turn to Everton Park State High School, and the member for Noosa is a former student. He ranks with Geoffrey Rush as one of the former greats of the school.

Mr Bleijie: Oh, come on!

Mr MANDER: Sorry, the former minister is a little bit above Geoffrey Rush. Everton Park State High School fought a really good battle when the legitimate question was asked about the future of the school when they have a facility that is designed for 1,100 kids and there are only 250 kids at the school and it has been that way for some time. We put up a very rational argument to the then minister for the

school to continue to remain open. Part of that was to sell off a portion of the land, which the school is absolutely in favour of. Why? Because they want a refurbishment of their very aged facilities; they want this to be a modern school and they want to be able to rebuild the school. Again, it saddens me that there is no allocation whatsoever, no capital funding allocated to the refurbishment at Everton Park State High School. They are very upset by that and, again, that is a great disappointment.

I am pleased that, in the budget, after much lobbying, the Labor government has agreed to support a couple of projects in the social services sector. I do want to thank the former minister and member for Aspley for her support of a couple of projects under the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial. We have a facility planned in Albany Creek; land was donated to Youngcare when I was the Minister for Housing and Public Works. It is great to see that funding has been provided so that program by MS Queensland can help those adults with a disability. I am eagerly waiting for this project to be signed off. I would ask the Minister for Housing and Public Works to expedite this as quickly as possible. There is a vacant block of land that needs to be used, and what better cause could there be?

At the other end of my electorate, at Mitchelton, \$1 million under the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial has been allocated to Wesley Mission, who are building 15 units of accommodation for adults with mental disabilities. I am really proud to have this in my electorate. I am really proud of the surrounding areas that are happy to have this facility looking after these people who do have a disability.

The budget has been quite disappointing for my electorate, but that does not come as any surprise. Similarly, it has been quite disappointing in the education and training space as well, my shadow portfolio. The minister made a number of announcements in this space. She boasted that this is a typical Labor government budget. I do not agree with her on many things, but this is one thing on which I do agree with her. It is a typical Labor government budget and Labor's solution to everything is to mindlessly throw money at it. The union puppetmasters have determined what will take place in the education space and they have demanded a return on their investment and this minister has delivered it in spades. When will the ALP learn that it is not the amount of money that is important but where the money is actually directed that is the most important thing? Some of the rubbish that has been espoused about the previous LNP government's term in the education sector is exactly that: rubbish.

Of course there was no sacking of teachers. The student-teacher ratios were the best they had been in decades. You would have noticed that during the recent election campaign the education unions were relatively quiet because they had nothing to complain about. The schools were happy with the policy directions and that is the reason that the unions were very quiet, but \$180 million has been ripped out of the programs that were initiated by the previous government.

One of these programs is Great Teachers = Great Results, which was all about making sure that we improve teacher quality. Every bit of research says that if we want to improve student outcomes we need to improve teaching quality, so we introduced 300 master teachers across the state. Mentors for first-year teachers were also very well received. We aimed to cut red tape through this program and give schools more autonomy at the local level to give schools the chance to become more independent, and all of these things were incredibly well received. But the unions hated Great Teachers = Great Results because it gave decision-making powers to the locals and away from centralised control, which they absolutely abhorred.

Perhaps Labor are going to use the \$180 million that they have taken out of this successful program and allocate it to something that the Treasurer has mentioned in the budget: enhanced middle management. That is a proud thing to have in your budget! Who would take money out of the pockets of state and private school principals to pay for middle management bureaucrats who will supposedly help deliver the curriculum of the future? Who in their right mind in this day and age shouts from the rooftops that they will provide enhanced middle management? You would swear this is an episode of *Utopia*. Will more middle management help our kids read and write better? I do not think so.

One of the other great programs that the previous minister introduced—which has been incredibly successful and one that I mentioned yesterday—was the Great Results Guarantee. For those of you who are not aware of this, the Great Results Guarantee was federal money that some refer to as the Gonski money. It was not imaginary money of the future; it was actually allocated in the forward estimates. When the Rudd-Gillard government asked the states to sign up to the Gonski reforms there is one thing that the other side of the House continues to forget: as part of that deal each state had to match \$1 billion in years 5 and 6, which would have been totally irresponsible with the debt levels that we had. When we did not sign up for Gonski, the Rudd-Gillard government took \$797 million away from Queensland schools. Thank goodness the Abbott government got in and gave us that money back, and we then directed it to the Great Results Guarantee.

What is incredibly interesting is that the Minister for Education—who has been banging on in this House about how she is going to keep going to the Abbott government to ensure they get that imaginary Gonski money in years 5 and 6—has forgotten one thing, and that is that Bill Shorten does not give a ‘Gonski’ about Gonski because he acknowledges and realises how irresponsible that promise is. I would say to the Minister for Education that, before you go to Tony Abbott, go to Bill Shorten and get a guarantee for this so-called imaginary Gonski money.

If you have been in any school at all over the last three years, you will understand that this Great Results Guarantee money has been one of the most effective education policies in decades. This money has been very well received and it is a program that we would like to see continue into the future. Yesterday I asked a question of the minister about the future of Gonski money and she was very tricky with her answer. I asked, ‘Is the Gonski money going to be there in 2016?’ Of course when you are talking about budgets you are talking about financial years. The minister very cleverly pointed to page 12 of Budget Paper No. 4, where it states quite clearly that there is no money allocated for the Great Results Guarantee in 2016-17, 2017-18 or 2018-19. Next year we were going to commit \$299 million to the Great Results Guarantee.

I am encouraged that the minister has said she agrees with the Great Results Guarantee and acknowledges that it has been a good program, but there is no commitment beyond June 2016. I am asking the minister to make an unequivocal commitment that the \$797 million that came from the federal government will go towards the Great Results Guarantee. I suspect that the money is not in here because they want to keep it up their sleeves in case their union masters say that they want that money directed somewhere else. This matter could quite easily be put to bed tomorrow if the minister would just come out and say that the \$797 million will go towards one of the most effective education policies in the history of the Queensland education department.

I was very flattered by this budget, because my policy as the former housing and public works minister for the maintenance of government buildings was such a good one that Labor has copied it. We stopped the stranglehold that QBuild had on maintenance in schools, because the schools had no option but to go to QBuild. I am glad that the Treasurer has recognised this is an effective policy, because it gave them the option to go to their local tradies, who then had the opportunity to do this work at a far more cost-effective rate than QBuild could in the past. I thank the minister and I congratulate her for keeping that policy and ensuring that our local tradies have the chance to be involved with school maintenance.

There have been grand announcements about ‘rescuing’ TAFE. The government is throwing \$34.5 million over the next four years to restore TAFE Queensland to its rightful place as the premier provider of VET in Queensland. As I mentioned yesterday, Labor is standing back and throwing large amounts of money at a broken system and dumping the very good solution that the LNP had to fix it because their union bosses once again did not like this. You cannot argue the fact that, over the past 12 months, the number of VET places across the public and private sectors has increased by five per cent. The system has worked, and it beggars belief that this government can stand before the people of Queensland with a straight face and claim that it is all about jobs now and into the future. To make matters worse, Labor is going to recklessly throw \$314.5 million over four years—or almost \$80 million a year—at programs to boost skills and training and not one single job will be created.

This budget is underwhelming, unimaginative and does nothing to create jobs or reduce debt. I would urge the Treasurer to read the transcript of the opposition leader’s budget reply speech where he spoke about a real plan for the future that only the LNP can deliver.

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (3.29 pm): I rise today to speak about how the Palaszczuk government’s budget, which was handed down on Tuesday, supports jobs and invests in front-line services in my electorate of Gladstone. Not only this, but it also gives improvements and funding to critical parts of my electorate including health, education, police and roads. This government has a plan to work together and work smarter to build Queensland’s economy now and into the future. Gladstone is a region which includes a \$62 million investment to upgrade the RG Tanna Coal Terminal at the Port of Gladstone.

Not only did this government stop this profitable government owned asset from being sold; we are now investing in infrastructure and upgrades which will generate jobs and prosperity in our region and our state now and into the future. This budget will deliver a new road, health and education infrastructure as well as social services and grants. This government is investing in initiatives across the breadth and depth of Central Queensland’s economy to support this growth.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to restoring front-line services and investing in the future of our great state. I am excited to see the government's commitment of \$212 million to boosting overall nurse numbers in Queensland and the commitment to nurse-to-patient ratios. I am sure that the many nurses who work at the Gladstone Hospital will be guaranteed extra resources to help them continue the great work they do in our wonderful electorate of Gladstone. This will see a legislated minimum of four patients per nurse during the day shift and seven patients per nurse during the night shift at Gladstone Hospital, keeping the patients in my electorate safer than ever before.

As part of the new Enhancing Regional Hospitals program, the people of my electorate are set to have a second-to-none emergency department following upgrades to the aged and run-down facility at the Gladstone Hospital. The Gladstone Hospital was a core concern for many of my constituents during the recent election. The issue with our hospital is not the staff who work there or the tireless efforts they put in to keep the people of Gladstone healthy and safe but the facilities they have to actually work in. This is a big win for the Gladstone community, who have been crying out for an investment in health for way too long. I was pleased to have the Minister for Health visit Gladstone recently and listen to my request for a much needed upgrade to this facility. This upgrade will allow us to be confident in the care of those who are in need of emergency care. I must say on the record that I will continue in my quest, along with many in my community, to advocate for a new hospital for Gladstone.

I am glad to call my home an industrial city, one which can develop our youth into tomorrow's tradespeople and trained employees. By working together with industry and TAFE, we can connect skills to jobs. It is a smarter way to help reduce unemployment. In my electorate, \$3.1 million is being invested in a trade skills centre at Gladstone State High School—a wonderful investment in this school. This centre will increase the skills of our high school leavers and provide pathways to successful futures for these children.

The Palaszczuk government's commitment to our kids continues in Gladstone, with approximately \$1.96 million invested in additional classrooms for Calliope State School. This school has seen a rapid rise in student numbers, and this investment will help cater for this community's needs. With ever-increasing numbers in our senior high schools in Gladstone, there is an increasing need to invest more money into another high school in Gladstone and in Calliope. It is my intention to continue to work to ensure our students get vital infrastructure for the future of my area.

I am also pleased that there has been a funding announcement of \$250,000 for classroom renewal and refurbishment at Rosella Park School. This school does so much in my community to assist those students with special needs, so extra classroom and facility upgrades will be very well received by that school.

I was also pleased to hear that flashing lights will be installed at one of the busiest schools in Gladstone, Kin Kora State School, to remind motorists to slow down and watch for kids at pick-up and drop-off times. This is critical for the safety of our students and their parents.

This budget focuses on working smarter with what we have and sees an ongoing commitment of \$434,000 to the Gladstone Women's Health Centre. This centre provides vital support and counselling services to the women of Gladstone. To ensure continuity of service relationships and to build on what we already have and what is already working, the Palaszczuk government has committed this funding for the next three years. I know that Tash from the Gladstone Women's Health Centre will be ecstatic with the amount of funding continuing on for a guaranteed three years.

This budget at its heart is about jobs—jobs now and jobs for the future. This government has committed \$780,000 to upgrade the Gladstone watch house closed-circuit camera system. I know that this is a very important piece of equipment that needs upgrading because my twin brother is a policeman in Gladstone and he tells me that the need for this service is critical to ensure the safety of police. This upgrade focuses not only on increasing the safety of our police while they carry out their important public service but also on generating jobs in my electorate.

The Palaszczuk government has allocated \$785 million to infrastructure spending in Fitzroy which will support an estimated 2½ thousand jobs in my region. This includes the completion of the Kin Kora roundabout, which I must admit is an ongoing project in my electorate, and upgrades to the Bruce Highway at Gladstone-Mount Larcom Road. The Palaszczuk government is committed to working together with industry and local communities to build a stronger, smarter Queensland. This budget is a testament to that vision.

I congratulate the Treasurer and the Premier on a responsible budget for Queensland. I thank all of the government ministers for listening to me and to the voice of my electorate and starting to deliver for Gladstone after many years in the budget wilderness. My electorate is a fantastic, diverse community, and this budget is finally delivering for what is needed now and into the future. I support the bills.

 **Dr ROWAN** (Moggill—LNP) (3.46 pm): The Palaszczuk government's Queensland budget for 2015-16 has at its core a fundamentally flawed debt action plan. As such, there will be more heartache for Queenslanders. This state budget is a feather castle built on liquid sand. It will float away and disintegrate rapidly. Shifting or transferring general government debt to our government owned corporations, including our electricity companies, is simply a smoke-and-mirrors exercise. But Queenslanders will not be fooled.

Accessing the long service leave fund of public servants is a cheap trick that risks our currently fully funded Public Service entitlements. This plan, which includes ripping out \$3.4 billion from the funding pool set aside for public servants' long service leave and not contributing towards the defined benefit scheme for five years, is highly questionable and is really a form of Russian roulette. This is being done by an inexperienced Labor government with no credible or sustainable plan for our economic future.

What we have heard from Labor in their state budget is rhetoric and hollow announcements which cannot be matched by practical, long-term, sustainable action. This budget is bad for jobs and bad for growth. Grassroots environmental programs have been slashed. The infrastructure freeze is more like a blizzard. The successful Safe Night Out Strategy has also been inappropriately targeted. What we also know is that Labor are soft on crime. They have cut funding for the Crime and Corruption Commission and they are empowering criminal gangs.

This budget does nothing to provide real cost-of-living-pressure relief for my residents in the electorate of Moggill. The cost of car registration has increased by 3.5 per cent from 1 July after a three-year freeze under the former LNP government. In my electorate of Moggill this means that the cost of putting a four-cylinder car on the road has risen by \$12, with the costs for a six-cylinder car rising by \$17.

In contrast, the Liberal National Party has a vibrant and robust economic plan which will deliver real jobs and ensure sustainable, long-term economic growth in Queensland. The LNP has real economic plans which will deliver jobs and achieve economic diversity and growth in Queensland. Diversifying via a balanced investment in a range of industries, sectors and emerging technologies and markets, as committed to by the Liberal National Party, is a prudent and wise course of action.

The public at large understand that economic security is a fundamental right of all Queenslanders. Achieving resilience within our economy requires a focused and determined commitment by experienced economic managers such as those within the LNP. Without a realistic and truthful approach to our government's finances, Labor will not be able to truly invest in our schools and hospitals of tomorrow as well as much needed state infrastructure.

The Liberal National Party understands that the agricultural sector is a vital component of economic activity for our state, ensuring that food and primary source materials are available for secondary industries such as manufacturing. In Queensland over the last three years the value of our total manufacturing sector has remained relatively stable at around \$18 billion despite some unfavourable conditions including rapid technological change, a higher Australian dollar and variable market conditions and consumer expectations. The Liberal National Party will ensure that workers in manufacturing occupations have access to further research and development strategies, including design occupations which can be exported to international markets.

Tourism at present represents 70 per cent of Queensland's service industry—a \$23 billion industry. Many visitors from around the world contribute to our local economy by enjoying the beauty of our Great Barrier Reef, visiting our national parks, interacting with our unique flora and fauna as well as visiting our beaches and tasting our terrific culinary delights. The LNP understands the importance of tourism and has a track record of strong support for this sector whilst in government, and I acknowledge the former minister and member for Currumbin for her great work during the term of the Newman LNP government.

Our resources sector with a specific focus on coal, oil and gas must continue to be supported with specific strategies to drive investor confidence and expedite approval processes whilst also ensuring that the highest standards of environmental protection are adhered to as part of an ethically sound governance framework. The LNP will deliver such a balance in relation to mining and the resources sector in Queensland.

Those in construction also need less bureaucratic red tape, lower taxes and planning law reform in order to progress residential developments in the south-east as well as regional Queensland so as to sustain projected population growth. Queensland has a unique opportunity to further progress biomedical research and be a recipient of its economic benefits. This was recently discussed at the Asia Pacific Cities Summit held in Brisbane, and I must offer my congratulations to Lord Mayor Graham Quirk on hosting such a successful event. In order to invest in biomedical and health research, a government must be able to discharge its due diligence and oversight proper governance processes. What we know in health is that when last in government the Labor Party had the trifecta of governance failures with the payroll fiasco, the Patel saga and the fake Tahitian prince episode. The LNP has strategies to further expand the education and training sector, particularly in relation to exported services of this sector into the Asia-Pacific region.

On 31 January 2015 a state election was held and a decision made by the people of Queensland. Since then, the LNP has systematically set about the task of rebuilding and developing innovative public policy whilst also announcing a number of associated commitments. The LNP is committed to reducing debt, delivering sound economic management when in government, enhancing the successful Royalties for the Regions program, reducing the tax burden on small business, further expanding front-line services and ensuring value for money for taxpayers in the provision of public services. The LNP will always be committed to lower taxes, smaller government and the principles of fairness, accountability, transparency, productivity and efficiency for the people of Queensland.

The Liberal National Party has also always had a strong commitment to supporting those with disadvantage in our community by creating and providing opportunity through real and practical education strategies and employment opportunities, and I give the practical example of the School of Hard Knocks in Queensland. The original Choir of Hard Knocks, now known as the Choir of Hope and Inspiration, first began rehearsing in September 2006 under the leadership of the great Australian choral conductor and opera singer Dr Jonathon Welch AM. The choir was created for people experiencing homelessness or disadvantage, with many members having a range of unique personal, physical, health and/or emotional needs.

Many honourable members may remember that the original Choir of Hard Knocks captured the hearts and minds of Australians in the award-winning ABC TV series of the same name in 2006. Since 2006, more than 300 street choirs have formed around the world. From the experiences of the original choir, Jonathon Welch has established the School of Hard Knocks, which provides a range of arts and wellbeing programs to those suffering with disadvantage. The School of Hard Knocks trains volunteers and professional teachers in its methods and provides a pathway forward for those suffering homelessness, poor mental health or other forms of disadvantage towards obtaining formal educational qualifications, employment and a brighter future.

In 2014 Jonathon Welch established the Absolutely Everybody Choir in Queensland, with a formal launch occurring on World Mental Health Day. This would not have been possible without the support primarily of the then LNP government but also the Department of Health and the Queensland Mental Health Commission. As an honorary patron of the School of Hard Knocks in Queensland, I want to acknowledge the achievements of Jonathon and his team including David Jones, Susan Gilmartin and Melissa Gill as well as various partnering agencies including Common Ground, Open Minds, Richmond Fellowship, Footprints, Lives Lived Well, Stepping Stone, the Salvation Army, Transitional Housing, and most recently, the Brisbane City Council for the collaborative work they are all undertaking for the benefit of many in our community.

This year the School of Hard Knocks intends to hold the Absolutely Everybody Loves Broadway concert at the Queensland Performing Arts Centre on the evening of Friday, 9 October, during Mental Health Week. I would encourage all honourable members and the people of Brisbane and Queensland to consider supporting this event given the transformational change such events and programs are making to the lives of those Queenslanders suffering with social, economic, health and educational disadvantage. This highly innovative and successful collaboration is an example of the LNP augmenting and enabling the delivery of socially and economically sound programs as part of public-private partnerships in our community.

I now wish to return to budget matters and, having previously addressed elements of the state budget, I now make some comments in relation to the federal budget delivered a few short weeks ago. I do this given the importance of cooperative relationships needed between state and federal government budgetary arrangements—that is, working together. This year's visionary federal budget and associated initiatives and incentives are great for residents not only in my electorate of Moggill but also right across Queensland. The Commonwealth announcements for small business including tax cuts will boost economic activity and create jobs. Allowing small businesses to immediately write-off any asset they buy up to \$20,000 with no limits on how many assets they write-down or how often they do it until June 2017 is to be commended. Providing small businesses earning under \$2 million a year a 1.5 per cent tax cut to 28½ per cent from 1 July has also been very much welcomed in my electorate by small businesses. From the Commonwealth government, Queensland hospitals will receive an extra \$819 million from 2014-15 to 2018-19 and Queensland's schools will receive an \$876 million increase from 2014-15 to 2018-19 and Queensland will receive an extra \$5.6 billion in GST revenue.

The Commonwealth's \$5 billion funding package for Northern Australia will also have very significant infrastructure and economic benefits for Queensland. Major highway projects to benefit from federal funding will also boost job creation in Queensland. In health additional Commonwealth funding for new medicines on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, vaccines and eHealth is also welcome. What this all highlights is that the Liberal National Party knows how to manage the finances and support economic growth in Queensland as well as across the nation.

In Queensland this side of the House has a plan for the future. Those members opposite have no credible plan. There is no vision; there are no credible plans. Queensland requires a credible vision and commitment to address our roads, rail and other vital public transport infrastructure. All this government has been focused on is outrageous directives to encourage union membership and return workplace relations to a situation of antagonism, with the resultant effect of Public Service inefficiency, poor productivity and wastage. The taxpayers of Queensland, including my constituents in Moggill, deserve better.

As a member of the LNP parliamentary team, I will continue to hold the Palaszczuk government to account as the residents of Moggill will not be hoodwinked by a lack of investment in vitally needed local infrastructure as well as the game of smoke and mirrors being led by the Treasurer and member for Mulgrave, Curtis Pitt. Debt is debt is debt. It does not matter where you hide it. It is still debt, Premier.

Finally, the health minister, Cameron Dick, asked a few short weeks ago: what do I have against the doctors of Queensland? That is a cheap shot at best. I am pleased to inform the minister: nothing at all. That is why the doctors of Queensland elected me to be president of both the Australian Medical Association of Queensland as well as the Rural Doctors Association of Queensland on two separate occasions as well as serving in various capacities of both organisations for over a decade. I am one of only two doctors in the history of Queensland to have been afforded this honour. But the real question is: what does the health minister, the member for Woodridge, have against the people of Queensland, as it is the health minister who opposes surgical waitlist integrity and it is the health minister who opposes Queenslanders getting their required care within clinically recommended time frames? It is also the health minister who locks out members of his own department from providing advice. The minister himself locks them out.

Can I also suggest to the health minister that he take a train trip. Maybe he and the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines, the member for Stafford, Dr Lynham, should board the *Spirit of the Outback* train. They can travel up the coast and have a look at some terrific communities and then head on inland and see some great parts there. They could personally support some of those drought affected communities by making that trip and perhaps on the way they could enjoy a glass of champagne from the estate or vineyard known as champagne socialism. That is right: they are champagne socialists on the other side of the House.

Eventually, they would come to Barcaldine. I would recommend that they disembark and spend some time in Barcaldine and support the local economy in the town. Perhaps they could have a meal at the Union Hotel. I know that the member for Whitsunday and the member for Gregory have certainly enjoyed time there. But after the health minister and the member for Stafford have contributed to the local economy and enjoyed their meal at the Union Hotel, they really need to visit the Tree of Knowledge. At the Tree of Knowledge they will find that it is dead—and not because it has been poisoned in the middle of the night by some scoundrel but because the Labor Party is rotten to the core because of union corruption, cronyism and failed public administration by Labor over many years not only in Queensland but right across Australia.

This year's state budget is flawed, just like the Labor Party. Queenslanders deserve truth in government, honesty and a credible economic plan. Labor is all about spending more but getting less. Certainly, there is a lack of transparent outcomes metrics in relation to health and education. My constituents in Moggill and the people of Queensland deserve better.

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (4.01 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the Treasurer's 2015 budget and to congratulate him on a wonderful job in delivering his first budget. His great stewardship and his hard work in steering this state back in the right direction should be acknowledged. Again, I congratulate him on a job well done. This budget will restore funding for vital services, create new jobs and deliver infrastructure for the people of my electorate of Thuringowa. This budget brings back the fairness and hope that the people of Queensland lost under the previous LNP government.

On 31 January, the people of Thuringowa—in fact, the people of Queensland—voted to return Labor to form a new government. Not only did they vote Labor to form government but also they provided Labor and the Palaszczuk government with a mandate that would see important revenue raising and government owned assets like the Port of Townsville, the Townsville-Mount Isa rail link and Ergon Energy remain in the hands of the people of Queensland and remain in their hands for many generations to come. These assets raise significant funds to help build and maintain our hospitals, schools and roads and help fund our vital front-line services such as police, fire and ambulance.

The Palaszczuk government received this mandate and heard the voices of the voters loud and clear. In return, this government gave a strong commitment to the people of Queensland that, under Labor, responsible and measured debt reduction would be the key to governing our great state whilst at the same time proactively ensuring that the needs of all Queenslanders were adequately met. This budget ensures that key infrastructure spending is being undertaken in core areas of government such as health, education and transport and doing so without needing to sell government owned assets to pay for it and in a way that is balanced, measured and fiscally responsible.

I feel very confident in saying that this budget appropriately funds our core areas of government whilst also securing much needed growth and prosperity and, more importantly, increased productivity in many diverse and much needed areas such as tourism or in new and innovative industries such as the proposed biofuels industry. These areas will provide not only much needed jobs for Queenslanders but also a significant boost of funds for Queensland Treasury. This budget provides us with a strong opportunity to build a better Queensland for the future.

In Townsville and Thuringowa, significant funding has been put aside to improve our local health services—\$804.6 million of significant funding, to be exact. As a former paramedic, and having worked closely within the health sector, I have a very keen interest in seeing our local health services not only maintained but also improved. I am very pleased to see that key areas of our local health services, such as acute mental health services, are getting the much needed attention they deserve. Importantly, it is great to see this budget restore nurse-to-patient ratios, which ensures the safety of our patients who use our health services. I, along with the constituents of the Thuringowa electorate, should feel comforted in the knowledge that our current health needs are being well looked after in this budget and that our future health needs are also being adequately catered for as well.

Once again, I commend this budget again for addressing many of the transport concerns in the Thuringowa electorate. An amount of \$75 million has been allocated to progress the construction of stage 4 of the Townsville Ring Road. This vital piece of road infrastructure will traverse 11 kilometres of my electorate and provides a new motorway bypass for the Bruce Highway around the city of Townsville. It connects our fast-growing northern beaches suburbs to major infrastructure such as the Townsville Hospital and James Cook University. It will also provide greater connectivity to our thriving business, retail and community hub that is Thuringowa Central.

An amount of \$10.5 million has also been allocated in our local community to complete the construction of the Dalrymple Road Bridge. Prior to that funding being allocated, the people of Deeragun and those nearby in the fast-growing residential subdivisions of Kalynda Chase and Greater Ascot could not cross this particular section of the Bohle River in the wet season owing to the existing crossing being regularly inundated by flooding. The completion of the Dalrymple Road Bridge will mean that residents of those areas can continue to have a direct and reliable road link to the Townsville CBD via Dalrymple Road in future wet seasons. This bridge will help improve road capacity along Dalrymple Road to cater for the fast residential growth that is currently underway on the western side of the Bohle River.

Education infrastructure has also been given a significant boost in the Thuringowa and northern beaches area, with \$10 million being set aside to commence the development of two new state schools in the fast-growing area of the northern suburbs. That investment should total a whopping \$90 million

over the next four years and will see the completion of both a state and secondary school. Another significant education investment for Thuringowa is \$135,000 set aside for the Weir State School, which will be used to complete the expansion and build a new storage area for their multipurpose hall. This strong investment in infrastructure shows that this is a government that is listening and addressing the concerns of the people of Thuringowa and that this is a government that is catering to the needs of Queenslanders.

Of course, these projects also serve another purpose. These are projects that create jobs. We had a situation where the previous LNP government promised Queenslanders that it would reduce unemployment to four per cent. But, of course, that promise turned out to be nothing more than an untruth that was made by he who shall not be named. This government is committed to building jobs for the future and with a solid budget and plan that includes the reintroduction of the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work program, that means that many of the major projects that I have discussed today will create new job opportunities for the people of the Thuringowa electorate and new job opportunities for Queenslanders.

I am excited because of the significant government investment that is being made in Thuringowa. New-found confidence and certainty is being developed in the private sector of the Thuringowa electorate and the broader Townsville community. With this new-found economic confidence and certainty comes momentum in the form of significant private sector investment in Thuringowa's future. I would like to share with members of the House some examples of that momentum, resulting in significant private investment that is currently planned or now underway in Thuringowa. Recently, Wingate announced the building of a \$500 million residential development in the Thuringowa electorate. I congratulate Wingate on its investment in that area. I know that Wingate will build a great community, comprised of 1,400 homes. Such investment is the shot in the arm that is needed in Thuringowa as it creates new jobs in construction and drives further investment in the region.

Our retail sector is also going strong, with Dexu investing \$90 million to expand and redevelop the Willows Shopping Centre. Again, this development helps to create more jobs in the building, retail and hospitality sectors. It also helps drive further investment and business confidence in Thuringowa. All of that, along with the recent announcement of the establishment of a new Catholic primary school in the Thuringowa electorate, shows that the engine room of Thuringowa is well and truly humming. I congratulate the various private sector businesses for investing in Thuringowa, for instilling further confidence in our community and for creating new job opportunities that were noticeably absent over the past three years. Importantly, I believe that local business confidence has lifted itself off the mat after the battering it took over the past three years. That local business confidence is being restored because, put simply, business believes that a return to good government brings renewed economic certainty, jobs and prosperity.

Good government needs a good budget and a good budget includes a plan to create new jobs, stimulate growth in our economy and provide new economic opportunities for all Queenslanders. I believe that the Palaszczuk government has demonstrated that it is honouring the commitments that it made to the people of Queensland in its first few months of government. This budget demonstrates that the Palaszczuk government will continue to honour those commitments well into the future. I again congratulate Treasurer Pitt on a job well done and I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr EMERSON** (Indooroopilly—LNP) (4.10 pm): I rise to deliver my budget reply. Let me begin by recalling the legacy of Labor's last period in office. This is particularly important because the transport minister in the last Labor government is now the Labor Premier. This legacy is her legacy. Under Labor we saw a disaster in public transport.

An opposition member: A train wreck!

Mr EMERSON: A train wreck. I take the interjection. Fares for trains, buses and ferries became some of the most expensive fares, not just in Australia but in the world. Labor put in place a policy of 15 per cent annual fare increases. When Anastacia Palaszczuk became transport minister, in one of her first commitments in that role she promised to review the fare increases, but all she did was then put them up again by 15 per cent. All up, fares went up under Labor by more than a massive 50 per cent in just three years.

As public transport affordability plummeted under Labor it had an obvious impact. Patronage also began to plummet as Labor's fare policy drove commuters away from public transport. It has even been suggested that it may have been Labor's plan all along to drive people away from public transport so that there would not be the need for the additional spending on transport infrastructure. While fares

were being hiked up 15 per cent year after year after year, reliability on public transport was falling. Under transport minister Palaszczuk, the on-time running performance of Queensland Rail trains hit a three-year low. People were not getting to work or school on time or getting back home on time. That also drove people away from public transport as commuters concluded that it was not reliable.

But it was not just public transport users that were targeted by Labor. Motorists were also being hit under Labor. Members should not forget that the Labor transport minister was Annastacia Palaszczuk. Like the massive increases in public transport fares, vehicle registration also went through the roof. Under Labor, car registration went up 30 per cent in just four years and public transport fares went up 50 per cent in three years. The RACQ found that, under Labor, Queensland had become the most expensive state in which to own and run a motor vehicle. But even if people could afford to run a car, there was a failure to appropriately invest in roads on which to drive them on. For instance, the RACQ concluded that, by the end of Labor's term in office, Queensland's major road corridor, the Bruce Highway, was in crisis. It warned that, after years of neglect, without urgent investment 400 people would be killed on the Bruce Highway over the next decade. But even when Labor did invest in infrastructure, it bungled it.

ABS figures show that the increase in the cost of delivering roads in Queensland had outstripped the rest of Australia in the preceding decade and that Labor was failing to deliver roads in Queensland efficiently and effectively. In relation to the Gold Coast Light Rail, a flawed business case meant that Queenslanders would have to pay an extra \$300 million for the project. On the Springfield rail line, a failure to provide adequate park-and-ride spaces was something that was condemned even by Labor's own member for Bundamba, who urged the then transport minister to rectify the situation and she refused. Members should not forget that those opposite also ordered trains that were too big for tunnels and trains without seats. This is Labor's legacy—the legacy of the transport minister, the now Premier of Queensland.

Despite getting a report in 2008 saying that a new inner-city rail river crossing was needed, four years later it had produced a plan that was unfunded and would see more than 100 homes and businesses razed. In fact, during the lead-up to the 2012 election the cost of Labor's plan varied by \$2 billion. At one point the transport minister said it was \$8.3 billion, then went on Steve Austin's program on ABC Radio and claimed that it was \$7 billion. Then days out it was \$6.3 billion. Most embarrassing of all, a year ago in last year's budget reply the then opposition leader, now Premier, had to come back into the parliament after midnight and apologise to parliament for misleading it by claiming falsely in her budget in reply speech that Labor's plan had been fully costed and funded. She was forced to come back and apologise because she had made false claims about a bungled Labor project. That is Labor's legacy in transport and roads: inaction, bungles and massive cost-of-living hikes.

That is the legacy that we inherited in government in 2012. What did we do about it? On fares, we ended Labor's 15 per cent annual fare hikes. We halved them, as we promised because Labor had already factored them into the budget, and then we went further. Last year, for the first time in Queensland's history we saw a statewide cut to public transport fares of five per cent. That is the first time that had happened in Queensland's history. This year there was a freeze on public transport fares. The contrast could not be clearer: 15 per cent annual fare increases under Labor; a cut to public transport fares statewide for the first time in Queensland's history under the LNP. We also brought in the incredibly successful free trips after nine journeys that benefit 80,000 commuters a week. After patronage on rail starting to plummet under Labor's policy of fares going up every year by 15 per cent, last year, under those policies of the LNP, for the first time we saw patronage increase.

On car registration, in contrast again to Labor's increase of 30 per cent in just four years for car registration, the LNP froze family car registration for the three years we were in office, as we promised at the election. Sadly, we have seen that policy change now under the current government. We delivered record spending on the Bruce Highway. We had a 10-year plan to bring it out of the crisis. We had the lowest road toll in Queensland's history on the back of a record \$350 million Road Safety Action Plan.

In terms of trains, we concluded a \$4.4 billion new-generation rolling stock plan that will deliver 75 new six-car trains, an expansion of the existing fleet and the retirement of old rolling stock. What do we get from this budget? So far in this budget we have seen fares going up again. Last year the LNP cut fares and we froze them for this year, but now we see fares going up again. The bad old days of Labor are back. What is happening with rego? Last time under Labor there was a 30 per cent increase in just four years. Under the LNP there was a freeze on family car registration. Now we are back to the bad old days of Labor with a 3½ per cent increase for car rego, which is 2½ times the current inflation rate of 1.4 per cent. Rego is going back up again.

In this budget there are no new projects, although there is a lot of credit claiming for LNP projects. We have even heard the Treasurer say that early spending on the new-generation rolling stock would see all 75 trains delivered by December 2018. Of course, that same passage was in last year's budget because they were going to be delivered by December 2018.

Mr Minnikin: Tell him he's loco.

Mr EMERSON: I take the interjection from the member for Chatsworth. He is on fire today. We hear the minister claiming credit for new-generation rolling stock and claiming credit for the Toowoomba second range crossing, which is a project that federal Labor refused to back and state Labor refused to back when last in office. They are claiming credit for LNP projects on the Warrego. We worked on those projects with local LNP members. By fighting for and working with their local communities, they have put pressure on this government to maintain those LNP projects. The upgrade of the Gateway North was an LNP project claimed by Labor as part of its Infrastructure Plan that we have seen in this budget. The upgrade of the Bruce Highway—

Mr Byrne interjected.

Mr EMERSON: I take the interjection from the member for Rockhampton who will say the Yeppen South project is a Labor project, but who started it? The LNP! I remember being up there to start the project. I am sure the member for Rockhampton will applaud the LNP's vision and commitment to his electorate for the Yeppen South project, which provides extra capacity, extra safety and extra flood mitigation on the Bruce Highway, which is the corridor of commerce that is so necessary for Queensland. There was record spending on the Bruce Highway by the LNP after years of neglect by Labor.

The LNP has already promised to freeze family car rego at the rate of inflation going forward. In stark contrast, we saw every Labor member of this House vote to put rego up 2½ times the inflation rate. It is particularly extraordinary when we hear rural and regional Labor members of parliament say they want to put rego up 2½ times the inflation rate, because people in their electorates do not have ready access to public transport and the car, often a V8 four-wheel drive, is so necessary. To see rego increased must send shivers through those people who remember what it was like under Labor last time they kept going up.

This is a failed budget. It fails on infrastructure by not providing for new projects but merely continuing LNP projects. We put in place great projects, but the budget does not do anything more. It increases public transport fares and car rego. Interestingly, according to the budget, the reliability of trains is forecast to fall. Under previous transport minister Palaszczuk, we had a three-year low in reliability. Under the LNP we achieved the highest on-time running and reliability of any train system in Australia and this budget forecasts that it will fall again. That is what this budget is about. It is a failed Labor budget for Queensland.

In my own electorate, because of the hard work of the community that I have worked with to pressure the government, we will see some projects continue, including the upgrade of the Graceville train station and the Indooroopilly cycle bridge. However, there are no significant new projects or funding. This government is simply continuing good LNP projects. I do commend the government for continuing the flashing school lights program that our government introduced. The previous government talked about it, but never implemented it. Across every electorate in this state, we introduced flashing school lights. I thank the government for continuing that project, because it is so important for safety around our schools. As the local member, I will be fighting for more money for flashing school lights and other projects in my electorate. I conclude by stressing that this is a failed Labor budget that does not provide new infrastructure, but only provides increased cost-of-living pressures for Queenslanders.

 **Hon. SJ MILES** (Mount Coot-tha—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef) (4.25 pm): This is my first budget as the member for Mount Coot-tha. I echo the comments my colleagues have made previously in congratulating the Treasurer on a measured and responsible first budget that delivers on Labor's commitments. I am proud to highlight two major funding commitments for my local community in today's debate. However, I digress briefly to acknowledge my family in the gallery. Those are the lengths that they will go to to see me these days. It is great to have them here.

Firstly, the budget provides for the initial stages of a \$16 million upgrade at Auchenflower train station. Auchenflower station sees around 18,000 passenger movements each week and is a key station on the Ipswich line, especially for people who use the Wesley Hospital. Passengers have been

asking for improvements to the accessibility of Auchenflower station for some time now. It is an issue that came up repeatedly when I was doorknocking and campaigning at the station. I am pleased that the Palaszczuk government is making this a reality. It is part of a substantial program worth \$212 million over five years for disability access upgrades across the rail network.

In addition to the \$1 million also delivered for local school improvement projects, as I promised during the election campaign in this budget I have also secured a \$200,000 boost for Red Hill Special School. This will be spent on major structural repairs for the school and will also allow for extra room for the children to play. In my role as a local member of parliament, one of my first meetings was with the Red Hill Special School P&C. They are a small but incredibly dedicated group of parents, as is the principal, Pamela Stack, and her team of teaching staff. They told me how they had a problem with a stormwater drain that threatened the structure of the building. I phoned the education minister on my way back to the office and met with her shortly after. Together we made sure that the budget included the necessary funds not just to fix the building but also to expand the play space for the kids. To see those funds allocated in the budget is exciting. There is no other way for me to describe it. For me, it was a moment that really reinforced the great thing about this job. I thank the education minister and the Treasurer for their support on this issue, and particularly Don Wilson in the education minister's office. I am dedicated to supporting my electorate by ensuring it receives the funds it needs. On top of those two initiatives, we also announced \$50,000 to upgrade the Paddington skate park.

Of course, I am also passionate about my ministerial portfolios and I want to point out the highlights in the budget for the areas of environment, the Great Barrier Reef and our national parks. My portfolio budget truly reflects our commitments as a government to ensure appropriate protection for the state's environment. My portfolio provides vital functions such as protecting the Great Barrier Reef, conserving nature and heritage, ensuring the sustainable management of natural resources, enabling responsible development and providing responsive and integrated government services. This funding will ensure that the necessary actions are in place to mitigate against unacceptable environmental impacts, including the impacts of climate change, improve water quality practices and the availability of information, secure more land of significant conservation value, manage our protected estate, support wildlife conservation, create employment opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders and continue our ongoing advances in best-practice regulatory strategies, including tailoring compliance and enforcement approaches to those areas of highest risk.

We have made big pledges for 2015-16 to ensure that we are delivering a better state for the Queensland community. For the Great Barrier Reef we have committed \$100 million over five years for reef water-quality initiatives, scientific research and tools to help business transition to better environmental practices. Some \$10 million of the \$100 million has been allocated to buy back net fishing licences in three zones—Cairns, Mackay and Yeppoon-Rockhampton. This will provide recreational fishers with exclusive access to prime inshore fishing spots.

Allocations from the \$100 million will support the work of the Great Barrier Reef Water Science Taskforce to deliver a final report by June 2016. This report will advise on the best policy and investment strategies so that we can meet our ambitious reef water-quality improvement targets. Our targets aim to reduce nitrogen run-off by up to 80 per cent and total suspended sediment run-off by up to 50 per cent in key catchment areas including the Wet Tropics and the Burdekin by 2025.

Another investment that I have already announced is an extra \$2 million over the next two years towards the cutting-edge eReefs project that will give people near real-time information about the quality of water in the Great Barrier Reef. The government takes reporting and public information seriously. We have allocated an additional \$6 million over four years to be put towards expanding the regional report cards program to include Cairns and Townsville in addition to Gladstone and Mackay-Whitsunday.

Over the next three years the Queensland government will spend \$15 million managing the impacts of climate change and helping coastal communities prepare for rising sea levels, storm tide and erosion. This is delivering on the government's commitment to work with councils to address climate change and coastal hazards.

The Queensland government is partnering with the Local Government Association of Queensland to deliver the Climate Change Adaptation Fund. This fund will support at-risk councils to address current and future coastal hazards. Coastal councils will be able to apply for a share of \$12 million from October this year to assist with the development of local plans and options to deal with their escalating climate risks. The remaining \$3 million will go towards developing and implementing a climate adaptation strategy in collaboration with industry and local government.

In keeping with our election commitment, the Queensland government is providing \$5 million in 2015-16 to continue the NatureAssist program. This commitment will expand the protected area estate and be used to incentivise private landholders to undertake conservation management on their land. This funding will secure nature refuges and provide financial support for leasehold and freehold lands of significant conservation and climate change resilience value.

Additional funding of \$1.8 million in 2015-16 will be provided to continue to support a range of wildlife management and conservation activities, including: regulating the use and trading of native plants and animals; responding to situations where wildlife present a risk to the public that needs specialist skills to manage; management of sick, injured and orphaned animals; and the protection of koalas.

We have also delivered on our election commitment to fund the continuation of joint management of the Naree Budjong Djarra National Park on North Stradbroke Island. The member for Algester might assist with my pronunciation. Over four years we are providing \$12.4 million to support joint management with the traditional owners, the Quandamooka people, to employ a joint management coordinator and to deliver on commitments made in the Indigenous management agreement. The funding will ensure that the national park continues to be managed to preserve the outstanding natural and cultural values in collaboration with the Quandamooka people.

Over four years we are providing \$7.3 million to continue employment of Indigenous rangers to work across the protected area estate to ensure that parks are well managed and maintained. This includes protection from the threats of fire, pest and weed infestation and ensuring sustainable visitor access outcomes.

Over four years we are providing \$7.4 million to jointly manage with traditional owners approximately 2.6 million hectares of park estate on Cape York Peninsula. This funding will be part of Indigenous management agreements and will also include the employment of seven additional rangers.

A major upgrade of the Walkabout Creek Visitor Centre is on track to be completed this year, with the Queensland government committing \$1.5 million to finish construction. The precinct transformation will include a junior mountain bike skills park, trail network, events lawn and picnic areas. The first of its kind in Brisbane, this upgrade combines protection and enhancement of conservation values with open-space visitor experiences right on the border between my seat and that of the member for Ashgrove.

This government promised to tackle a number of key threats facing Queensland's environment and this funding demonstrates our commitment towards this. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (4.35 pm): Let the people of Queensland and the people of Glass House be in no doubt: the Australian Labor Party cannot be trusted because the Australian Labor Party does not tell the truth. Whilst the LNP took to the election a fully costed and funded plan for paying down debt and investing in much needed infrastructure, such as the Bruce Highway and the north coast rail duplication, the ALP said that it would pay down debt by merging the electricity companies. The other key plank of Labor's so-called pre-election debt action plan was to quarantine two-thirds of the dividends from the state owned electricity companies and funnel them into a debt reduction trust.

Again, the LNP opposition has for months been pointing out that this plan simply does not stack up. The dividends from these businesses already go into funding schools, hospitals and infrastructure. Diverting revenue from one source to another would not and could not reduce debt. Once again, this strategy has been found out in the 2015-16 budget.

The debt reduction trust that those opposite promised before the election does not even get a mention anywhere in the budget papers—not in one spot; nowhere. This was something that was going to allow for debt reduction of \$1.5 billion annually. In Labor's words, they were conservative estimates. But those savings do not exist. Labor's debt reduction trust has been seen for what it is—a mirage.

More than that, there was no mention to the people of Queensland of Labor's plans to raid the superannuation and long service leave entitlements of Queensland's public servants nor was there talk of shifting \$4.1 billion worth of debt onto those same electricity companies. Queensland, you just cannot trust Labor!

At best, the Treasurer is the Burt Wonderstone of the Queensland cabinet. At worst, he is the deceitful architect of yet another Labor backdown and of setting Queenslanders up again for more debt, less infrastructure and liabilities that our grandchildren will be paying. The budget is a sleight of hand. While the Treasurer tells us he is paying down debt, he is not. While he says Queenslanders will not pay, they will.

At this point I refer to an article in today's *Australian* written by Joe Branigan, a former Queensland Competition Authority employee. The article is titled 'Turning government corporations into a giant ATM' and subtitled 'Queensland's Treasurer has achieved an impossible budget task—by cheating'. Mr Branigan states—

The 2015-16 Queensland budget is extraordinarily brazen in its disregard for public finance accounting standards.

Freshman Treasurer Curtis Pitt (the Youngest) has rejected the advice of the International Monetary Fund, the OECD, Australian state and federal budget honesty acts, numerous audits of federal and state finances, and the fiscal sustainability metrics of the ratings agencies, not to mention the bitter experience of Victoria and South Australia in the 1990s and various southern European countries this decade.

Mr Branigan goes on—

The central plank of the fiscal charade is that Labor will treat the equity in Queensland's Government Owned Corporations as a giant ATM providing \$4.1 billion in cash to the general government sector. Pitt argues the consequent increase in debt held by the GOCs doesn't matter because a higher gearing ratio is the "standard" for energy businesses and, besides, it won't affect retail electricity prices because they are effectively set by the Australian Energy Regulator.

That is wrong, and Mr Branigan explains why—

There are several problems ... First, Queensland Treasury's recommendation to aim for a gearing ratio of 70-75 per cent (up from 55 per cent) is counter to the AER's 60 per cent benchmark and ignores the extremely wide range of gearing across the industry.

Second, the Queensland taxpayer is ultimately responsible for the debts of these businesses. That is exactly why the ratings agencies measure the debts of the whole government sector against a state's revenue.

Third, it follows that the size of that debt burden matters, as Victoria and South Australia in the 90s and Greece today so clearly demonstrate, because when things go bad, and growth rates decline while interest rates rise, fiscal sustainability deteriorates sharply.

Fourth, by loading the networks up with max debt now, it reduces their capacity to fund future capex with retained earnings, meaning either more debt (but their capacity to borrow more will be reduced) or an equity injection from the state.

As I said, Queenslanders will pay. Even previous Labor leaders and treasurers said that what the government has done by raiding superannuation and long service leave should never have been done. In 2003, Peter Beattie said—

All the earnings from QIC, for our liabilities such as superannuation and long service leave, will be reinvested to provide a buffer against periods when the markets are not so strong. It is this strategy that is key to our strong balance sheet.

In 2005, Terry Mackenroth, the then treasurer, said—

Our government has consistently pursued sound long-term policies such as ensuring ... employee superannuation entitlements (are) fully funded.

Even Queensland's worst treasurer, Andrew Fraser, said in 2008—

As a state we are uniquely placed to look forward to having that long-term (superannuation) liability fully provisioned. We are unique ... in the world in having that benefit.

They even fly in the face of their own budget principles. In Budget Paper No. 2 I refer to page 17: 'Principle No. 5—Target full funding of long term liabilities such as superannuation ... in accordance with actuarial advice'. Guess what? Until Tuesday this week that had been complied with by successive state governments. This is the first government to shy away from that principle. It might have given them some play money but it has put super and long service leave in jeopardy as warned by many should there come another GFC or another mining downturn. Whilst it is in surplus now, it is in surplus now to buffer against those days that are not so positive.

But to compound the lies, the deceit, the Treasurer is also setting up Queensland electricity companies for sale by stealth. He made comments the other day that they are investigating QIC's ability to invest in our electricity companies. By transferring those electricity companies to QIC, it is an asset sale by stealth. Mark Ludlow picked it up in the *Australian Financial Review* this morning, where he interviewed QIC Chief Executive Damien Frawley. Damien Frawley said that the 'global fund manager will not be forced into making dud investments by the Queensland Labor government and will only invest in assets which will deliver decent returns'. So, Queenslanders, all I can say is watch this space—watch this space, because they have history. They did exactly that in 2009 and they are doing it again. They have fooled Queenslanders again and again. They should not get away with it.

They have created a \$10 billion bucket of money. What are they actually doing with it? Despite the protestations of the Treasurer, they are not actually driving down debt. A number of my colleagues, including the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer, have pointed out the debt comparisons and that in 10 years time we will be no better off than where we are now. In that same article by Joe Branigan in the *Australian* today, he states—

There is very little doubt that Queensland's finances will be downgraded again.

...

Thanks to the Charter of Budget Honesty we have what's called the uniform reporting framework. And at table 8.1 on page 133 of Budget Paper No 2, the cumulative fiscal deficits across the forward estimates of \$4.1bn are reported, a dramatic deterioration compared with the last LNP budget.

What is more, Moody's on 14 July said—

Moody's Investor Service says that the State of Queensland's budget for FY2015/16—
fiscal year 2015-16—

published on July 14, projects a deterioration in its financial performance in FY2015/16 and over the next four years when compared to projections made one year ago in its FY2014/15 budget. The anticipation of larger deficits reflects the impact of falling commodity prices on state revenues, while spending on health and education have been augmented. As a result, the achievement of a balanced budget (net lending/borrowing result, including capital outlays), which had been projected for FY2015/16, will not occur over the next four years.

So they are not paying down debt, nor are they spending it on infrastructure. There is no pipeline of projects. In fact, there is an infrastructure freeze. There is no north coast rail duplication. There is no Cross River Rail solution. There is no Gold Coast Light Rail solution. There is no new money on roads other than what we in the LNP's previous government announced, nor are they creating jobs. Despite their claims to the contrary, they have included in their own budget papers, on page 29 of Budget Paper No. 2, stable projections of the state's unemployment rate at or around 6.5 per cent for the foreseeable future.

Contrary to their claims of no jobs cuts, of no forced redundancies, of no voluntary redundancies even, they themselves are cutting jobs. I refer to a *Courier-Mail* article of 9 July, headed 'Powerlink to cut nearly 200 jobs', where it states—

The company last week told staff of plans to cut a number of positions as it attempts to be a more "agile business".

...

It is understood 199 positions will be cut from Powerlink over the next 12 to 18 months, including 140 permanent positions and 59 contract or temporary positions.

Tell me, Mr Deputy Speaker, how you do that without offering forced or voluntary redundancies. We heard from the shadow agriculture minister that more than 130 jobs are to go in the department of agriculture—130 jobs. They can try to explain it any way they want, but those are job losses. As reported in that same *Courier-Mail* article, even the unions fear similar cuts in other energy companies. It states—

The Electrical Trades Union is warning other energy companies could soon be making similarly sized cuts, despite staff numbers already at "critical levels".

It is clear that Labor say one thing and do another. So what have they spent the money on if not paying down debt, funding infrastructure or growing employment? They have invested in health and education—nowhere near the record increases in funding that the former LNP government provided in those portfolios; that is true, but, yes, increases. I guess you always have to invest in those portfolios with a growing population.

Again, when you look closer alarm bells ring on what they are spending it on. Let me use a local example—the Caboolture Hospital. Loaded in the previous budget, not reliant on any election outcome, not reliant on Strong Choices or any other funding program, were a number of commitments to the Caboolture Hospital made by the former LNP government: \$4.5 million for an emergency department expansion that would have seen 15 additional treatment spaces; \$7.2 million for four coronary beds, 12 cardiac beds and 16 general medicine beds; 100 car parks; and a plan to expand the Caboolture Hospital. What do we see in this budget for the Caboolture Hospital? Zero—nothing for the emergency department expansion, nothing for new treatment spaces, nothing for coronary beds, nothing for cardiac beds, nothing for general medicine beds, nothing for car parks and no plans to expand Caboolture Hospital.

I received correspondence from one of the professionals who operates at the Caboolture Hospital in which they state—

The recent budget talks about much needed infrastructure upgrades and quotes the Caloundra emergency department as getting a much needed revamp. It has just had \$16 million spent on it and it is going to close in 12 months when the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital opens. There is no mention of Caboolture. Is this a mistake and has he got Caloundra and Caboolture mixed up or have we missed out again?

It is plain and simple. Caboolture has missed out again, despite having Labor representation in the seats of Pumicestone and Morayfield.

It also has very real and personal impacts for my constituents. I was approached by two constituents, Mr Darryl Pollett and Mrs Ellen Turner of Woodford, regarding their daughter, Rachel Pollett. Rachel is 38 and has the mental capacity of an 18-month-old to two-year-old. She has a severe

disability. One of the aspects of that disability is that she will not allow anyone to go near her mouth or her teeth. Her parents became aware, on the rare occasion they saw their daughter smile, that she was in desperate need of dental work. For that dental work to occur, Rachel needed to go under a general anaesthetic. When they approached the Metro North Hospital and Health Service, they were told that the waiting time would be two years—I repeat: two years—because there is only one general anaesthetist who can undertake this work.

Whilst we were in government, we were making plans to increase funding to the Metro North Hospital and Health Service to undertake more paediatric dental work under general anaesthetic. Opening timeslots and availability by the proper staff were issues, and thus very few patients were able to be seen. What we have seen in this budget is no allocation for that additional anaesthetic work, which means that patients like Rachel cannot and will not be seen by the public health sector for more than two years. Unfortunately, Rachel could not wait that long so her parents had to pay through the private sector for that work to be done at a cost of \$2,126.45, and they have had advice that they will need ongoing medical treatment as well. I have written to Dr Paul Alexander seeking his investigation of this matter and to see if he is able to reimburse the Polletts for their expense. I ask the Minister for Health to look at increasing Metro North Hospital and Health Service's general anaesthetic opportunities, given its connection to paediatric services, so patients like Rachel can be seen sooner.

I turn to education and I echo the concerns raised by the shadow minister for education. Whilst the Great Results Guarantee funding is in the budget this year, there is no commitment beyond 2016. One thing I constantly hear when I visit the 18 schools in the electorate of Glass House is how fantastic the Great Results Guarantee funding is. I commend the former minister for education, John-Paul Langbroek, for that initiative. It truly is remarkable to see the turnaround in particularly our state schools in numeracy and literacy because they are able to fund for the first time the priorities that those principals know work best in their schools.

Mr Deputy Speaker, if you will allow me to take a moment, I would like to acknowledge Lyn Winch. Lyn has been principal of Chevallum State School for 30 years. According to Lyn, she has been in schools for all but five years of her entire life and she has spent 30 of those years at the same school as principal. Lyn understands the importance of numeracy and literacy. Chevallum regularly wins the Sunshine Coast Readers Cup—

Mr Rickuss: How big is the school?

Mr POWELL: There are 450 students at the school, but if you looked at the catchment of Chevallum, you would expect they would only have 20—such is the reputation of that school. Lyn established classes that are based on peer groups, not on age. They are based on the ability of the student to progress through the curriculum, not on age. They have supports for those students and they use the Great Results Guarantee funding to the best that they possibly can. I want to commend Lyn for her tireless efforts in our public education system in the state and wish her all the best in her future retirement.

Over the last few days, members may have heard the Leader of the Opposition describe the Treasurer's actions as jiggery-pokery. Before I conclude, let me channel Roly Sussex for a moment and take the House back to my Scottish roots and explain the meaning of this phrase. It comes from two Scottish words—'jouk', which means to dodge or cheat, and 'pawk', which means to trick. The phrase fits Labor and the Treasurer perfectly. Again, they have deceived and cheated the people of Queensland, and I and my opposition colleagues will never stop reminding them of that.

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (4.55 pm): I rise to support the budget bill before the House and congratulate the Treasurer and his staff on delivering a budget that not only meets Labor's commitments during the recent election but also demonstrates that there is a better way of managing Queensland's finances—a better way for jobs now and in the future, a better way for an economic and debt reduction plan that does not include the sale of our income-producing assets and a better way to deliver a \$1.2 billion surplus for 2015-16, a forecast surplus that Queensland has not achieved in nearly a decade, with combined surpluses over the next four years of nearly \$7 billion. As Paul Keating would say, it is a nice set of numbers.

This budget outlines a plan for jobs, jobs, jobs in difficult times, with a key element being the \$1.6 billion jobs plan, Skilling Queenslanders for Work, which aims to support 32,000 Queenslanders back into work. We know that training is a key driver in workers obtaining jobs, and I welcome the additional \$34.5 million funding to rescue TAFE to deliver more courses, more qualifications through schools and more TAFE teachers. But innovation and developing the jobs now and into the future does not just happen. I recently toured the Brisbane Airport to view the early stages of the second runway

and other Brisbane Airport Corporation initiatives at the site, and I saw firsthand the smart jobs created by Beattie's Smart State plan. Those jobs in aviation, technology and science that were once a pipedream are now a reality.

Advance Queensland is the next important step in the jobs of tomorrow. This is an even smarter strategy and one of the centrepieces of this budget, with what was a \$50 million commitment growing to a \$180 million investment in innovation, skills, education, business development and a start-up program to achieve similar outcomes to what I recently witnessed at the Brisbane Airport Corporation. I know the constituents of Brisbane Central will welcome funds to ensure that our young people have the skills of tomorrow in science, technology, engineering and maths, including computer coding abilities, which will be advanced via a \$50 million Best and Brightest Fund. Some \$46 million will be advanced for a Future Jobs Strategy that will open the doors to global industries to tackle innovation and research collaborations. Finally, there is a \$76 million advancement in a Business Investment Attraction package to encourage the business and industry ideas of the future.

Creating local jobs is what drives the Palaszczuk government, and it is also what drives me every day. During the campaign, so many of my constituents talked about the difficulty of obtaining not only jobs but the training to get those jobs and also, unfortunately, the job cuts they endured under the previous LNP government. As we all know in life, it is not just about jobs. Health, education, the communities we live in and the social fabric of our societies are just as important. This is why I welcome a record health budget of \$14.2 billion this year. This is the largest on record to meet the growing demands of our health system. I am particularly delighted that we are addressing our commitment to employ up to 4,000 new graduate nurses as well as employ 400 nurse navigators across our health system to work with patients. Labor will deliver over \$212 million to employ more nurses for the delivery of safe patient care and for the first time to legislate ratios to ensure the best patient care and safety is delivered by our hardworking nurses and midwives.

I welcome the \$361 million over four years to reduce the numbers on the waiting list for the waiting list and I look forward to seeing these funds and additional nurses at the RBWH, Queensland's premier tertiary hospital. This budget also delivers a record spend in Education, with \$12.4 billion allocated to delivering the best schools in Australia. We will reduce class sizes, employ 875 extra teachers, including 275 specialist teachers for high schools, and an extra 45 guidance officers in our secondary schools. I welcome the increase of \$300 million in the state's school maintenance budget and I can assure the minister that I will be doing all I can to ensure Brisbane Central gets its fair share for the schools in my electorate.

I welcome the boost to ambulance services for Queensland and look forward to the upgrade of the fire and rescue station at Kemp Place in Brisbane Central, which will benefit from a \$1.35 million investment facelift. It is also great to see the employment of an additional 75 paramedics throughout the state being included in this budget. My niece Ellie Grace is currently completing a paramedic degree, and I am sure she will be very happy to hear that we are going to be employing more paramedics.

We will continue our commitment to save the Barrier Reef with an additional \$100 million over five years to improve water quality and additional funds for other initiatives which will ensure that our best tourism attraction is saved for generations to come. Labor also has a community rebuilding plan which was decimated by the previous government. I look forward to restoring the TAS services and other community services such as \$13.3 million over four years to re-establish the Biala Sexual Health Clinic in Roma Street, which was closed by the LNP government. I believe that one of the significant initiatives in this budget is the allocation of over \$31 million over four years to address domestic violence and I welcome an allocation of around \$3.78 million for the delivery of support services and construction of a crisis shelter within Brisbane for women and children suffering violence in the Brisbane Central electorate.

At a local level, I welcome the \$2.9 million for the continuation of the northern bikeway, \$639,000 for the refurbishment of early childhood centres in Windsor, Wilston and Spring Hill and additional funds for school classroom accommodation. Law and order also gets a boost and I am pleased that the budget provides for additional police and essential safety equipment such as body-worn cameras and vehicles to support our hardworking police officers. I am pleased that \$233 million over four years has been allocated to pensioners and seniors via concessions for energy, water, rates and transport, which will now be retained following Commonwealth cuts last year.

I also welcome funds of \$173 million for the arts. We will work to restore arts funding, invest in our wonderful arts sector and protect the heritage value of our cultural institutions. I am pleased that \$11.2 million over four years is available to safeguard programs slated to end in 2014-15. What is life without a vibrant arts sector?

This budget is a budget about people, about jobs, about health and education, and about rebuilding our communities. It restores funds for training, the vulnerable and safe patient care in our hospitals. It delivers a debt action plan, delivers all the election commitments made during the last state election campaign and, more importantly, saves our assets. We said there was a better way and this budget delivers a better budget than those opposite are capable of delivering. I commend the budget to the House.



Dr McVEIGH (Toowoomba South—LNP) (5.03 pm): I would like to begin my contribution to this debate by reflecting on the context in which this Labor budget has been delivered. As the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Treasurer have already mentioned here in the House this afternoon, there has been significant commentary about the shortcomings of the budget and concerns that many hold in relation to its long-term impact. The Treasurer himself has described this budget as vanilla and despite his protestations here in the House yesterday, he is the one recorded in the media as the person who first raised the description of 'raiding' to explain the budget's dependence on access to accumulated Public Service employee reserves to prop it up. In fact, as we cast around the media commentary, there have been some fairly common themes coming through: sleight of hand, ignoring credit agencies' warnings about government debt, trickery and, in terms of Joe Branigan in the *Australian* today, a budget that is 'an impossible task unless you cheat'.

It has been my duty to immediately check the impacts of this budget on my seat of Toowoomba South. Ours is a region that was left behind by successive Labor governments. It was not until the LNP government was elected in 2012 that our region started to receive the much deserved catch-up necessary for Australia's largest inland city behind our nation's capital. The LNP secured the \$45 million inner-city bypass road and flood mitigation project together with the Dent Street railway bridge development, again, to assist in flood mitigation; the redevelopment along East and West creeks, making our city safer and more resilient, which is so important to my seat of Toowoomba South and the neighbouring seat of Toowoomba North held by my good friend and colleague Mr Trevor Watts; the Warrego Highway upgrades throughout our region from the electorate of Lockyer through Toowoomba and west to Condamine and Warrego; infrastructure redevelopment and development in the Charlton industrial estate just west of our city, which is seeing the most significant industrial development in our state in recent times; and of course the final commitment to the second range crossing.

The way in which the government is claiming all of these projects is to me mind boggling, especially the second range crossing. I know firsthand the efforts of the former Queensland treasurer, Tim Nicholls, to secure this project alongside our federal member for Groom, Ian Macfarlane. I know because I signed the agreement to proceed with the project along with the Deputy Prime Minister, Warren Truss, whilst I was acting Treasurer. Can I say how good it is to work with a proactive state and federal LNP team that gets on with the job of infrastructure investment and development, in this case for our great state of Queensland.

All that Labor has done in this budget for our region is, as I said, to claim LNP initiated projects: school maintenance programs, for example, that were started by the LNP; the LNP's ongoing program of Warrego Highway upgrades, as I mentioned a few moments ago; MRI facilities at the Toowoomba Base Hospital initiated by the necessary preparations by the LNP; but most notably for me is the fact that there is no mention of the much needed and previously funded, under the LNP's Royalties for the Regions program, projects for road safety around Middle Ridge and Glenvale State schools in my electorate. As an act of desperation, the government has even attempted to claim in its own budget brochures private sector expenditure in our part of the world, including the new Grand Central shopping centre expansion. At the end of the day it is clear that, without the vision and foresight of the former LNP government during our last term, our region would be seeing little or no attention from this government whatsoever.

Few would argue with the need for Queensland to look towards the future, to continue to broaden our economic base and to support jobs growth. As shadow minister for science, information, technology and innovation, I take this opportunity to compliment the former LNP ministers the member for Mudgeeraba, Ros Bates, and the member for Mansfield, Ian Walker. The member for Mansfield has already mentioned during his contribution to this debate earlier this afternoon our efforts: dementia

research, crown-of-thorns starfish research, development of scratch-resistant acrylic glass, drones for agriculture and natural resource management activities and a dengue fever vaccine to name but a few initiatives supported under our Science and Innovation Action Plan.

I certainly acknowledge the government's statements in relation to knowledge based industries. The Leader of the Opposition, in also acknowledging those statements, made it very clear that the LNP, as outlined in his previously released discussion paper *A real economic plan*, clearly identifies knowledge based industries as a priority economic area alongside agriculture, resources, manufacturing and construction, and of course tourism. The government's just announced plans of \$180 million for innovation and \$50 million for skills should be contrasted with the LNP's election commitments of some \$500 million towards an Entrepreneurial and Innovation Fund together with \$90 million for a new Research to Reality program to support innovation and research right across the economy.

Ultimately all such discussions are about the future of our great state—a future that was comprehensively considered in a range of the former LNP government's initiatives: the Queensland Plan, for example, developed with the direct participation of thousands and thousands of Queenslanders; the 30-year education accord; the 30-year agriculture strategy; agricultural research and development that was ramped up in sugar, grains, horticulture and beef; proper research and management—and I must say, science based decision-making in cooperation with various communities and industries—in relation to our iconic Great Barrier Reef, as has been recently internationally vindicated; health research and biotechnology, as has been mentioned by the member for Mansfield; robotic developments with QUT and other agencies; and of course innovation in information technology such as the secure digital radio network for our police that performed so very well during G20 last year.

It is good to see this government continuing the LNP's focus on the Government Wireless Network and the one-stop shop for liaison with government agencies, and so they should continue to focus on those activities given their own record on the massive Health payroll debacle. As our ICT industry very clearly expects, government must recognise that its most significant roles include being a procurer of best practice—or a model procurer, if you like—whereby our Queensland companies are provided the real and ongoing opportunities to supply the Queensland government with its information technology requirements in an efficient and effective manner. At the same time, of course, in line with the LNP's plans we need to support the development of a leading information and communication technology sector in Queensland. Industry is hungry for that, and that is exactly what I am discussing with industry on behalf of the LNP.

As I conclude I must express my extreme concern that this is a budget that is clearly designed to be a one-off sugar hit without regard to the long-term future of our state. As I said at the beginning of my contribution to this debate, many have commented on the shortcomings of this budget. It has been said that it is sneaky; it is cheating; it is a sleight of hand. Ultimately, I believe we need to consider what this budget will leave for Queensland and our future generations. It represents a government debt transfer to government owned corporations—shifting debt between the credit cards, as the opposition leader has described it here this afternoon—therefore shifting debt for future generations to deal with. It does away with long-term initiatives for our education sector and children such as the Great Teachers = Great Results program, which is of particular concern to me as a father, the husband of a teacher and deputy chair of the Education, Tourism and Small Business Committee. It raids accumulated reserves—the same reserves that have been preserved and lauded by former Labor premiers and treasurers; the reserves that are there for our public servants in the future.

Of course all the while, despite the government's jobs rhetoric, it represents projections of unemployment to remain at 6.5 per cent in the outer years. It even suggests that the government will set the dangerous precedent of directing the investment strategy of the Queensland Investment Corporation through an apparent suggested sale of Ergon, Energex and Powerlink—an asset sale by stealth. It maintains a debt of \$80 billion for future generations to deal with, and for those future generations at this stage it continues to represent a continued freeze on infrastructure development and spending.

None of this was outlined to Queenslanders prior to this last election. Again Labor has deceived Queenslanders, and I am sure they will be shown for what they are in the not-too-distant future. This is a budget that I can assure you ignores the long-term future of Toowoomba. It clearly does not show a fair dinkum approach to the long-term future for Queensland either.

 **Mr MADDEN** (Ipswich West—ALP) (5.16 pm): Mr Deputy Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise to congratulate the Treasurer, the member for Mulgrave, on delivering a budget that will lay the foundations for strong economic and social development in Queensland. The Treasurer was faced with

the aftermath of three years of arrogant economic mismanagement that tore at the social fabric of our great state and the cruel decision-making of those opposite. At the January state election Queenslanders made it clear that they had had enough of the Campbell Newman government and the Liberal National Party, with record unemployment levels and being treated like numbers on a balance sheet—not people with families, homes and aspirations. Yet in the face of this challenge the Treasurer has delivered a responsible and fair budget that will deliver jobs, services and infrastructure across the breadth and width of Queensland with my own electorate of Ipswich West being no exception.

I was elected to parliament with a commitment to address the crippling unemployment levels in Ipswich West. Youth unemployment is approaching 20 per cent and adult unemployment is in the order of 20 per cent. I also made a commitment to address the infrastructure problems that have plagued Ipswich West since the 2012 election. There is much to celebrate in the 2015 budget for the electorate of Ipswich West, but perhaps chief among them is the recommissioning of the Borallon Correctional Centre. With \$28.8 million for refurbishment, this will provide much needed work for local tradies and businesses. In total there is \$145.3 million over four years for recommissioning and operating expenses as well as 270 badly needed jobs. \$226.5 million has been provided to deliver new and upgraded existing rolling stock at the new state-of-the-art rail maintenance facility at Wulkaraka. This includes \$51.6 million for construction costs at the maintenance facility and \$26.2 million towards upgrading the existing Queensland Rail facilities. Most importantly, this project will deliver over 200 new full-time jobs.

The budget also provides for 266 new police officers and 75 paramedic positions across the state of Queensland. I am hopeful that some of these new positions will be in Ipswich West. The government delivers on Labor's election promise of an additional 875 teachers as part of a total of 2,500 new teachers in this term of government. The Ipswich West electorate is expected to receive up to 10 new full-time-equivalent teacher resources over the next three years at state primary schools, state high schools and special schools as part of this initiative which will include letting teachers teach, providing more curriculum coordination time, more teacher release time, more specialist teachers in high schools, more deputy principals and more support for principals. All schools in Ipswich West will benefit from the budget in some way.

The budget has also delivered on badly needed infrastructure projects in Ipswich West, including: \$7.068 million for the Lowood Water Treatment Plant upgrade; \$6.2 million—a total of \$26.2 million overall—at Blackwall for the replacement of the ageing secondary energy management system; \$4.456 million for raw water control improvements at the Mount Crosby Water Treatment Plant; \$1.1 million to undertake repairs to the Brisbane Valley Highway between Sandy Creek and Mockers Road; approximately half a million dollars for construction of a multisport facility at Fernvale, with dollar-for-dollar funding with the Somerset Regional Council; \$460,000 for non-government agencies to provide specialist services for the homeless; and \$114,681 to provide the Lowood State School with a covered outdoor learning area.

Community services in Ipswich have also received a boost in the budget. They will receive \$7.3 million of disability services funding committed to assisting people with a disability and their families to access support services; \$1.9 million to ensure the children of Ipswich West in need of protection have a safe place to stay; \$42,000 for the Marburg catchment flood study review and the Thagoona flood mitigation works. Half a million dollars will be provided to non-government agencies in Ipswich West to provide specialist support services for the homeless—something I have been dealing with through my time as the member for Ipswich West.

The Palaszczuk government has taken on the challenge of job creation with the introduction of the \$1.6 billion Working Queensland jobs plan, the reintroduction of the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program and the Advance Queensland plan, as well as the Rescuing TAFE program that will see \$34.5 million in extra funding to TAFE over three years. I am proud to be part of a government that has recognised both the need and the opportunity for this growth in Ipswich West, and I look forward to watching as Ipswich and Somerset locals reap the full benefits of such a significant investment. I commend the bills to the House.

 **Ms DAVIS** (Aspley—LNP) (5.22 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate on the appropriation bills. Firstly, I would like to congratulate the Leader of the Opposition on his budget reply speech, which highlighted the very grave reservations Queenslanders have that this government, after three years in opposition, a full election campaign and six months in office, still does not have a plan; that it is robbing Peter to pay Paul; and that the measures to pay down debt that this Queensland Labor Party took to the last election are nowhere to be found in this budget.

I would also like to commend the Leader of the Opposition for articulating to Queenslanders the LNP's vision for the future of our great state through our Real Economic Plan. Unlike the Labor Party, we on this side of the House have a plan and we are ready to take the state forward. We are acting as any responsible opposition should—with a plan for Queensland's future to boost jobs and grow Queensland's economy.

I have been a member of this House for only six years. I reflect on the stark difference between budgets handed down by the Queensland Labor Party and budgets handed down by the LNP over that period. I reflect on budgets delivered by Andrew Fraser, who, in my estimation, was the worst treasurer Queensland has ever had, and on the fiscally responsible budgets delivered by the former treasurer, the member for Clayfield. The member for Clayfield's effort in getting Queensland back on track was mammoth when we consider the mess the LNP inherited from the Bligh Labor government, a government in which the current Treasurer served as a cabinet minister. After this budget, the lack of experience of this Treasurer and his tricky—indeed reckless—handling of our state's finances should surely elevate him to the level of the last state Labor treasurer.

When you are in government, when you are our state's Treasurer, you are the custodian of the taxpayer dollars that Queenslanders have worked very hard for. The way this Treasurer has managed the budget is an insult to each and every one of those hardworking Queenslanders. At no point during the election campaign did the ALP tell Queenslanders that it was going to raid the superannuation contributions and the leave entitlements of public servants as part of its so-called strategy to pay down debt—a debt that those opposite conveniently ignore was racked up on their watch.

I tell you what the Labor Party did tell Queenslanders during the campaign: that they would amalgamate Ergon, Energex and Powerlink into a single network business which, in their own words, would achieve more than \$150 million a year in savings. That is what Queenslanders were told. Were they to pick up Tuesday's budget papers to find more details on this merger proposal, they would be bitterly disappointed.

It is irresponsible in the extreme to be ripping \$3.4 billion from the entitlements of Queensland public servants and spending it elsewhere. It is irresponsible and, more than that, it is just bad policy. Speaking of bad policy, it takes a very special type of Treasurer to stand in this House and, with a straight face, tell Queenslanders that your plan to further pay down debt is to simply shift \$4.1 billion in debt onto government owned corporations. This Treasurer's sleight of hand in shuffling debt from one balance sheet to another is, as one economist said in the *Australian* today, 'extraordinarily brazen in its disregard for public finance accounting standards'.

My shadow portfolio of communities, child safety and disability services is for many people the doorway to accessing services and is connected to the way we live in our communities and contribute to wider society. As I have said in this House at other times, I was very proud to be part of a government of reform and to secure funding to contemporise the child protection system in this state and also to prepare for the NDIS here in Queensland. Unfortunately, significant commitments in the human services area seem to be focused on building bureaucracies rather than delivering services to some of Queensland's most vulnerable people. This is echoed by the CEO of QCOSS, who was also very disappointed that there was no relief from cost-of-living pressures for the unemployed and for low-income earners.

For those programs that have been allocated money in the budget, they are simply built on from previous initiatives undertaken by the LNP in government—for example, the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial, which appears in all of the glossy Regional Budget Statements. Labor's budget allocation is simply using the residual funding from the LNP government's fully budgeted \$15 million commitment for this very important trial. I think EPCIT is an important initiative—that is why we developed and delivered it—but to gloss it up as if there is additional funding is just another sleight-of-hand magic trick.

This is simply not a government of new ideas. There is an important increase of \$82 million in the Disability Services budget, but of course there is, because this money was part of the \$868 million over five years that was fully budgeted for by the LNP when we were in government.

The minister has touted 13,000 new jobs in the disability sector that will be generated from the NDIS here in Queensland. These are very necessary jobs that will underpin the delivery of services essential to people accessing the NDIS. But to suggest that these jobs will come about as a consequence of this budget is, to say the least, very creative. We already knew that this boost to the job market was going to happen. The Productivity Commissioner told us so. We knew that the NDIS would affect demand for skilled workers in the areas of aged care and disability services, and this demand was predicted to continue to grow.

But the question is: what is the minister doing to ensure that we have 13,000 people ready to go when the NDIS reaches full implementation in a few short years? The LNP had a plan. What is the minister's plan? I also note the \$1.9 million allocated for an NDIS trial. In the absence of a signed bilateral agreement with the federal government, I would be interested to learn how this figure was reached and how that \$1.9 million will be spent and, more importantly, where this trial site will be located—none of which has been articulated by the minister. I have had many opportunities to speak to people with a disability and their families along with service providers and carers and it has been very disturbing to hear that they feel that under this minister things have stalled. The NDIS has bipartisan support and members will know my absolute passion to ensure that the NDIS in Queensland is the very best that it can be, but the minister needs to step up to the plate and make this happen. Just announcing a trial site or a launch site is simply not enough.

The Child Safety budget simply echoes the commitment by the LNP government to implement such needed reforms. This is in stark contrast of course to the first budget when we came into government. The child protection system was overburdened, it was unsustainable and it needed urgent attention to bring about a contemporary child protection system here in Queensland. We left government with a strong plan to address this dreadful Labor legacy with a fully funded \$406 million package of reform. I have been looking through the budget papers for any semblance of commitment for additional child safety officer positions and—no surprise—there is no mention of this. In government the LNP announced 20 Family and Child Connect services across the state by 2016 and I note in the budget that there will be only 19 of these services now. So already it appears that the axe is being taken to child protection reforms and that new staffing positions will be dedicated to the back office, not to front-line positions. Mind you, the minister does not know the difference between a front-line child safety officer and child safety staff as evidenced in an answer she gave to a question without notice this week and, of course, in her zealous attempt to hit a homer in the House she got it wrong. Just check Hansard audio.

Domestic violence is not an issue to politicise. As the Leader of the Opposition indicated, the LNP supports measures to address the scourge of domestic and family violence. Whilst we welcome the announcement of \$31 million over four years, I think it is important to note that the previous LNP government had already committed over \$26 million of this funding to address this scourge on our communities. This is too important an issue to gloss up with budget figures. When addressing front-line services in the Premier's three-month report, she claimed her government had provided \$17 million to target gaps in domestic violence services addressing a key recommendation of the Carmody report, but of course this funding was already budgeted for by the LNP as part of that \$406 million in new funding over five years to implement the Carmody reforms. But I am pleased that the government has indicated that it will progress the child protection reforms. I am concerned though that in order to deliver on its promises quarantined money will be reprioritised for non-Carmody programs.

It appears that local hardworking community organisations look set to miss out on accessing small grants through the Caring for Our Community initiative. The LNP understood the invaluable contribution that community groups and their volunteers make on a daily basis to this great state, and that is why we made funding available for small grants to support their fantastic endeavours. Grants of \$5,000 and up to \$15,000 were available to local groups that really went a long way to providing better outcomes for our communities, enabling groups to purchase small equipment items and materials such as printers, microwaves and even fridges. But more than that, we understood that these groups, often operating on a shoestring budget, had little time to be completing onerous amounts of paperwork, which is why we kept the application process simple and effective by making it easy to complete online. Hundreds of community and volunteer organisations were successful right across the state in everybody's electorate in obtaining this funding and it was an initiative that was highly heralded and yet, sadly, this government has seen fit to thumb its nose at community organisations which are such a vibrant, essential part of the fabric of our local areas.

I turn my attention to the electorate of Aspley and what this budget holds for my constituents, and sadly it is very little. Once again under a Labor government Aspley lucks out. There has been no greater failing in this budget than for the transport infrastructure needs of my local community. As the local member for an electorate that is the gateway to Brisbane for motorists coming to and from the Sunshine Coast, modern transport infrastructure is vital for Aspley. When in government I was very pleased to deliver key projects for the local community, including the Telegraph Road overpass and the construction of noise barriers along Old Northern Road, which I am pleased to say will commence very shortly. But, sadly, residents along Gympie Road, Carseldine, are not so lucky. They have been overlooked in this budget, which is why I will continue to fight for their noise barriers. Providing funding

for this project was a costed LNP commitment in January not contingent upon any asset leasing program, but it is now anyone's guess if we will see construction of these barriers now that the Labor government has announced an infrastructure freeze.

Perhaps this project was not addressed by the Minister for Main Roads because he does not actually know where Carseldine is. He certainly does not know the difference between roads in Darra and Stafford based on his response to a question on notice I recently asked. Of course, this is a minister who advised us in the House that he does not know all of the roads in Queensland because he has responsibility for 33,000 kilometres worth across the state, and perhaps this is fair enough. So, for the benefit of the minister, I would be very happy to take him on a tour of Gympie Road—not that it is that hard to find. It is the really big one, the one that I said is the gateway to the Bruce Highway! Perhaps there are 33,000 reasons he should not have carriage of such an important portfolio area. This is a minister who is out of his depth and who continues to hand in his homework of his LNP predecessor, the member for Indooroopilly.

This week, we have heard a lot from this government about upgrades to school facilities and that teachers and students deserve to have the best facilities in which to educate and learn—and I agree, and that is why when we were in government we invested \$300 million to address the maintenance backlogs in state schools. For any school the school hall is the place where everyone can gather, be it for assemblies, for special ceremonies, for performances, even for sport and recreation. The school hall at the Aspley State High School is in desperate need of an upgrade—an upgrade that would have been delivered through a costed election commitment offered by the LNP. In recent times Aspley State High School has had to do it tough after sustained damage from vicious storms. The very least that it deserves is a school hall that reflects our modern education system and one that can adequately hold students and parents for any number of events throughout the year. Again, this upgrade did not get a guernsey in the budget, and I note in the House the former federal member for Petrie and now Attorney-General. She has sat in that school hall and I am sure would agree that it is in desperate need of an upgrade. I ask the Minister for Education that she show the Aspley State High School community they that are valued and allocate funding for this project in her Education budget.

Before the ink was even dry on the budget papers, though, this government sought to get the bad news out early and announced that it was slugging Queensland families with a 3.5 per cent increase on car registration—more than twice the inflation rate. Then only to add insult to injury to these families in what can only be described as the perfect example of Labor's inexperience and lack of instinct, the member for Bundaberg explained that technically that is not an increase. Only the Labor school of economics would try to claim that a registration fee higher than the year before is not an increase. Queenslanders deserve better.

My electorate office is currently located at the Carseldine Government Office Precinct, home to the Transport and Main Roads Customer Service Centre. My office has been inundated by hardworking and taxpaying motorists from as near as Aspley and as far away as Bribie Island, telling me how angry they are. The last thing they need is a further hit to the back pocket courtesy of a government that is making it up as it goes along. Thankfully, the LNP understands. That is why the LNP pledged that, in its first term in government, increases on car registration would be fixed at the inflation rate.

Government members interjected.

Ms DAVIS: I would be delighted for members to come to that precinct and talk to customers.

Mr Power: Anytime.

Ms DAVIS: There is every opportunity. I would love to have the member there. I take the interjection. The member for Logan has no understanding about how people on the north side of Brisbane feel. I would be delighted for the members of the government to talk to motorists about how they feel about being slugged a 3.5 per cent increase on their registration.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Just a moment, member for Aspley. Order, please! There is just a little bit too much audible conversation. Thank you.

Ms DAVIS: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. One area that, sadly, was overlooked in this budget was the Kirby Park upgrade. Members may know that Kirby Park is home to the Aspley Devils Rugby League Club, which is a feeder club for the Brisbane Broncos. For some time that club has been looking to upgrade its grounds. There is an increasing number of players coming through, which is fantastic. A lot of those players are coming to the club specifically because of the great Get in the Game program. I am very pleased that the minister has decided to continue such an important program. We

in Aspley had over 200 families use the vouchers so that they could access junior sport. Get in the Game is an important program. It is about keeping children connected, it is about keeping them healthy and it is about keeping them engaged.

Mr Costigan interjected.

Ms DAVIS: Absolutely. I take that interjection. But we missed out on \$100,000 that we had committed as an election promise to the local area. That was fully costed. I hope that the Minister for Sport might favourably look at any proposal that the Aspley Devils may provide to him to upgrade those facilities.

The Aspley electorate is a wonderful place to live. The people in Aspley are deserving of a government that supports their wishes and their aspirations. It is very sad that this budget does not do that. Unfortunately, I have to go back and tell them that news. I will continue to fight for the things that are important to them. It is a shame that this government has not looked after them in this budget.

 **Hon. YM D'ATH** (Redcliffe—ALP) (Attorney-General and Minister for Justice and Minister for Training and Skills) (5.42 pm): I am pleased to contribute to the debate and speak in support of the Appropriation Bill. I take this opportunity to address the House on the investment that this government is making to deliver better outcomes across both my portfolios.

This government is delivering for Queensland's justice system and is putting job creation and training front and centre. The reinstatement of the diversionary courts is a key point of difference between this government and the former LNP government in the administration of justice in this state. The Palaszczuk government has invested \$32.3 million over the next four years to get diversionary courts back up and running. I use the word 'investment' deliberately, because investing in early intervention courts and programs delivers better outcomes for taxpayers, for individuals and for community safety. This funding includes \$8.7 million to honour our election commitment to reinstate the Murri Court and the Special Circumstances Court Diversion Program.

The Murri Court was established in 2006 in response to the growing number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who were being incarcerated. It was yet another successful program that the previous government axed. In its absence, and despite the attitudes of the former government, the Indigenous Sentencing List evolved out of necessity and has played an important role in trying to bridge the gap that was left behind. I am committed to bringing the Murri Court back. I believe a community based approach can result in more positive outcomes for communities across Queensland. I can say that all of those in the legal profession, the community legal centres, the not-for-profit organisations with whom I have met with over the past five months and discussed our election commitments in bringing back these courts and these early intervention programs have welcomed them with open arms. They understood these programs. They had seen them at work. They knew the benefits of these programs and they are very eager to see them reintroduced.

Likewise, with the diversionary courts, the former attorney-general was even caught out under questioning in his first budget estimates hearing that he had axed this program without having any idea what it did or achieved. Reviving the diversionary courts goes hand in hand with our commitment to consulting across the legal sector and developing best practice in this space. Re-establishing these specialist courts will help to address the underlying causes of offending and divert offenders from prison by creating opportunities to address their behaviour. Success in the justice system is not about counting how many people are in our prisons; it is about reducing crime and doing our best to assist those to not reoffend and to transition them back into the community and to a better way of life. These courts help turn lives around and, in doing so, make safer communities across Queensland.

Another area where this government stands in stark contrast to its predecessor is youth justice. Unlike the previous administration, under the Palaszczuk government putting children in jail will be a last resort. Funding of \$23.6 million will bring back court based referrals to youth justice conferencing, which was another positive program that the LNP cut. The conferencing process makes young people take responsibility for their actions and their effect on victims. Importantly, it gives victims the opportunity to be heard.

This government is committed to informing and educating the public about the role of the courts in society and the justice system. That is why it has allocated \$5.5 million over three years to bring back the Sentencing Advisory Council. That council will play an important role in explaining sentencing, collating statistical information and researching the effectiveness of sentencing practices in cutting down crime.

This government recognises the widespread harm that is caused by domestic and family violence to individuals, families and to the wider community. Much has been done to understand the underlying causes and the report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence provided 240 recommendations based on extensive and wideranging research and consultation. This government has already started to take action to tackle domestic and family violence by allocating \$4 million as part of a total government package of \$31.3 million over four years as part of our initial response to tackle domestic and family violence. This funding includes a six-month trial of a Domestic and Family Violence Magistrates Court at Southport from September, including a dedicated magistrate. An amount of \$2.1 million will be allocated to establish an independent Domestic and Family Violence Death Review Board and expand the Domestic and Family Violence Review Unit.

A further \$1.1 million will be allocated to help to expand the Domestic Violence Duty Lawyer Service across the state through Legal Aid Queensland. I want to acknowledge those community legal centres and those not-for-profit organisations that have already been providing this important service in our courts. This is about helping expand those services across 14 sites in Queensland. This service will empower victims so that they can pursue matters in the justice system. It will smooth the way for victims in court and improve not only their safety but also offenders' compliance with court orders.

We know that we need to tackle alcohol fuelled violence in our communities. We are determined to protect Queenslanders from alcohol fuelled violence in and around licensed premises, particularly in our key entertainment precincts. That is why we have allocated \$9.6 million over three years for expanded compliance and enforcement. This will mean more inspections of licensed premises, particularly at peak trading times, and a boost in overt and covert enforcement capabilities.

This government will reduce alcohol fuelled violence by going straight to the core of the problem: trading hours. We will deliver on our pledge to introduce a 1 am lockout and cease the service of alcohol at 3 am. We will ban the sale of high alcohol content drinks after midnight and ban repeat offenders from entering licensed premises. Those opposite and others in the community would have us believe that this is actually going to have an impact on employment and service in those venues. However, the reality is that almost one in two people believe that it is unsafe to go out at night in their own towns and cities because of alcohol fuelled violence. If we can make our towns and cities safer, in fact more people will go out and patronise those venues, meaning more money will go into those venues in the evenings. As a government, we are willing to tackle the key issue based on expert evidence, that is, trading hours. The drink-safe precincts, first introduced as a trial by the Labor government in 2010, will continue in Fortitude Valley, Surfers Paradise and Townsville. We will keep building on our strong record to provide safe communities where Queenslanders can enjoy a night out without the fear of assault.

On the issue of organised crime, one of the key priorities for me as Attorney-General and for this government is our commitment to reviewing and addressing organised crime in Queensland. We have allocated \$6 million to conduct the commission of inquiry into organised crime in Queensland to give law enforcement a clear picture of the battle ahead and to make sure that our laws work to complement their efforts. Unlike the former government, I will ensure that there is proper consultation on our legislation and our approach to these issues, both through the commission of inquiry and through the task force into the VLAD legislation. We are committed to proper consultation, but we are also committed to looking at organised crime broadly across this state rather than narrowly thinking that the only organised crime is committed by outlaw motorcycle gangs.

In my portfolio of Training and Skills, we are creating jobs for Queenslanders now and well into the future. In our first term, this government's prime focus is jobs. I have heard a lot of complaints from the other side about how their communities are not getting enough and how they value community organisations, in which case it would be fair to say that every member opposite should get up and thank this government for bringing back programs such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work. They ripped funding from that program, which was an attack on every single one of our communities across this great state. If they want to talk about harm to communities, they should look at the funding that was ripped from that program. Most centres lost 50 to 75 per cent of their funding if they could keep their doors open and had to halve, if not more than halve, their staff numbers. That contributed to the unemployment figures we now see in the state. I am delighted that \$1.08 billion will boost the training and skills component of the budget of the Department of Education and Training for 2015-16. Our commitment is to offer all Queenslanders access to skills training, no matter where they live. We will invest \$60 million this year and \$240 million over four years to reinstate the successful Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative that was axed by the LNP government. This cost-effective program will support up to 32,000 Queenslanders back into the work.

As part of the \$34.5 million to be spent on our Rescuing TAFE commitment over three years, we will invest \$6.63 million to restore TAFE Queensland's status as our state's premier provider of VET. We have allocated \$40 million over four years to establish Jobs Queensland, an independent statutory entity providing industry advice to government on skills demand and long-term workforce planning. Last night, this government abolished the LNP's Queensland Training Assets Management Authority and returned control of the state's training assets to the Department of Education and Training. If there was ever any doubt, during that debate members opposite confirmed that they still believe in their asset sales agenda.

We are conducting a comprehensive audit of the state's training assets and are delivering a 10-year strategic plan to bring stability and purpose back to the state's TAFE network. Last night the member for Everton mentioned the Pimlico TAFE site as an example of a site that is in desperate need of repair, refurbishment, rebuilding and redevelopment. He said that it is a very rundown site and I absolutely agree. That is why, when in government, we built the new trade training centre in Bohle to relocate TAFE from the Pimlico site. Also, \$17 million was set aside in the forward estimates to redevelop the Pimlico TAFE site, but in 2012 the LNP government came in and removed that \$17 million so no further redevelopment happened at that site. That was its commitment to TAFE campuses.

We have already started the process of reinstating an independent training ombudsman by hosting a round table attended by significant stakeholders from across the sector. We will invest \$745.6 million in vocational education and training this financial year, which is a 22 per cent increase of \$139 million on the LNP's budget last year through the VET Investment Plan for 2015-16. In his budget response today, I heard the member for Everton say that Labor is just throwing money at training. I am very proud to be part of the Palaszczuk Labor government that is increasing funding in training and skills in this state. This will target key areas across-the-board, from giving school leavers basic literacy and numeracy skills to helping mature workers to retrain for the new jobs emerging in the regions. This training is the first step on a career path for thousands of young people. It will give disadvantaged Queenslanders the skills boost to get back on track and make a positive contribution to their communities. That is why we are committed to ensuring that apprentices and trainees make up 10 per cent of the workforce on large government projects and that projects in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities commit to making up 10 per cent of total labour hours by employing Indigenous workers.

Before I finish, I want to talk about my beautiful electorate of Redcliffe. It is a very beautiful part of Moreton Bay and the state of Queensland. I stood as a candidate for the Redcliffe by-election and I pledged to the people of the Redcliffe peninsula that I would work tirelessly every day for the community and I would make sure that they have a voice in government and in parliament. I ran in the by-election because I would not stand by and watch what the LNP was doing to our communities, hurting our schools, damaging our hospitals and attacking public services and community organisations on the peninsula.

Opposition members interjected.

Mrs D'ATH: As those on the other side attack the fact that I stand here as a member of parliament, what they are doing is attacking the people of Redcliffe for the decision they made. They put their trust in me and every day I work hard to fulfil that commitment to the people of Redcliffe. I can now proudly say to the people who put their faith in me that this government's first budget will bring real and much needed benefits to Redcliffe. The budget will provide \$139.6 million to continue construction of a proud Labor achievement. It is an achievement that those on the other side have tried to claim for the past three years, that is, the highly anticipated Moreton Bay Rail Link. That project started under Labor and it will be finished under Labor. It is due for completion in 2016.

Along with this government's broader election commitments for education, Redcliffe schools will receive up to eight additional full-time-equivalent teacher resources. In 2016, Clontarf Beach State High School will gain a full-time-equivalent guidance officer. This government has allocated funding for increased specialist homelessness services in Redcliffe with \$967,000 to go to those who need it most. This will provide a helping hand to empower those who are homeless to get back on their feet. Domestic and family violence services will receive \$420,000, while \$338,000 will go to help resource family support services. Metro North Hospital and Health Service will receive much needed funding in order to cope with increasing needs as part of a \$3.396 billion investment push into our state's health services. I welcome the funding commitment to tackle the waiting list for the waiting list. As we know, there are many people on the waiting list for their first outpatient appointment at Redcliffe Hospital. Finally, I am pleased to announce that the Peninsula Power Football Club will receive \$100,000 for new change rooms.

I am proud to speak in support of this budget. It is a good Labor budget that will benefit Queenslanders in my portfolio areas across this great state and in my local community.

Mr NICHOLLS (Clayfield—LNP) (5.58 pm): After having listened with some degree of amazement to the speeches of those opposite over the last three or four hours and the speech of the Treasurer on Tuesday, I would like to make a few points. This Treasurer promised Queensland a budget in the finest Labor traditions. The budget he delivered on Tuesday would make Andrew Fraser, Wayne Swan and Kevin Rudd proud.

Like Mr Swan who turned the record surpluses of the Howard years into record deficits or Labor in Queensland that went broke in a boom and wasted the rivers of gold, this Treasurer has turned the LNP's fiscal surpluses into deficits totalling \$5 billion over the forward forecasts. Like Mr Swan and Mr Rudd, who raided the education fund set up by Australia's longest serving treasurer, Peter Costello, this Treasurer has raided the long service leave and superannuation entitlements of public servants. Like Mr Rudd, who changed Australia's credit card limit twice, this Treasurer wants to shift debt from one credit card to the next. Like Mr Rudd and Mr Swan, who squandered the savings built up by Howard and Costello, this Treasurer is spending a generation's worth of savings in long service leave entitlements in one fell swoop.

The theme of his budget is quite obviously the audacity of hypocrisy. It is a budget that promises more jobs but delivers fewer jobs. Unemployment will remain above six per cent over the next four years and it will not drop below 6.5 per cent over the next two years. I will be talking about that a little later.

It is a budget that promises to lower debt but delivers higher debt, with debt continuing to increase each and every year over the forward forecast despite the Treasurer's hit-and-run raid. I compare that to the outcome that we delivered when we came to government. With the forward forecast showing debt reaching \$85 billion when we came to government, the Treasurer's budget papers this year show that debt will be just over \$75 billion. Without any hit-and-run raids on hollow logs, without attacking long service leave entitlements, without attacking the entitlements of public servants, without any assets sales or leases—in fact, through proper, prudent management—we managed to take \$10 billion off the \$85 billion of debt that we inherited.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I hear the main roads and ports minister chiming in from the back. It is a budget that promises to lower debt but delivers higher debt. Debt will continue to increase each and every year over the forward forecast despite the Treasurer's hit-and-run raid. There will be more debt.

This is a Treasurer who thinks that he does not have to stand behind the government owned corporations of Queensland. This is a Treasurer who says, 'No, I will walk away from that debt. I do not want to count it.'

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Hang on a second—

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Members! It has been a long session and we are nearly due for a break.

Mr NICHOLLS: This is the same Treasurer who thinks he only has to pay interest on net debt and not on the whole amount he owes to the bank.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Did you go to your bank? What is your bank—the Commonwealth Bank or Westpac? Which bank?

Mr Pitt: Wouldn't you like to know.

Mr NICHOLLS: You go to the bank and you say, 'I would only like to pay the interest bill on the net debt.' They say, 'Yes, Mr Pitt, that sounds like a good idea. After a thousand years of banking history, we will not charge you interest on the total amount you owe.'

Mr Costigan: The new order.

Mr NICHOLLS: The new world order.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: What did the ratings agencies say about that? They said, 'No, sorry, that idea does not work. When we look at you it is the total amount the state of Queensland owes. It ain't the little bit.'

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: I know where the Treasurer is getting his advice from. The Treasurer is getting his advice from Walker and Walker. Remember Walker and Walker, the academics from the University of Newcastle? I am not referring to the entirely sensible shadow Attorney-General who is just Walker. Walker and Walker, the economists from the University of Newcastle, said that it is not the total debt you have to worry about.

Do members know the other thing Walker and Walker said? I will tell members. Walker and Walker said, 'You have all of these long service leave assets and you have all of these superannuation assets.' Do members remember that we had this debate? I said at the time to the then shadow treasurer, 'Are you going to raid the superannuation assets of public servants in Queensland? Are you going to raid the long service leave entitlements of public servants?' Two years ago he denied he would do it.

But do members know what I have heard today? The Treasurer, the student of Walker and Walker from the University of Wollongong or Newcastle or wherever they were from, is now on the hunt. Like the member for Woodridge, he is on a mole hunt. The leaks are out there. He has done a press conference this afternoon and said, 'How did the opposition know that I was going to raid the long service leave and superannuation entitlements of public servants?' Mate, we knew two years ago when you took Walker and Walker's advice that you would do that. Just because the Treasurer cannot remember what happened two years ago—

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Clayfield, there is a lot of interjection. I know that you are in a way bringing it about—

Mr NICHOLLS: Loving it.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:—and loving it. As long as you do not need protection, I warn members to keep it down a bit.

Mr NICHOLLS: Just because the Treasurer cannot remember what he said two years ago and was saying two years ago, does not mean that the rest of us do not remember it. Just because there are those of us who understand the accounts of Queensland and know that there are funds put aside, does not mean that he needs to go about impugning the integrity—as he has done for the past three years—of Treasury officials. He is impugning the integrity of the Treasury officials. He has gone on a mole hunt because he thinks there is a leak.

We knew where he was going as soon as he started talking about it. We knew that the fantasy that was their so-called economic plan in January—the \$1.3 billion black hole; the *Courier-Mail* got it dead right—was unsustainable. So what has he done? He has done something that no other Treasurer in Queensland's history would ever dare do. He has done a hit-and-run cash grab on the long service leave and superannuation entitlements of public servants.

I go back to my theme of this being a budget of the audacity of hypocrisy. It is a budget that promises to deliver surpluses but delivers fiscal deficits each and every year. Remember, the fiscal deficit is the measure recommended by Treasury and the one taken into account by ratings agencies.

Under the LNP we were already running operating surpluses. We were already doing that. Members only need to look at Budget Paper No. 2 'Outlook and strategy' at page 10 to see that in the last two years alone we have run \$1.5 billion in surpluses. We have also had to fund, with the assistance of the Commonwealth, disaster recovery after cyclones Yasi and Oswald and a number of other natural disasters.

This Treasurer should go down on bended knee and thank the LNP for what we bequeathed in terms of operating surpluses. Instead of going on his mole hunt in Treasury he should be saying to hardworking officials of Treasury, 'Thank you for the good job you did. Thank you for the job you did in giving us the fiscal repair statement. Thank you for identifying the failings of the Labor government.' He should be saying thank you to the LNP for taking action to fix them up.

This budget is full of hypocrisy. It is a budget that promises more infrastructure but delivers no new spending. Capital purchases are down by more than \$800 million and grants are down by more than \$500 million when compared to last year's budget. It is a budget that promises more health services but does not deliver any way of measuring what they say. It is a budget that promises expenditure restraint but that spends \$1 billion on 3,000 more public servants and sees expenses growth more than triple this year, heading back to the old Fraser-Bligh days where expenses grew

despite every promise they made in 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010 that they were going to control expenses growth. What was the decade average of expenses growth? Almost 10 per cent a year. No wonder the rivers of gold that were flowing disappeared—no wonder.

Fundamentally, this budget illustrates the hopelessness of the plan that Labor took to the people of Queensland at the last election. The money simply is not there as they thought it was. I watched on Tuesday as the Treasurer stood up there and congratulated himself on this budget. But it was the LNP who did the hard work. We did the hard work. We got in there and got the hard work done after a decade of debt and deficit by those opposite.

What did the member for Mulgrave inherit versus what we inherited? Before he attacks the Treasury officials, he inherited total state debt down by \$10 billion, expenses brought under control, more services for less money, no tax increases, a reinstatement of the Great Start Grant, \$7,000 for first home buyers—

Mrs Frecklington: Froze car rego.

Mr NICHOLLS: Froze car rego for three years and the first public transport fare reduction in Queensland's history. That is what he inherited. What did we inherit? The opening line of the Fiscal Reform Blueprint states—

Queensland's fiscal position and outlook is unsustainable and restoration must be an urgent priority for this term of Government. Queensland Treasury Corporation stated—

The state's debt has reached unprecedented levels—
that is actually not being helped by this budget—

Together with its published forward estimates showing an even greater volume of debt required, Queensland is now in uncharted waters with respect to the volume of debt on issue and the resultant interest bill.

Guess what? This Treasurer is taking us straight back into uncharted waters. The Bermuda Triangle is on this Treasurer's GPS and he is going straight at it without any care, without any fear, in full knowledge that what he is doing is wrong and, what is worse, with no buoyancy left in the tank because he has now raided the long service leave and the superannuation entitlements of public servants.

Of course we had the independent Commission of Audit, involving Peter Costello, Sandra Harding and Doug McTaggart, which said—

Urgent fiscal repair is necessary just to stabilise debt which will continue growing in the absence of corrective measures.

What did we also inherit? Not just the massive debt, not just the deficits, not just the mismanagement, the expenses growth and the taxes and fees and charges going up. What we inherited was this—

The magnitude of the task is substantially larger than previously recognised because the former Government—
that is, the Bligh-Fraser Labor government—

has built in unrealistically optimistic Budget assumptions that have masked the magnitude of the underlying structural problems.

They were living on a wing and a prayer. They thought that the revenues would come in from stamp duty receipts at 14 per cent a year, year on year. In 2012, after two years of the GFC, after the falling of the property markets, they thought property sales were going to increase and they were going to get more stamp duty—unbelievable!

So what did the financial report prepared by this government say—the report on state finances? It states—

At the time of the publication of the 2014-15 Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review—
that is, the last one that we provided when in government—
the budget and debt position had been broadly stabilised.

The ship was no longer sinking. The ship was afloat and it was heading on the right course, and that was backed up by Standard & Poor's assessment, including the assessment on Tuesday, that recognised the hard work of expenditure constraint under the previous government. What does the report on state finances also say? It also says that under this government there is no chance of getting the AAA credit rating back—no chance of getting it back whatsoever. So Queensland's AAA credit rating, which was estimated to cost an extra \$200 million a year in interest payments which saw our interest bill higher than the interest bill of Tasmania—and by the way we are 40 bases points higher than the interest bill in New South Wales, so we are still paying more because of Labor—was ballooning under Labor. So this is a budget full of hypocrisy.

In the lead-up to the budget the Treasurer promised innovation and compared himself to Bob Hawke and Paul Keating. I reckon Paul Keating would have something to say about that.

Mr Minnikin: I reckon he would, too.

Mr NICHOLLS: Yes. What was Keating's famous line? 'A shiver looking for a spine to run up.' That would be about right, indeed. What would Paul Keating say about not wanting to get out of unproductive businesses? What did he say in New South Wales to John Robertson and Luke Foley? What did he say to them? That they were troglodytes, stuck in the past, more interested in their union mates than they were in the people of New South Wales. That is what Paul Keating would say about that.

An opposition member: History repeating itself.

Mr NICHOLLS: Absolutely. It is not innovative to throw billions of dollars more into growing government bureaucracies as Queensland's unemployment rate remains at six per cent. It is not innovative to continue to borrow more and more money to pay for your election promises. It is not innovative to raid a generation's worth of savings. It is not innovative to accept the lowest common denominator as the benchmark regarding the funding of public servants' superannuation and long service entitlements.

This budget is a pale and tepid imitation of the failed and discredited policies of Wayne Swan and Kevin Rudd. Like Kevin Rudd and Wayne Swan raiding the Education Investment Fund and the Health and Hospitals Fund, this Treasurer has raided a fund implemented under former premier Peter Beattie as a prudent and necessary provision for future obligations. Like Kevin Rudd and Wayne Swan, this budget fails to deliver any vision for Queensland. It is a do-nothing budget from a do-nothing government.

Remember how much Kevin Rudd promised us as a result of the mining tax? We were going to get a capital investment boom. Do members remember that? How much did we ever actually receive out of that? Zero, zilch, zip. For all of those projects that were going to go ahead—Abbot Point, the inland railway—there was not a brass razoo. There is nothing by the way of visionary infrastructure. The only new project is the Townsville stadium, a promise made safe in the knowledge that Labor's funding amount is \$150 million short. Labor's North Queensland MPs will be crowing about the Townsville stadium, but remember what the member for Townsville once said about it. He said it was unnecessary. The member for Townsville had to get pulled into line by the Premier for his comments in relation to the unnecessary Townsville stadium. Boy, did he change his mind about that in a hurry.

Labor members will be crowing about the Queen's Wharf development in a few weeks time. It pays to remember that Queen's Wharf is only possible because of the LNP's vision to move public servants out of the existing aged and decrepit accommodation into new, modern accommodation at 1 William Street—a project being funded by the private sector at no cost to taxpayers which will provide savings of \$60 million a year, creating 1,000 jobs a year over three years, and a project which was put together by the director-general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet under this government.

Where this government waits up to 12 months to come up with an idea, the LNP got on with the job and acted. We do not need a glossy brochure to deliver projects like the Toowoomba second range crossing. We rolled up our sleeves, we got on, we did the deal and we made the project a goer—a project which will support 1,800 full-time-equivalent jobs during its construction phase.

There were other projects like the \$10 billion upgrade to the Bruce Highway, the government wireless network and new generation rolling stock. I heard the member for Ipswich West talking about the new rail stabling yards at Wulkaraka—a promise made good by the LNP, not by the government over there. There is the Queensland schools PPP partnership delivering 10 new schools, the Coomera interchange on the Pacific Motorway which will see a \$1 billion commercial and retail centre go ahead, and the Herston health quarter redevelopment—they are climbing all over the Herston health quarter, which we put together.

I have absolutely run out of time and I have a lot more pages to go so I will have to save them up. But let me say that on infrastructure the spend is not there. On planning I do say that the money put aside to assist in planning reform is welcomed. However, the planning reforms put in place by the member for Callide, the member for Mansfield and assisted by the member for Southport have seen approvals increase by 150 per cent. So much was done in such little time. This budget delivers so little for so many. Truly this is a budget that will leave people wanting. It is a Labor budget that spends more than it earns and sees debt increasing—and, just like last time, when we are back we will fix it up.

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (6.19 pm): It is a pleasure to rise and speak to the Appropriation Bill before the House. I would like to congratulate the Treasurer on this his first budget. It is a responsible and measured budget and one that remains true to the commitments we made to Queenslanders at the recent election. I would also like to acknowledge and thank his office and departmental staff who have worked tirelessly to pull together such an important suite of budget measures.

One of the reasons I joined the Labor Party was that we believe deeply in the value and dignity of work—in the opportunity it provides. There is little that is more important than having the opportunity to gain work and the independence and ability to support your family that it provides. When we went to the election, we did so in an environment of significant anxiety in the community following the far-reaching Public Service cuts undertaken by the previous government. We made a commitment to Queenslanders that we would create jobs now and jobs for the future. It is our No. 1 priority.

The \$1.6 billion Working Queensland package is about stimulating job creation, increasing the productivity of our labour force and fostering emerging and innovative industries—jobs now and jobs for the future. It is about creating the broader economic environment necessary for business confidence and economic growth, as well as having targeted programs to reduce the barriers to labour market participation experienced by some groups within the labour market.

The \$60 million this financial year for Skilling Queenslanders for Work and the \$34.5 million investment over three years to rebuild TAFE after the former government's undermining of the sector is an investment in improving the skills and training necessary to support up to 32,000 Queenslanders into work. I am also particularly excited by the investment contained in this budget in science and innovation and in the cultivation of emerging industries like biotechnology under the Advance Queensland package. As a government, we must of course govern for the welfare and good government of Queensland today, but we should also have a vision for where Queensland is going tomorrow, something that we can aspire to, and this package builds on and advances many forward-thinking initiatives and policies of successive Labor governments.

The budget will restore front-line services, with a record investment of \$14.2 billion in health and \$12.4 billion in education. Additional funding contained in the budget to lower class sizes and provide extra teachers and guidance officers is an investment in our children and our future. Funding for 4,000 new graduate nursing places, 400 nurse navigators, investment in preventative health and measures to reduce the 'waiting list for the waiting list' ignored by the former government is a focus on the needs of patients across the entire health and patient journey.

Measures contained in the budget as part of the government's response to the *Not now, not ever* report—some \$31 million over four years—are vital to continue the fight against domestic violence in Queensland. Domestic violence is insidious, it is contemptible and it is taking the lives of women in our community. I applaud the \$347 million commitment in this budget to pensioners and Seniors Card holders who will continue to receive one or more of the core energy, water and transport concessions. While the federal government, Tony Abbott and Joe Hockey are cutting \$52 million this year alone from the pensioners scheme, this government is determined to maintain concessions for Queensland pensioners.

I am so pleased to see that Queensland mums and dads will receive new support under this budget with \$6.6 million for the Triple P—Positive Parenting Program. This program is about giving parents a helping hand and access to strategies to build the skills and confidence they need to give their child the best start in life. The two-year trial will give families free and voluntary access to a range of programs, including an online program, topic specific seminars, parent discussion groups, one-on-one consultations as well as more intensive, small group based and individual programs. The necessity and benefit of these programs cannot be underestimated. When pregnant with my first child, my obstetrician spoke highly of this program and the support it provides to first-time mothers. My two young boys, aged 21 months and four years, are without doubt the light of my life but all parents know how challenging parenting can be. Children have the best start to life when parents have the support they need, and I commend the Treasurer and Minister for Communities for investing in families in my electorate and across Queensland.

Locally, I am delighted to see \$232.4 million allocated to progress widening of the Gateway Motorway upgrade between Nudgee and Bracken Ridge. When complete, this joint \$1.1 billion Commonwealth-state project will make an appreciable difference to the journey time of local residents of the electorates of Nudgee and Sandgate, held by my colleague, as well as the 80,000 motorists who use this stretch of road daily.

Two local train stations will receive upgrades, with \$13 million allocated to commence detailed design for upgrades at Boondall train station to improve accessibility and \$888,000 to be spent on a new pedestrian footbridge at Banyo train station. The upgrade at Boondall train station will significantly improve station facilities and accessibility for Boondall passengers. Boondall station sees approximately 6,400 passenger movements each week and is a key destination station on the Shorncliffe line owing to its proximity to the Boondall Entertainment Centre. When an event is on at the centre, the station can experience up to 1,800 passenger movements in one night. This investment will significantly improve access to the station for all customers, including those with disabilities, the elderly, parents with prams, people with injuries or just those carrying luggage.

In addition to upgrades at Boondall train station, I am very excited to see the commitment by Queensland Rail under the Deputy Premier's portfolio to build a new pedestrian footbridge at Banyo. My community has been calling out for improved access between the station's two platforms for some time, after an ageing timber footbridge was removed in 2006 at the northern end of the station due to it having reached its useful lifespan and having become structurally unsafe. Since then, access between the station's inbound and outbound platforms has been approximately 170 metres away via the St Vincents Road level crossing at the southern end of the station. Of concern, over 500 people have risked their lives to cross the tracks irresponsibly over the past three years, making it only a matter of time before someone was injured or killed. These near misses, along with concerns raised by my community, prompted me to raise this issue with the department and I am delighted to see this safety improvement delivered for my community. Construction on the new footbridge is expected to start in November and will be completed by March 2016. The project will also include new lighting, CCTV and signage for the new footbridge.

The budget also contains welcome improvements for my local schools. The first issue raised with me by the Zillmere State School P&C on being elected was the state of their playground. This budget contains \$58,778 for replacement of this playground equipment which will make a tremendous difference to children at the school. I look forward to continuing to work with the school community and the education minister's office on the tennis courts next. In addition, both Geebung State School and Geebung Special School have received \$650,000 and \$35,000 respectively to complete the refurbishment of amenities commenced in the previous financial year.

I made a promise during the election to Earnshaw State College, my former high school, that they would receive funding to upgrade their current part-time guidance officer to a full-time-equivalent position, and this budget delivers on that commitment. I thank the Minister for Education for this investment in providing the very best support possible for these students.

The 2015-16 state budget will lead Queensland to financial sustainability while keeping our income-generating assets in public hands. It is a budget that will grow our economy, generate jobs and restore front-line services. It is also the first budget in 16 years to forecast a reduction in debt across the forward estimates and I know Queenslanders will support the responsible and measured spending put forward by the Treasurer in this budget. I commend the bill to the House.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Due to the time and so that the next speaker is not interrupted by the dinner break, the House will rise and resume at 7.30.

Proceedings suspended from 6.27 pm to 7.30 pm.

Debate, on motion of Mr Hinchliffe, adjourned.

COMMITTEE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Portfolio Committees, Auditor-General's Reports and Reporting Dates

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (7.30 pm): I rise to advise the House of the determinations made by the Committee of the Legislative Assembly at its meeting today. The committee has resolved, pursuant to standing order 194B, that the Auditor-General report to parliament No. 20 of 2014-15 titled *Results of audit: managing water quality in Great Barrier Reef catchments* be referred to the Agriculture and Environment Committee for consideration.

The committee resolved, pursuant to standing order 136, that the Agriculture and Environment Committee report on the Agriculture and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 2 October 2015; that the Health and Ambulance Services Committee report on the Public Health (Childcare Vaccination) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 2 October 2015; that the Communities, Disability Services and Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Committee report on the Guide, Hearing and Assistance Dogs Amendment Bill 2015 by 2 October 2015; that the Finance and Administration

Committee report on the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2015 by 4 September 2015; and to vary the committee responsible for the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation (Protecting Firefighters) Amendment Bill 2015 from the Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee to the Finance and Administration Committee and to vary the time for the Finance and Administration Committee to report on the bill to 4 September 2015.

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

Second Reading (Cognate Debate)

Resumed from p. 1487, on motion of Mr Pitt—

That the bills be now read a second time.

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.32 pm): I rise to speak on the Appropriation Bill 2015. In the lead-up to the budget I said it would be the first major test of whether the Labor Party would listen to my local residents or choose to simply abandon the Mudgeeraba electorate as Labor governments have in the past. Unfortunately, for residents of my electorate, what we can clearly see is that the Labor Party has failed this test. Fundamentally, this is a budget which is bad for jobs and bad for growth. It is a budget of tricks and raids on public servants' long service leave and superannuation which Labor never foreshadowed before the election. While Labor went to the election and entered government with no plan, we now know Labor has a sneaky plan. These tricky moves represent a complete betrayal of the public's trust reminiscent of their asset sales after the 2009 election. This is a budget which shows debt will continue to rise every year, breaking a key Labor election promise.

Whilst the government talks about a jobs budget, the truth of the matter is that unemployment levels will barely change this term according to budget projections. In typical Labor style, many of the projects funded in the budget were existing ones, simply rehashed, rebadged and reannounced with no money for major job-creating projects. This has become the overarching narrative of this Labor government.

Whilst the former LNP government had committed to and set aside funding for a number of projects in my electorate, all we have seen since January is a fumbling, bumbling Labor government supported by the crossbench and exiled former Labor members with no plan and no clue doing nothing but taking credit for LNP achievements. Despite putting forward no real plan of their own, this Labor government has had the audacity to take credit for countless LNP achievements throughout Queensland and in my electorate of Mudgeeraba in particular. In March, we had the Minister for National Parks, then a member of this House for just over a month, taking credit for the \$1 million John Stacey Suspension Bridge at the base of Purling Brook Falls in Springbrook, which was being built before he was even a member of parliament. As we on this side of the House know, it was the former LNP government and the former minister for national parks, the member for Buderim, who committed to, funded and delivered this suspension bridge for Springbrook only to have it announced by those opposite.

Later that month, we had the Deputy Premier lauding the approval of Pacific View Estate at Worongary as a miraculous ALP achievement. What she neglected to mention was that it was the former LNP government and the former deputy premier, the member for Callide, who called in the development in 2014. Not only that, but her own failed Labor candidate for Mudgeeraba labelled the call-in 'disturbing' during the election campaign and made absurd claims that the LNP would suddenly 'drop' 10,000 people into Pacific View Estate overnight.

Two months later, in May, we then saw the Labor government taking credit for the new \$14.7 million train stabling facilities at Robina train station which were funded and delivered by the LNP as part of our New Generation Rollingstock project to increase the train fleet to cater for demand. Just when we thought this Labor government could not be more dishonest, in June we saw them announce that the LNP's \$5 million Carrara roundabout upgrade at the corner of Gooding Drive, Nerang-Broadbeach Road and Robina Parkway would be completed in time for the 2018 Gold Coast Commonwealth Games. Residents were rightfully perplexed by this announcement, remembering that just five months earlier in January I had announced this LNP project with the then LNP minister for transport and main roads as part of a series of road upgrades which would be delivered before the Commonwealth Games. It was yet another case of a project being fought for, funded and delivered by the LNP, only to have this Labor government, with no plan of its own, swoop in and take credit where credit is not due.

What is even more concerning than this government's consistent willingness to take credit for LNP achievements is that, as we have seen in the budget, this is a government with no real plan for economic growth. Queensland is paralysed with a 12-month infrastructure freeze, which remains in place under this budget, and business confidence is down as a result. In contrast, the LNP is a stable and experienced team which has put forward a real plan to grow Queensland's economy and boost jobs. A week before Labor's budget, the LNP announced its Real Economic Plan, which will grow our economy by focusing on major commitments in five key areas of agriculture, tourism, resources, construction and manufacturing, and services and knowledge based industries. We have a common-sense alternative plan which will not only see confidence grow and jobs created throughout Queensland, but will also ensure our local economy in Mudgeeraba is equipped to grow into the future.

Today, the difference for residents of my electorate between our experienced LNP team and this inexperienced, bumbling, fumbling Labor government could not be clearer. Whilst the LNP has put forward a Real Economic Plan to address the needs of our state and my electorate of Mudgeeraba, this is a Labor government which has, in typical Labor fashion, chosen to ignore the needs of my electorate. In my sixth year as Mudgeeraba's representative, I can state with confidence that I have a firm understanding of the projects and funding my electorate needs to enhance our local area. Prior to this budget being handed down, I clearly outlined in this House, in the media and to my local community what were the local area needs and the priorities of local residents. These priorities would see roads improved, school safety enhanced, tourism boosted, law and order secured and the local environment preserved.

Under the former LNP government, in a range of areas, we were working calmly, methodically and competently to address the needs of my constituents and ensure our local area received the funding, infrastructure and services it deserves. In contrast, under this Labor government, we now have a budget which, at its core, ignores the needs of residents in my electorate. In fact, funding previously set aside for local projects by the LNP has been ripped away in this Labor budget.

Under an LNP government, we would have seen \$330,000 allocated to protect the Numinbah Valley community in my electorate from dangerous hooning activity at the corner of Nerang-Murwillumbah Road and Pine Creek Road after this proposal was approved by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee. This location is a known hooning hotspot and the Queensland Police Service considers an upgrade of this intersection to deter hoons an urgent priority. Hoons at this location have escalated their activities to include burning car tyres, posing a significant bushfire risk in a populated and high risk area. This intersection is only five kilometres north of the Numinbah Valley township and only 150 to 200 metres from the Numinbah Valley Environmental Education Centre, which regularly hosts groups of students aged seven to 14 years on overnight education stays.

Our hardworking police officers are frequently put at risk when confronting hoons at this location often being outnumbered by up to 50 hoons in attendance, many of whom patrol the surrounding area to warn other hoons of police en route to the location. A \$330,000 project to stamp out hooning at this intersection through the installation of enhanced lighting and CCTV cameras had been fully funded and announced by the former LNP government. I asked this Labor government to deliver on the LNP's commitment and protect police officers, students and local residents from being terrorised by hoons in Numinbah Valley. Unfortunately in this Labor budget, despite my productive meetings with the Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services, we have seen no money allocated to keep Numinbah Valley residents safe.

This Labor government's soft-on-crime approach has not only seen funding ripped from crime-fighting measures in the Numinbah Valley, but also \$24 million ripped from our Safe Night Out Strategy to keep young people safe. In addition, we have seen \$1.8 million over two years and seven staff members taken from the Crime and Corruption Commission, which will now be under-resourced when fighting outlaw motorcycle gangs in my electorate.

Under an LNP government we would have seen \$100,000 spent to revitalise Mudgeeraba Creek, as the funding was already set aside by the Cabinet Budget Review Committee. The poor state of Mudgeeraba Creek has been a huge issue for locals, who can still remember a time when it was home to all kinds of wildlife, including platypus. Unfortunately, it has been stagnant for a long time, often causing flooding due to blockages and emitting foul odours. One hundred thousand dollars in restoration works had been fully committed to by the former LNP government which would have seen local families once again able to visit the creek and enjoy yet another environmental attraction in our local area. In contrast, in this Labor budget we have seen no money allocated to preserving our local environment by cleaning up Mudgeeraba Creek.

In my regular conversations with local Mudgeeraba residents living near the creek, I am frequently reminded of what a wonderful environmental attraction the creek was for local families and what a sad state it is in now. Lucy Moss has told me of how locals would explore near the creek and enjoy all our local environment has to offer, but this has not been possible for a long time. It is disappointing to see, despite all its rhetoric, that when it comes to the Mudgeeraba electorate this Labor government has proven that it has no plan and no interest in preserving our environment, even discontinuing funding for grassroots environmental grants programs.

Under an LNP government, \$80,000 had been fully funded through the Cabinet Budget Review Committee to install flashing school zone signage at Mudgeeraba Special School on School Street, Merrimac State School on Gooding Drive, Mudgeeraba Creek State School on Gold Coast-Springbrook Road and Numinbah Valley State School on Nerang-Murwillumbah Road in my electorate. In the LNP we know safety at our local schools should be a priority. We know that in order to safeguard our children when walking to and from school, we need to ensure that drivers are aware of school zones and are reminded to slow down and take care. The teachers and parents of these four local schools deserve to know their students can get safely to and from school each day and that motorists are being reminded to take adequate care within school zones. Unfortunately, in this budget what we can clearly see is that this Labor government does not take school safety seriously.

My local schools have been shocked to learn that the flashing school zone signage they were due to receive under a re-elected LNP government has been taken away from them by the new Labor government. During my discussions with the P&C president of Mudgeeraba Special School recently, I was again told how urgently flashing school zone lights were needed to ensure secure student safety. Having visited the school on many occasions, I know firsthand how cars drive through School Street at high speeds, even though it is marked as a 40-kilometre-an-hour zone, with the school being located at the bottom of a steep hill and being prone to alarming road safety issues as a result. As the P&C president has said to me, this is an issue which needs to be addressed as soon as possible rather than funding being taken away and ministers engaging in unproductive buck-passing.

When it comes to schools in the Mudgeeraba electorate, this Labor government does not have a plan and does not have any concern for the safety of our local students, nor does it have any plan to give my local schools the funding they deserve. Under this Labor budget, local schools in my electorate will miss out on funding through the LNP's Great Teachers = Great Results program, as well as missing out on a share of \$299 million in funding through the Great Results Guarantee in 2016.

Similarly, whilst tourism in the hinterland areas of my electorate would have been a priority for an LNP government, there is no funding in this Labor budget for improved tourism signage in my hinterland communities. Under the LNP, \$155,000 had been set aside through the Cabinet Budget Review Committee for improved tourism signage at Springbrook on approach to Wunburra Lookout. This signage would have provided a one-stop shop for visitors and locals alike to have a guide to all tourism attractions in Springbrook, as it is not uncommon for visitors to stop by one attraction and miss other fantastic tourism drawcards. This was a sensible step championed by the local community and myself which would have further revitalised this mountain community. Unfortunately, whilst this project was fully funded by the LNP, there is no funding in this Labor budget for tourism signage in Springbrook. Despite all of its vague commitments to boosting hinterland tourism, this Labor government has unsurprisingly cast aside the tourism potential of Springbrook.

Whilst much has been said since the election about the LNP's Strong Choices proposals, our proposals allowed for \$1.5 billion to be spent on much needed infrastructure on the Gold Coast, much of which would benefit the residents of my electorate. It is now the responsibility of the Labor government to explain exactly when and how it will ensure our \$1.5 billion in planned road and rail infrastructure upgrades for the Gold Coast will be funded under this government. Under our proposals, projects like the widening of the M1 from exit 82 at Robina to exit 85 at Reedy Creek and the widening of exit 82 to exit 79 northbound at Mudgeeraba would have been fully funded, relieving the traffic pressures faced by my constituents on a daily basis. In contrast, under this Labor government we have a Minister for Main Roads who has admitted that he did not even bother to ask for federal funding for the M1 before this year's federal budget. This is despite the minister having attempted to shift political responsibility for the M1 to the federal government, claiming to have 'asked for \$350 million' in a media release issued a day after the federal government's budget was handed down. Unfortunately for the minister, he was caught out telling porky pies when it was revealed that the only submission made for federal funding for the M1 between Robina and Reedy Creek was made in 2012 under the LNP state government to the Rudd-Gillard-Rudd Labor federal government, who did not cough up one cent of

federal funding. Whilst the minister chooses to spend his time playing politics and attempting to rewrite history, the residents of my electorate deserve better. They deserve a plan for their roads to be fixed, and they deserve it now.

Similarly, under Strong Choices \$22 million would have been allocated to upgrade Franklin Drive in Mudgeeraba from Old Coach Road to Somerset Drive, meaning residents of Bonogin, Austinville, Springbrook, Mudgeeraba and Tallai would have had a safer section of road to drive on every day, with improved visibility at this road's tricky intersections. Only last Monday night on my way back from playing tennis there was a severe accident between a motorcyclist and a car at this very intersection. My understanding is that the motorcyclist will probably lose his leg.

Whilst the Strong Choices proposals were defeated at the state election earlier this year, it is incumbent upon this government to ensure they outline an alternative plan to fund these important projects. Residents of my electorate supported our proposals which would have allowed their road issues to be fixed, including at major congestion hotspots in my electorate. Unfortunately, they have yet to see an alternative plan for improved road infrastructure from this Labor government.

Thankfully, some measures that I have been fighting for on behalf of my local residents have been secured by the LNP. Pressure from the opposition has seen this government recommit to the LNP's hugely popular Get in the Game program. The former LNP government had committed \$68 million for the grassroots sports funding program up until now, and I am absolutely delighted that our program will be continued for the benefit of local sporting clubs. It is, however, disappointing that it has taken this long for Labor to commit to the LNP's Get in the Game plan. I do take this opportunity to thank the minister for sport, who was one of the few members on the other side of the chamber who actually listened.

As the patron of 15 local sporting clubs in my electorate, I have spoken personally with a number of my clubs and I can say they are absolutely thrilled that this much needed LNP funding program will continue. During a recent visit to the Mudgeeraba Tennis Club, local coach Andrew Dornsteiff said the Get in the Game program had been a huge success in the local community. He told me that thanks to the Get in the Game program, over 150 community members have enjoyed tennis lessons on Sunday mornings at the club so far. He said it really has been wonderful to see so many people learning new skills and making new friends from the Get in the Game program. This story is common throughout all of my local sporting and recreation clubs, as I have been proud to deliver more than \$560,000 in funding to local clubs since I was elected.

I am also pleased to see that \$6.5 million has been allocated for clinical decision units at the emergency departments of the Gold Coast University Hospital and Robina Hospital which provide health care to the residents of my electorate. As a registered nurse for over 34 years and having again visited Robina Hospital recently, I know this was an issue of concern for staff. I am sure these clinical decision units will make a difference to our hospital and health services.

Whilst the residents of my electorate will no doubt be unsurprised by Labor's abandonment of the Mudgeeraba electorate in this budget, they can rest assured that I will continue to fight for them in this place and ensure our concerns are addressed. In particular, I will continue to fight for a concept design and upgrade of Beechmont Road in Lower Beechmont between Elimbah Court and Jardine Road, which is something I have been fighting hard for alongside the member for Beaudesert. As the Minister for Main Roads would have seen recently on Nine Gold Coast News, this section of road is the final section residents want upgraded following extensive community consultation.

During community consultation, the residents identified this as the most hazardous section of road which has yet to be upgraded after I had secured \$11.4 million to upgrade Beechmont Road since my election in 2009. This is an incredibly narrow section of road on which cars, as well as school and tour buses, often come dangerously close to colliding with each other. Having driven on this road countless times, I stand shoulder to shoulder with the community and the Better Roads for Beechmont Committee as we take the fight to the minister and ensure this Labor government cannot continue to ignore our road safety concerns.

Whilst the minister may have already dismissed the Lower Beechmont and Beechmont communities as 'not a priority' for the Labor government, I am sure former Labor ministers for main roads will knowingly confirm that I will keep fighting for this road upgrade for as long as I am seated in this House. Only two weeks ago there were two fatalities on Beechmont Road—one at each end—involving motorcyclists. It is a very bad area for high-speed motorcyclists. Unfortunately, as we all know, even if we do fix up the road we cannot stop stupidity.

In addition, I will continue to fight for \$1.6 million which had been allocated to the upgrade of Worongary Road at the Worongary Creek causeway but which remains unspent, to be reallocated to fixing the rest of Worongary Road. As the Minister for Main Roads should be aware, the 2014-15 Capital Statement lists an upgrade of the Worongary Creek floodway as having a budgeted cost of \$3.981 million including \$750,000 to 30 June 2014 and \$3.231 million for 2014-15. Despite almost \$4 million having been budgeted, the final design and construction contract for this significant project was in the order of \$2.36 million. By my reckoning, this means that about \$1.6 million is left over from the LNP's upgrade of the Worongary Creek floodway, and I want the minister to ensure this money is put directly back into Worongary Road for the benefit of local residents.

Whilst this budget will no doubt come as a bitter disappointment for local residents of my electorate who had voted for better roads for a growing population, for the education our kids deserve and to make Mudgeeraba the safest place to raise a family. Whether in government or in opposition, I will keep fighting to ensure we receive the funding we deserve. It is no secret that this Labor government came to office with no plan and very few election commitments, but residents of my electorate can be assured that, as their local member, I will keep fighting for the things that matter to them.

 **Mr PEARCE** (Mirani—ALP) (7.51 pm): I rise as the elected representative of Mirani, a Central Queensland electorate that covers some 44,727 square kilometres. In the lead-up to the January state election, LNP candidates and the former LNP premier were threatening voters that they would not deliver on their project promises if the local candidate was not elected. I am pleased to stand in this place today and say that many of the projects expected by the community have been delivered by this Labor government. I am proud of the fact that a Labor government can do that, because we as a government have a sense of integrity and a sense of commitment. This is about meeting the expectations of the community. Labor has met those expectations.

Treasurer Pitt has been able to do this without having to sell off assets. I am happy to be working with a Treasurer who did not have to call on a Commissioner of Audit to come up with a plan for the government of the day. When I look back, I see the Commission of Audit as a lazy way of determining an agenda to sell off assets—the old trick of filling up the moneybags and blowing \$2 million a year of revenue looking after a few mates.

I now want to spend a few minutes speaking about the state of small business in the Mirani electorate. From my limited knowledge of small business, I understand that compliance cost is a serious factor in the viability of this sector of the economy. Tax compliance costs and employee compliance costs are just two of the issues that determine the success or failure of a small business. In Central Queensland we have seen many small businesses fail.

I want to submit that in Central Queensland the industry sector plays an important role in the survival of many small business outlets, most owned and operated by families. When I talk about the industry sector I am talking about people on the land, mining companies and those big companies that support mining operations. We need them to be out there working and turning over money for the work they are doing.

As a state member I am saddened by the overwhelming lack of commitment by the mining sector to contribute to the wellbeing of communities through employment policies that fail to deliver the opportunity for worker families to live locally. Resource communities across the Bowen Basin are currently accommodating about a third to a half of their population capacity. Fewer workers residing in the local community with their families means that cash flow for small business has been significantly reduced, impacting on the viability of business and on employment opportunities for people who are not in the coal industry.

I do understand that cash flow is vital and that it is the workers in long-term, permanent work who make the biggest investment in the sustainability of small business in resource communities. When you have small businesses in resource communities failing and you have workers who are not taking home the pay they should be taking home, the failing economy in Central Queensland then flows on to places like Rockhampton and Mackay. Labor knows that it is long-term, well-paid jobs that drive a local economy. Spending and maintaining cash flow in the local economy ensures healthy small jobs for youth and women which in turn creates more cash flow and more jobs. And so the cycle continues.

I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker, the Mirani electorate has the potential for job creation through tourism.

The poor economic management of the LNP in government over just 3 years has put Queensland tourism well behind where it should be today.

I believe that the LNP in government took tourism for granted, in the same way that it took regional Queensland for granted.

Without a strong active commitment to tourism, we ignore the benefits that this industry can deliver to our State. I believe that tourism offers for government real opportunities as well as challenges.

Tourism, I feel, requires cooperation and determination to build and expose our outstanding natural attractions.

We do offer all the competitive advantages—our weather, lifestyle, nature and culture, diverse landscapes and of course our people.

In Mirani we have a natural stand out attraction that I want this Labor Government to unlock.

Get behind local tourism enthusiasts, local government and community to promote and proudly display the natural assets of the Pioneer Valley.

Mt Morgan needs the support of Government to help re-establish rail infrastructure at the historic Mt Morgan Rail Museum to return to the days when people could jump on a steam driven train and experience early day travel.

I support more than ever before, a fresh approach with government taking a leading role in partnerships that are about making things happen, about sharing responsibilities, opportunities and funding.

We know that tourism operators are doing it tough. We know that a vibrant tourism attraction will create jobs through visitor traffic and also benefit associated small businesses with more cash in tills and more jobs.

What is required for this to become a reality is recognition that we can make it happen. The challenges are real, the outcomes are achievable and the benefits are ongoing.

Mr Speaker, I will give a rundown of some of the budget highlights in my electorate

- \$11.2m Peak Downs Highway Eaton Range Works (Total Cost \$189 million)
- \$2.4m Several Projects Peak Downs Highway
- \$5.5m Dysart water Treatment Plant Upgrade
- \$1.37m Upgrade Eungella Dam Spillway
- \$27.76m Ongoing Upgrade Stanwell Power Station
- \$4.37m Mirani State High School Year 7 Sports Facility
- \$99,000 Dysart BMX New Track and Start Gate
- \$94,000 Dysart Pony Club
- \$73,000 Sarina and District Netball Courts Upgrade
- Sarina and Mirani State High School full time equivalent Guidance Officer—2016 (Up from current part time)
- 13 full time equivalent teacher resources to improve curriculum co-ordination teacher release time.
- \$13.4m Ongoing maintenance Cost Mt Morgan Mine

I look forward to getting on with the job working with schools, sporting clubs and community groups to identify projects that we can lobby for.

Walkerston Tigers Leagues Club to expand existing facilities to cater for additional sporting activities.

Tourism initiatives to grow visitor numbers to the Pioneer Valley West of Mackay. Scenic Train Ride Cycle and Walking Track.

I also want to advance the often talked about Dam on the Connors River.

I need to consult—get a good understanding of project viability.

I will be motivated based only on my understanding of the huge potential for irrigation cropping.

I know that there are thousands of hectares of high value quality crop growing lands—that will grow money if we are able to maintain a regular water supply.

LOT OF WORK TO BE DONE—GREAT PEOPLE GREAT ELECTORATE.

Mr Speaker, I congratulate the treasurer for putting the dollars up front so that I can be confident of playing an important role in the creation of job opportunities especially for our younger generation.

I will be knocking on doors—to make sure the Mirani Electorate gets its fair share of the JOBS NOW, JOBS FOR THE FUTURE funding program.

Creating jobs—bringing jobs back to our region is my number one priority.

Secure well paid jobs for Central Queenslanders means more prosperous and liveable future to us all.

I know just how important Resource Industry jobs are—for the wellbeing of the regions.

I realise I will have to be tough and persistent in working to get jobs back to levels that contribute to the local economy such as they were as recently as two years ago.

Boosting Skills and Training is good for these who want to position themselves for opportunities of getting into work.

- \$34m to restore TAFE
- Payroll Tax Rebates For Apprentices and Trainees

- \$40m for a Business Development
- \$240m over 4 years to support Queensland back into work.
- Budget allocations for more nurses and teachers Roads—Energy and Water Health and Community.

All leads to securing jobs and creating more jobs, and that's great news for Mirani for C.Q and for Queensland.

Mr Speaker I commend this bill to the House.

 **Mr CRIPPS** (Hinchinbrook—LNP) (7.56 pm): I rise to speak to the Palaszczuk government's 2015-16 state budget. What a turnout it is, in the true colloquial sense of the phrase. What a turnout it is! Last week the Treasurer announced Labor's ridiculous plan to shift public sector debt on to the books of Queensland's government owned corporations. This absurd debt hospital pass was never part of Labor's pre-election plan.

The Treasurer claims that this manoeuvre reduces public debt. That is like making a home loan payment with your credit card and suggesting that you are reducing your personal debt. We should all remember that Labor stated that it would rely on revenues from GOCs to pay down Labor debt. This plan, of course, is now in tatters. Thanks to Labor, these GOCs will now have to service a much bigger debt and interest on that debt, increasing costs to Queensland consumers. This is the type of magic pudding economics that we have come to expect from Labor.

Labor has dreamed up some fairly objectionable ways of pulling more money out of Queenslanders—the Leader of the Opposition has already canvassed the unfair increases in motor vehicle registration of more than double the inflation rate—but, of all the swifties pulled by the Treasurer in this budget, the one relating to the raid on public servants' superannuation has to take the cake. The excuse offered up by the Treasurer, that the superannuation entitlements are fully funded, really misses the point that most people understand. That is, those employer contributions do not belong to the Treasurer; they belong to the people who earned them. This is what it actually boils down to. The Treasurer is not entitled to discontinue those superannuation payments for any period of time, because they form part of the salaries and wages of those workers who worked to earn them, regardless of the relative health of the fund that they are paid into. The Treasurer is effectively expropriating that portion of the wages and salaries of Queensland public servants which are generated through their employment and are by law required to be contributed on their behalf by their employer, in this case the Queensland government. That this is lost on the Treasurer and on Labor is extraordinary. Their actions are a complete disgrace.

I turn now to those areas of the budget that relate to my shadow portfolio. In the 2015-16 Service Delivery Statements for the Department of State Development it says that its objective is to boost business development, increase economic growth and stimulate job creation opportunities. Unfortunately, there are no tangible actions in the SDS explaining how this will occur. For example, the SDS says that the department will facilitate private sector development by case managing regionally significant private sector projects in key industry sectors, but it does not say where they are. It says that the department will maximise opportunities for Queensland businesses in regionally significant public projects, but it does not say where they are. The SDS for the Department of State Development claims that it will implement industry and regional development strategies, but it does not say where or when. What it does promote is the commencement of Labor's \$200 million Building Our Regions program which Labor has offered up as evidence that it is committed to investing in regional Queensland.

As I have said before, this is a cut-down version of the LNP's flagship Royalties for the Regions initiative and it is short-changing regional Queensland. Labor's so-called Building Our Regions program is a smaller, shorter and narrower version of the LNP's initiative and it is a step backwards for regional Queensland. This \$200 million over two years compares poorly to the \$495 million over four years committed by the LNP and breaking it up—breaking up this smaller fund into even smaller streams—means Labor will now be dictating to local communities how the funding will be spent rather than letting local communities decide and nominate what their priorities are. The LNP's initiative has helped to deliver many important projects in local communities across regional Queensland. Labor's program is a pale imitation and it is particularly telling that Labor has only committed to this program for two years. In a cynical exercise of blatant historical revisionism, the Department of State Development SDS lays claim to the stand-alone legislation providing for master planning processes for priority ports at Gladstone, Hay Point/Mackay, Townsville and Abbot Point. This is of course handing in the homework of the former state development minister, the member for Callide.

The SDS for the Department of Natural Resources and Mines at least nominates some things that Minister Lynham actually wants to do. The sad thing is the extent of Minister Lynham's ambition is to bind himself to the ideological agenda of the Greens to pay back for their support at the election.

Dr Lynham interjected.

Mr CRIPPS: The Palaszczuk Labor government wants to overturn the sensible and balanced reforms that the former LNP government made to the Vegetation Management Act, repeal the long overdue and much needed reforms that the former LNP government made to the Water Act and increase red tape for resource sector projects instead of providing an improved environment for investment and job creation. But that does not mean that Minister Lynham has not taken every opportunity to hand in my homework and it does not mean he is too proud to continue to do so over the course of the current financial year.

Dr Lynham interjected.

Mr CRIPPS: Minister Lynham has laid claim to the implementation of the Indigenous land strategy to provide flexible tenure arrangements and enhanced Indigenous home ownership. He has claimed the initiative to provide statutory valuations for Queensland's 16 Indigenous local government areas for the first time.

Dr Lynham interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): Pause the clock. Member for Hinchinbrook, just hold it there for a second. I ask the minister to return to his seat if he wants to interject.

Mr CRIPPS: Please do. Please come down. Come on down, Minister! And, of course, he is once again associating himself with the memorandum of understanding with the South Australian government to coordinate the development of the Cooper Basin.

The final area of my portfolio responsibility is northern development. I have no opposite number in the Palaszczuk government in this regard because Labor is not very interested in the development of North Queensland. The closest thing I suppose is the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, but I will talk about her and that role in just a moment. The closest Labor comes to actually talking about northern development is on pages 14 and 15 of the Capital Statement where it talks about how it will promote four potential projects for funding through the Abbott government's Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund. Those projects—the Nullinga Dam, the Hann Highway, the Townsville Eastern Access Rail corridor and the Galilee Basin rail—are all worthy projects and most are identified in the Abbott government's Northern Australia white paper. There is no original thought and no real strategic plan from the Palaszczuk Labor government on the issue of northern development. It is content to leave leadership on this particular issue to the LNP, and this brings me back to the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland.

In North Queensland there is not any confidence in, or leadership from, this minister. The business community and industry leaders are concerned that North Queensland is not getting the representation it needs at the cabinet table. The full extent of the achievement of the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland so far is to convene five roundtable discussions about the economy in North Queensland, one of which, quite ridiculously, will be held in Brisbane! We also do not know exactly what this minister is responsible for. We have all seen her fumbling and bumbling around here in question time trying to cobble together answers to questions about North Queensland. Today the minister objected to a question from the member for Glass House about Ergon in North Queensland but then the minister took a Dorothy Dixier from a Labor backbencher about the stadium in Townsville. So it seems the minister picks and chooses what she wants to be responsible for, which is totally unacceptable and lacks transparency and accountability.

There is only one brief sentence to the role of the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland in the budget papers—one line in the SDS of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet which also deals with the establishment of the DPC office in Townsville. There is no individual line item allocation in the budget, there is no service delivery statement and there is no indication of what that office or the minister proposes to achieve. It is very difficult not to conclude that the office and the position lack substance. Whatever this position is, the current minister occupying this role is not up to the job. If the Premier is not going to break her election commitment of only having 14 ministers, the very least that she ought to do is to replace the current Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland with someone who can get the job done and provide North Queensland with the representation that it deserves at the cabinet table.

I turn now to how this budget will impact upon my electorate of Hinchinbrook. Projects delivered by the former LNP government dominate the initiatives benefitting the Hinchinbrook electorate in Labor's first budget. For example, the former LNP government delivered on stage 4 of the Townsville ring-road and the budget papers show that \$49 million has already been spent on the project while

planning for the Veales Road to Pope Road upgrade has already commenced. The flood mitigation project on the Bruce Highway over Cattle and Frances creeks south of Ingham is a major initiative that was part of the Bruce Highway action plan delivered by the former LNP government. Apart from these projects delivered by the former LNP government, there are no new major road initiatives that will benefit communities in the Hinchinbrook electorate in Labor's first state budget.

I note with some interest that \$250,000 will be spent on the acquisition of a lease at Mourilyan Harbour, which I hope is strategic work being undertaken by the Far North Queensland Ports Corporation to diversify the future use of Mourilyan Harbour. The Cairns Base Hospital and the Townsville General Hospital are the major health centres for communities in the Hinchinbrook electorate for specialist, secondary and tertiary treatment and services. The Palaszczuk Labor government has not provided any new major health projects for the Cairns or Townsville health and hospital service regions in this state budget. While the major projects funded by the former LNP government are continuing thanks to the leadership of the Leader of the Opposition as the former health minister—\$40 million this year as part of a \$446 million redevelopment of the Cairns Base Hospital and \$18.4 million this year as part of the \$334 million Townsville Hospital expansion—there are no new projects in Labor's budget.

After a five-year campaign to secure a new state primary school for the rapidly growing suburbs on Townsville's Northern Beaches, I do welcome the funding in this budget which allocates \$10 million to acquire the land and \$40 million in the forward estimates to build a new primary school. This is good news for the families on Townsville's northern beaches. This is something that I have been pursuing for several years. So it is satisfying to see it achieved. I think it makes sense to build this new school within the rapidly growing north shore development. I first asked the Queensland government questions about the future education infrastructure needs of communities on Townsville's northern beaches in 2011 and I was shocked to find out that, despite the rapid residential growth in the area at the time, the former Labor government had done nothing—no forward planning—to deliver any new schools for Townsville's northern beaches. So when the LNP government was elected in 2012, we established the Queensland Schools Planning Commission to determine future education infrastructure needs across the state. When the findings of the commission were handed down, it was demonstrated very clearly that there was a need for a new state primary school on Townsville's northern beaches.

The scenario in which we find ourselves on Townsville's northern beaches is that Bohlevale State School and Bluewater State School both have enrolment management plans in place. St Clare's Catholic School on the north shore has had to expand rapidly because of demand for enrolments. Earlier this year, in the lead-up to the budget, I asked the Minister for Education a question on notice about the need to acquire land and build this much needed school to make sure that it was still front and centre. This announcement is the result of a very long campaign that I have undertaken on behalf of the families of the Hinchinbrook electorate on Townsville's northern beaches.

I am disappointed that funding from the Australian government is the only source of support for skills and training projects in the state budget for the Hinchinbrook electorate, with no funding for projects from the Queensland government. For example, although I welcome the \$1.5 million for the Hinchinbrook Trades Skills Centre at Ingham State High School and the \$1.5 million for the Innisfail Health Trades Skills Centre at Innisfail State College, both of those projects are fully funded by the Australian government's Trade Training Centres in Schools Program. So although I congratulate Innisfail State College and Ingham State High School on their successful applications for funding from the Australian government, I question the inclusion of this funding in the Palaszczuk government's budget, because it really does not have anything to do with these projects.

On a serious note, I welcome funding in this budget for the ongoing response to the outbreak of Panama disease tropical race 4 in the North Queensland banana industry. The \$9.5 million in this budget to support the biosecurity response and identification of Panama disease tropical race 4 will help protect the future of North Queensland's \$600 million banana industry. The funding will provide for continued surveillance and tracing to determine the extent of the outbreak activities to contain and prevent the spread of the disease and the destruction of any infected plants. The Queensland government has indicated that the funding will also be utilised to assist in managing the long-term social and economic impacts of the outbreak in banana-growing communities across North Queensland. My electorate of Hinchinbrook grows about two-thirds of Australia's bananas. Ninety per cent of Australia's banana industry is concentrated in North Queensland. This is a very important issue and I welcome the funding that has been forthcoming from the Queensland government for the biosecurity effort that is required to protect this very important Australian industry.

Each year, in the state budget I always recognise the ongoing investment by Stanwell Corporation in capital works at the Kareeya Power Station north-west of Tully because I believe that it is an important power generation asset for North Queensland. This year, \$1.5 million will be spent on minor works at the Kareeya Power Station, which is a strategic valuable asset for the Stanwell Corporation. It is a constant reminder of the potential for hydro-electric power generation in North Queensland. Incidentally, if members examine the annual reports of Stanwell Corporation, they would see that they show consistently that the Kareeya Power Station is an extremely profitable asset of that particular government owned corporation. It makes a contribution to the revenues that come to the Queensland government via Stanwell Corporation.

As has been said by the Leader of the Opposition and my colleagues in the LNP opposition, this state budget, handed down by the Treasurer, is a tricky game of smoke and mirrors that attempts to cover up the fact that the Palaszczuk Labor government has no real economic plan for Queensland. On the whole, there is nothing much new in this budget for the Hinchinbrook electorate, except for unfair increases in motor vehicle registration and some cause for concern for public sector employees, given that Labor is proposing unprecedented interference with their employer superannuation contributions.

It is fortunate that the former LNP government put in place a number of projects that are continuing to be delivered and that the Australian government is funding some projects that will benefit the Hinchinbrook electorate, because the people of my electorate have been offered very little by the Palaszczuk Labor government in its first budget.

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (8.15 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak to this great Palaszczuk Labor government budget, delivered by the Hon. Curtis Pitt, Treasurer. I congratulate the Treasurer on his budget. What a great Labor budget it is, with a forecast surplus without the need to sell our precious income-generating assets and without the need for redundancies, forced or voluntary, and with this government restoring front-line services to the people of Queensland. During the term of the previous LNP government we saw the reduction of front-line services, massive job losses in the public sector and the raiding of our TAFE system. But today, rather than focus on the shortcomings of the Newman government, I want to focus on the first Palaszczuk government budget, this great Labor budget, a budget that is all about jobs now and jobs for the future and a budget that delivers on our election commitments.

This budget will restore front-line services, with record investment in health and education. Health will grow by four per cent and will include an investment in important nursing and workforce initiatives. It is also a record education and training budget for more teachers, teaching support and better classrooms. We want our children to be equipped and ready for the jobs of the future and we need to resource and support our principals, teachers and support staff to get today's job done in Queensland's schools.

The Working Queensland jobs plan focuses on skills, training and innovative industries that will promote jobs growth and investment with five key priorities: skills and training, enhancing business productivity, boosting government services, fostering emerging and innovative industries and growing our regions. The Queensland pensioner and Seniors Card holder concessions will be maintained and, might I add, without funding from the federal government. There will also be extra funding over four years to tackle domestic violence.

Through this budget the government will provide support for business by delivering a payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees, resulting in tax savings for businesses to reinvest. Small business will be strengthened and supported via initiatives such as the Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow fund, which will help stay-at-home parents grow their home based businesses. As I have stated already, this budget is all about jobs—jobs now and jobs for the future. This budget will invest \$180 million in the Advance Queensland program—a comprehensive suite of reforms that will create jobs now and jobs for the future.

Despite the previous government's attempt to reduce our TAFE system, this budget will restore and rebuild TAFE over the next four years to ensure that more Queenslanders are job ready. This budget includes a \$10.1 billion spend on infrastructure across Queensland this year, directly supporting an estimated 27,500 jobs. This budget will also restore a matter very close to my heart, the residential tenancy advice referral service. This budget will support and enhance my community of Lytton, with commitments to assist people with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, children, young people and families and will provide specialist support for homelessness.

Further, our local schools will share in the benefits of this budget with a full-time-equivalent guidance officer at Wynnum State High School and up to nine new full-time-equivalent teaching resources over the next three years across state primary schools, state high schools and special schools as part of this initiative. Indeed, all state schools in my electorate will benefit from Labor's commitment and from this budget. This budget will also deliver an upgrade of closed circuit cameras, or CCTV, in the Wynnum watch house, improving safety for prisoners as well as for our police officers.

Tenants, pensioners and seniors, teachers and jobseekers, businesses small and big, sporting clubs, employers, law enforcement officers, parents, children and students at all levels will all benefit from this great Labor budget. This historic budget begins the process of growing our economy, generating more jobs and restoring much needed front-line services to the people of Queensland. I am proud of this budget and I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government. I gladly commend these bills to the House.

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (8.20 pm): This 2015-16 Queensland state budget makes next to no mention of the clear election commitment of merging Queensland's generation and distribution electricity assets to scrap out annual savings of \$150 million. Many times during the campaign we all heard of the grand plan to deal with Labour's legacy of debt. The budget was silent on committing two-thirds of the dividends of our 'income-earning' assets towards debt in future years, which we also heard a lot about during the campaign. That plan was supposedly going to pay down \$12 billion over the next decade. Both dodgy deals were shot down by economists. They were part of a two-card trick to get through an election campaign. Now Queensland has finally been exposed to the Palaszczuk government's dodgy deals.

What Queenslanders have instead is a plan that puts at risk one of Queensland's greatest fiscal advantages over the rest of Australia, that is, our fully funded public service entitlements. The government will raid the funding pool set aside for long-service leave entitlements, suspending contributing towards the defined benefit fund and transferring debt onto the balance sheet of government owned corporations. The premise that we can move \$4.1 billion of public service entitlements into another platform of government is disingenuous at best. What Labor is trying to do is argue that GOCs pay off their own debt using their own revenues and we should shrug our shoulders as if this is not a problem.

The problem is that Queensland taxpayers are ultimately responsible for the debts of those businesses. That is exactly why we will not see any positive action from the ratings agencies as they measure the debts of the whole government sector against a state's revenue, even if we have been moving money across to different balance sheets. What has not been disclosed is that loading the energy networks with maximum debt now either reduces their capacity to fund future capital works with retained earnings—meaning more debt while their capacity to borrow more will be reduced—or requires an equity injection from the state, as we do for CS Energy and Stanwell. Every year, in this budget and many other budgets, tens of millions of dollars from taxpayers will be needed to sustain those assets, yet we hear from those opposite that they are important revenue-earning assets.

What successive Labor governments do not acknowledge or ever deal with is the debt and debt reduction, even if it is long service leave debt which must be paid for one way or another. What happens in an economic downturn? It is much like what occurred in 2009 when Labor was elected and revealed its plan to sell assets only after that date. Labor promised Queenslanders a reformist budget reminiscent of the Hawke and Keating era. Instead, what we have is a trick plan that seems to make the debt disappear, only to have it reappear in another place. It is smoke and mirrors. We all remember the Treasurer's promise in the lead-up to the budget to underpromise and overdeliver. What we have received is a budget that is underwhelming and underdone, because nothing will change with cost-of-living pressures and debt levels will continue to increase, which is what we have received from traditional Labor budgets for many years.

As has been well reported, the 2015-16 Queensland budget is scathing in its disregard for public finance accounting standards. The Treasurer has been widely criticised for rejecting the advice of the International Monetary Fund, the OECD, Australian state and federal budget honesty acts, numerous audits of federal and state finances, and the fiscal sustainability metrics of the ratings agencies, as reported today in the *Australian* newspaper. We all know that Labor has opened the door to these dodgy and deceitful raids on government owned corporations and we know that, not content with a lazy \$4.1 billion from the most recent raid, they will go looking for more idle cash. What is most disturbing in this post-GFC, post-mining boom decade of low interest rates and obviously stalled global economy,

which appears to be getting worse every day, as well as highly volatile stock market returns, is that Queensland Labor would recommend cutting the relatively small surplus in the public sector superannuation scheme to zero.

In keeping with a typical Labor budget, there is no acknowledgment that Queensland's finances are in no state to restart the spending trajectory of the Bligh-Fraser years. So far the 2010 decade has been one of the toughest decades in Australia's history. Per capita incomes have been falling and the domestic and global outlook remains uncertain. Where other Australian governments have heeded the worst of those warnings and reined in debt and spending, Queensland—like Greece—thinks it is a special case, believing that it will be saved by liquefied natural gas exports, which is a one-trick pony. There is very little doubt that Queensland's finances will be downgraded again. The only thing that saved them recently was a credible Liberal National Party treasurer who was able to tell a convincing story and deliver fiscal repair.

I have said consistently that you cannot, in all integrity, move people off the unemployment queue and into a classroom to be trained in programs that failed previously for jobs that do not exist because this Labor government is doing nothing to grow the economy. We also know that, instead of looking to the private sector, Labor is growing government with 19 new bureaucracies and hiring another 3,000 public servants at a cost of \$1 billion. Those types of poor Labor policies were predicted before the election; here we go again.

A further review of the budget papers exposes the fact that there is nothing good in Labor's proposal to phase out sandmining on North Stradbroke Island and provide a miserable \$20 million over five years to develop the North Stradbroke Island Economic Transition Strategy. This is completely insufficient. Extending the mining leases for Enterprise Mine from 2019 to 2035 delivers real economic gains to North Straddie and Queensland could benefit from extra mineral production of \$1.5 billion, value added to the Queensland economy of \$950 million, royalties to the state of around \$75.74 million and the retention of approximately 107 full-time-equivalent jobs from 2015 to 2035.

In the budget we see that Queensland's environment department will stop monitoring increases in land protected for koala habitat and high-quality conservation refuges after it failed to meet its targets. The budget papers detail an estimated 12.5 per cent annual increase in land to be rehabilitated as habitat for koalas this year, but it fell short, at only 5.2 per cent. The yearly percentage increase in land for nature refuges was to jump 10 per cent, but came in at 2.7 per cent. Both measures have been discontinued this year. The koala-habitat measure has been discontinued due to a ministerial decision from the previous government, but a new stocktake of the total protected land area will be introduced, which is just more red tape.

It comes as no surprise that the Great Barrier Reef will be burdened with new bureaucracy to add to the complexities of management and advice with a \$100 million boost to reef funding over the next five years. Treasurer Curtis Pitt declared that no government in history has been more committed to the reef and he outlined increased spending on water-quality monitoring, scientific initiatives and changes to primary production. What a pity that was all just to create another layer of bureaucracy. A departmental office of the Great Barrier Reef will be responsible for overseeing the efforts of 11 state and three federal agencies. There is no framework and scope has not yet been delivered—just talk. And they have responsibility for the reef! What the reef does not need is another expensive level of government.

Queenslanders should be concerned with this government's unattainable target of reducing nitrogen run-off by up to 80 per cent and sediment run-off to half its current level in the Wet Tropics and Burdekin catchments by 2025. Those targets will become regulated under this government, adding costs and burden for no gain while further demonising the farming sector. Our communities need to be concerned that Labor has slashed grassroots environmental programs. The LNP delivered \$12 million over three years through the Everyone's Environment grants program, which was highly successful and highly popular. Labor has ripped half a million dollars out of the Heritage Protection budget. Tonight, much has been made about pre-announced federal government road projects and previously announced local projects.

What is concerning is the lack of infrastructure, especially for the Bundaberg and Burnett region. We have no flood mitigation projects, no multiplex community centre, no hydrotherapy pool for the front-line health service and no funding for the urgent safety project at Kay McDuff Drive. We have heard a lot about jobs, but I cannot identify any new money for my region that will generate much needed jobs. We hear that this government will introduce many of their failed training programs, including announcing \$750 million for vocational training. The majority of that was already announced last year.

In my region we have seen the announcement that funding will not continue for the Great Teachers = Great Results program. The government is destroying the Bundaberg Safe Night Out Strategy by cutting \$24 million out of this program across the state. I acknowledge that those opposite have not ceased our commitment to provide more police and teachers. They are keeping our pensioner concessions. Pensioners will welcome that.

Our police are going to need the numbers and resources if Labor continues to go soft on crime, decreasing grant funding to the Crime and Corruption Commission to investigate criminal outlaw motorcycle gangs. There are seven fewer staff, thanks to this funding cut.

We see the attack on small business continuing, particularly the attack on those men and women who represent the commercial fishing industry. Not only are they being forced out of their traditional fishing grounds with compulsory closures, we are seeing a savage cut to the voluntary net fishing buyback program. Can we think of anyone but those in this government who would destroy someone's livelihood and remove the compensation?

The reality is that this budget delivers very little for Bundaberg and next to nothing for those hardworking men and women of the Burnett. The reality is that we have received a capital spend reduction of 33 per cent this year compared to 2014-15. I remind the people of my region that this budget is bad for jobs and bad for growth. Employment growth is down. Jobs are now drying up in the region due to a significant lack of confidence. Unemployment is up and continues to rise after we had stopped the upward pressure. It will be sad to continue to expose the deteriorating state of my local community.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Burnett, we will wait for the House to come to order.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Lockyer, I am waiting for the House to come to order and I do not need you to be a conductor.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Do not backchat or I will warn you under the standing orders and you can have an early night.

Mr BENNETT: In closing, Albert Einstein once defined stupidity as 'doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result'. He also said 'we cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them'. They are great thoughts for those opposite. I do not support the bill.

 **Mr PYNE** (Cairns—ALP) (8.31 pm): I rise to speak in the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2015. This budget includes record spending on health and education and a \$1.2 million surplus. When I heard that I thought, 'Oh, my goodness, I don't know how the Treasurer has done it, but I hope he keeps doing it.' If he does keep doing it, those on this side of the chamber will remain on this side of the chamber. We will have a well-educated community with great public health and a sound financial base underpinning the community. This budget has been described as a vanilla budget. If this is a vanilla budget, all I can say is, 'Pass the ice-cream. I'll have two scoops please with extra vanilla.'

It is interesting to me to hear comments about the budget which make implications as to the Treasurer's approach and certain personality traits. I would know the Treasurer better than anyone in this chamber because I have known him my whole life. If I could think of one word to describe the member for Mulgrave it would be sensible. That is what this budget is—it is sensible and prudent.

I know we all think we are political pundits, but I would not be surprised if we look back in a few years and the member for Mulgrave is known as the best Treasurer this place has seen for many years.

Mr Rickuss: Not if you have a superannuation fund.

Mr PYNE: That is very interesting. Some of the comments about workers' superannuation are concerning. They really amount to fearmongering. People are entitled to their superannuation payment when it accrues. People here will get their full entitlements on the same basis as others in every state of the Commonwealth.

I do not know a lot about the appropriations for 88 of the electorates, but I do know one thing. This budget delivers for the people of Cairns. Some \$10.12 million has been allocated to ensure children in need of protection have a safe place to stay. Some \$4.052 million has been allocated to support the needs of children in out-of-home care in Cairns, including funding for counselling and services for local service providers. Some \$6.275 million has been allocated to local organisations to support families to safely care for their children in Cairns.

All of this funding is important for child safety. Unfortunately, sometimes children do need to be removed from their home for their own safety. This budget provides for intervention and assistance to those families so that the child can be returned to a safe home environment where he or she can be educated and not exposed to domestic violence and many other negative social factors. This is a great thing for many of the socio-economically disadvantaged families in the Cairns electorate.

Some \$1.6 million has been allocated in 2015-16 to continue the foreshore development and extension to the boardwalk and foreshore promenade to the south. This is very popular and very important for our tourism industry and those people visiting Cairns.

Ms Jones: It will be great for Cairns.

Mr PYNE: It certainly will be great for Cairns, as the tourism minister well knows.

There is a total of \$25 million for the new Cairns Special School. I do not like to use the term 'special school' because I am very much about inclusion. This special education facility will provide for some students with profound disabilities and very challenging behaviours who can only ever be included in mainstream education in a very limited fashion. It will provide options for parents in Cairns who currently do not have those options. It will offer a resource centre or hub for some of our most talented special educators. It is a very important facility. Cairns has not had one to date. We do not like to see people missing out. The upside is that when this facility is constructed we will have one of the best special schools in Queensland.

Some \$202,000 has been allocated for the Cairns State High School canteen extension. Cairns State High School is performing very well academically and in the arts and is a victim of its own success. Many students from outside the catchment are travelling to that school. That \$202,000 will do a lot to improve and extend the school canteen. Woree State High School will be allocated a full-time-equivalent guidance officer, which is fulfilling another election promise.

Some \$955,000 has been allocated for refurbishing the registry at the Cairns courthouse. I have never felt more popular at the Cairns courthouse at William McCormack Place as I did just prior to the last election thanks to the former premier. Not only have we saved the jobs of the remaining staff working in those buildings, we are now making sure the staff at the courthouse have a decent and safe environment in which to work.

Some \$703,000 has been allocated for the Tingara Street subdivision, at a total cost of \$29.1 million. The Tingara Street subdivision is very important. It is where the recreational boat ramp is. I will certainly be chasing up additional funding from the Deputy Premier to make sure that boat ramp becomes a state-of-the-art boat ramp for recreational fishers.

Some \$20 million has been allocated for the Cairns electorate to assist people with disabilities and their families to access the support services they need to move through the different stages of their lives. As the member for Cairns, many parents have come to see me with regard to funding assistance for their children with intellectual and severe disabilities. There is a large unmet need. I hope this goes some way to addressing that between now and the rollout of the NDIS.

There is \$25,000 in the budget for the Cairns Taipans—the best team in the NBL. How Brisbane cannot manage to field a team has me beat. Even Townsville can manage to field a team. Of course, the Taipans will not just be making the grand final this year, they will win. The important thing about the Cairns Taipans is that they give back so much to the community. We rarely have a community event where we do not see some of the Taipans players there to support the community and the most disadvantaged people in the community. This money will go towards the Tiny Taipans program.

As a result of Labor's election promise to commit an additional 875 teachers as part of the 2,500 total new teachers in this term of government, the Cairns electorate is expected to receive up to 10 new full-time-equivalent teachers. Also, there is an allocation in the budget—I think it is \$900,000 out of a total allocation of \$1.5 million—to master plan and develop a new home for Cairns netball. That home in Martyn Street will involve a reallocation of fields, new pathways, swings and new facilities, and the car park will be realigned as well. So it is a very big project. That will provide the home of netball in Far North Queensland, and of course all of the netball players are very excited about that.

Importantly, there is an allocation for a new roof on the Cairns Convention Centre. The Cairns Convention Centre is one of our most iconic buildings. It will cost just over \$7 million to put a new roof on that facility. That will provide an uplift to that whole area next to the promenade extension.

Advance Queensland is a very important part of this budget. It is a highlight, especially for an economy on the move such as Cairns. Cairns is a city that will really fulfil its potential by making the most of its natural environment and its geographic location as a Pacific rim city—dare I say the

pre-eminent Pacific rim city as Cairns look outwards to the Asia-Pacific to that fast growing tropical part of our planet where about half the world's young people live and where our fastest growing economies are located. The exciting thing for Cairns is that these countries that are growing so quickly with such fast economic growth will be looking to Cairns for everything from how to build roads to how to address tropical diseases. It is Cairns city that is leading the way in so many of these areas.

It does become frustrating when people refer to expenditure on education and health as merely service provision. They will also be important export industries for cities like Cairns, exporting those services to our part of the planet, especially to our Melanesian and Polynesian neighbours. Isn't it amazing that over the last two years in Cairns we have genetically modified the aedes aegypti mosquito to completely eliminate dengue fever? How remarkable is that? We will keep leading the way in these technologies. That is why I am so excited about Advance Queensland for a service city like Cairns. Remember it is not just about tourism; it is about all of these other services as our economy grows.

Also very exciting for the Cairns economy is the establishment of CQ University right in the heart of our CBD. That leads me to our Rescuing TAFE funding. Isn't TAFE just a wonderful community asset? Again, by hacking and hacking away at it you really undermine the potential of the organisation. I will give an example. Our local community radio is looking for somewhere to locate. When they went to see TAFE they were referred to the board in Brisbane, and what they were charging per square metre just made that unaffordable. Now our local community radio can go and talk to our local people at TAFE and achieve a good win-win community outcome.

While we are on that, members may be interested to know that the Papua New Guinea government actually flies many of their best trade students down to our Tropical North Queensland Institute of TAFE every year and pays TAFE several million dollars to have those PNG students studying in Cairns. That is what I am talking about when I am talking about exporting our educational services from Cairns outward to that tropical part of the planet, especially to our Polynesian and Melanesian neighbours. I again congratulate the Treasurer on this budget and commend it to the House.

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (8.43 pm): I rise to speak this evening on the Appropriation Bill 2015 before the House. I must say at the outset that I am just so disappointed with this budget. I think that is the best word I can find to describe the budget that has been presented here this week. I am disappointed because it is a return to the past. It is back to future. We are going to dust off the Labor credit card from the previous Labor government's term. We are going to rack up the expenses. We are going to exploit our kids' future and leave nothing left in the bickie tin. We are going to lead Queensland down the same path that we saw under the previous 10 years of Labor mismanagement here in Queensland.

This morning we heard Cameron Dick, the Minister for Health and the member for Woodridge, describe the previous LNP government's wait-time guarantee as a gimmick. Yet in his own budget paper on page 119 we read that for the previous year in categories 1, 2 and 3 we achieved 99 per cent of all elective surgery time frames—99 per cent. Let's see how that is looking after another year of classic Labor mismanagement of the health system.

I note that the Premier, as one of her first tasks, emailed every public servant across Queensland to reassure them that their jobs were safe. Well they were always safe, but what was the effect of this email? It sent the wrong message to everyone. It basically said, 'Happy days. Labor is back. Kick up your heels. Don't worry about accountability. Don't worry about meeting reasonable or statutory time frames. Just do as you please. The old gang is back. Dust off your dancing shoes and let the good times roll.'

Mr Power interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking that interjection. In my first year as the member for Southport, an elderly lady and her husband from Keebra Park came to see me. She had had a stroke. She was the principal carer for her frail husband. She was struggling to cope while waiting for a simple cataract procedure because her cataracts had left her almost blind. For three years she had been trying to get those cataracts dealt with. She had a pile of paperwork about an inch thick—letters from the hospital advising her where she stood on the waiting list; another letter from the audit department at the hospital wanting to check that she knew that she was on the waiting list; another letter from the hospital saying, 'You will get your appointment on such-and-such a date'; then another letter saying, 'Unfortunately, we are going to have push that date'; but then another follow-up letter from the audit department again to make sure that she knew that she was still on the waiting list for a \$500 procedure. She sat there almost in tears at my Saturday morning listening post because she had been struggling with the effects of a

stroke, looking after her frail husband and being barely able to find her way around the house because she is just about blind from these cataracts that had been left for so long. One phone call is all it took and she received the procedure within the month.

I am worried—and so should the people of Southport, the Gold Coast and Queensland be—about Labor's approach to health services. How dare the minister this morning suggest that our government's genuine desire to help people receive urgent and non-urgent surgery on time is nothing more than a gimmick. How dare he be so flippant about our track record on health. Five hundred and forty extra staff—that is, nurses, medical officers, support staff—were employed in the Gold Coast health region under our term of government in the previous three years. What do we see in the budget presented in this House this week for Health? An extra \$119 million. Do you know how much the previous government allocated to extra health services on the Gold Coast? An extra \$400 million a year—a serious attempt, a serious commitment, to improving health services on the Gold Coast.

What did we see when we came into government three years ago in terms of the dental waiting lists on the Gold Coast? There were 4,416 people on the waiting list. What is that figure today? Zero, absolutely zero! That is the standard that we have set. I am concerned that the government on the other side of the House, through its commitment to this very disappointing budget, is not going to maintain the standards and the benchmarks that we have set over the past three years.

I want to take a minute though to draw to the attention of the House this wonderful brochure that was presented by the Treasurer, which allegedly provides some highlights of the budget and what it is going to deliver for the Gold Coast. I take you to the front page where it talks about \$1.19 billion for infrastructure. I am not sure what those commitments are because I have not been able to work it out from this fairly complex grid.

Mr Boothman: You need to get some crayons.

Mr MOLHOEK: I take that interjection from the minister for Albert.

Mr Boothman: Minister? Thank you.

Mr MOLHOEK: Sorry, I am a little confused. I find it amazing that the brochure also claims there is \$514 million for transport yet not one cent for the expansion of light rail. There is not one new initiative. All they have done in here is reannounced a whole lot of initiatives that were already underway under our government. They have reannounced every one of our commitments to games venues and the village. They have even tried to claim credit for the aquatic centre by saying they are going to build an aquatic centre. Well, the aquatic centre was finished about 18 months ago and the Pan Pacs have already been held there. It is open. It is just across the road from where I live and the lights are on every night. I am really not sure that it is appropriate to be reannouncing the \$48 million commitment for a new aquatic centre that we delivered, along with the Gold Coast City Council.

I am so excited about the roads program presented in this brochure—it is basically the \$100 million of mandatory road upgrades that are required to meet the games bid. That is it. There is no money for improvements to Edmund Rice Drive and no further money for improvements to build on the \$110 million that we committed to getting Olsen Avenue and Smith Street upgraded. There is no money for the realignment of Nerang Street from Kumbari Avenue to Queen Street and no commitment to the realignment of Ferry Road or Smith Street into Bundall Road. So I have to say that I am a little bit disappointed by the smoke and mirrors of this wonderful brochure.

The brochure has lies, lies and damn statistics, but one could be excused for thinking there was some really good information on the back of the brochure with more announcements from the government. Well, these are the announcements: the total population was 878,000; agricultural production was \$193 million, although I am not too sure there is a lot of agricultural production on the Gold Coast; and a number of residential buildings were approved. The government is trying to take the credit for those approvals, but I note that all of those approvals were for the year ended 31 March so I think nine months of the credit goes to us for that achievement. Then there is the wonderful statistic that says there are 80,000 businesses on the Gold Coast. I thought we were the party that was all about supporting business. If Gold Coast businesses understood what the other side of the House were proposing in terms of winding back WorkCover and relaxing the criminal bkie gang laws, then the government would not be bragging about business statistics in this brochure.

There is no mention in this brochure about the new half billion dollar private hospital at Parklands, but I note that on the back of the brochure the government are taking credit for a private commercial development down at Broadbeach, they are taking credit for the redevelopment of Pacific Fair, which has been underway for about 12 or 18 months now, and they are also trying to take credit for the

expansion of Jupiters Hotel and Casino at Broadbeach, which has been on the drawing board for about five or six years. There is no mention of the great improvements to Southport TAFE and the fact that it has gone from 5,000 to nearly 10,000 student enrolments this year. There is no mention of the 38,000 jobs in my electorate. There is no mention of the prolific growth of Griffith University and the almost \$300 million of new projects that are underway there. There is no mention of the work of the RDA and the epic growth in international students on the Gold Coast, which is forecast to grow from some 8,000 to 30,000 over the next three to five years. And, strangely, there is no mention about the extra medical staff and nurses who were actually employed in the Gold Coast health region during our time.

I have to say I am a little disappointed with this brochure. We committed to and delivered the first stage of the Gold Coast Light Rail. In spite of the current government proclaiming that it is all about jobs, I notice there is still no announcement about extra funding for the light rail. In fact, on Tuesday the Treasurer announced his bold plan for the next stage of the Gold Coast Light Rail extension, and it was the 'go for it plan'—no financial commitment, no budget, no idea, just that the current operators, GoldLinQ, can go for it. I would like to see what is in the budget for availability payments. I would like to see what capital commitments have been made in the budget in future years, because at this stage I do not think there are any. I would really like to know how the Treasurer plans to assess an application or expression of interest from GoldLinQ while meeting the state's stringent probity and competitive tender requirements. There is a lot of work to be done on this.

I would also like to see how the Treasurer plans to fund the existing \$300 million shortfall in revenues as a result of the gap between Labor's forecast patronage of 40,000 back in 2008 and today's reality of 20,000 passengers. It is a hollow promise and the Treasurer knows it and the Deputy Premier knows it. I am disappointed that there has not been a serious commitment to what will be one of the most important pieces of social infrastructure in South-East Queensland. In fact the recent report released by Infrastructure Australia highlighted it as one of the top 10 most important public transport projects in our nation. It has been said a number of times that there has been no commitment from the federal government, but, surprise, surprise, last year I actually did write to Warren Truss, the Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, and I got back from him a very clear commitment that the federal government was happy to work with us if we were prepared to get on with some asset recycling. I want to turn for a moment to the Housing budget.

Government members interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not taking those interjections. I want to highlight the outstanding achievements and the benefits in the budget in respect of housing. What we have in this budget from Minister Enoch is her first achievement, and it is probably a great achievement because I think it is the only department budget I have seen from the government that actually shows a reduction. We are going to reduce capital grants to community housing providers across the state by \$33 million. Last year under an LNP government we supported community housing providers across the state to the tune of about \$120 million. What do we see in the budget? A reduction of \$33 million for community housing projects across the state. If members of the House cared to look, they would see it all there in black and white. It is quite easy to find. Simply turn to page 72 and look at the numbers there—\$33.3 million less than the commitment of the LNP last year. We were committed to regional Queensland. We were passionate about improving housing across the state.

I want to take a moment to talk about some of the highlights of the previous minister, the present shadow minister for education, Mr Mander, who is sitting here in front of me this evening. Over the last few years, the waiting list for long-term social housing was reduced from 30,723 to 17,985. Our government was previously committed to delivering better housing outcomes. We released the Housing 2020 plan—a real plan to address some of the housing shortfalls across the state. The goals were as follows—to build 12,000 additional social and affordable housing dwellings across the state; to provide assistance to some 250,000 low-income households which would enable them to enter the private rental market instead of social housing; and to facilitate five major urban renewal projects, including revitalising areas which have a high concentration of social housing. It is disappointing to note that the government has delivered absolutely nothing in terms of the renewal programs that were proposed by our government. They have killed off all the other proposed programs. They have killed off the proposed stock transfer program. They have siphoned off the ability of enthusiastic volunteer community housing organisations across the state. They have robbed them of the capacity in the balance sheet and the opportunity to get out there and deliver real housing solutions for Queenslanders. I have to say it is nothing short of disappointing.

Here are some of the other goals that we have spelt out in our Housing 2020 plan, and I am really looking forward to seeing the plan from the government. The plan we had, which we are still committed to, contained 500 additional social and affordable dwellings in Logan, an extra 500 for the Gold Coast, 750 on the Sunshine Coast, 50 in Redcliffe, 500 additional social and affordable housing dwellings in Townsville, 400 in Gladstone, implementation of the first stage over a three-year time frame of the Mount Isa Regional Housing Plan—and so it goes on and on.

The achievements of our government are on the record. Queenslanders have seen those achievements. What are we doing about homelessness? The previous minister under the LNP government announced the Homelessness-to-Housing Strategy 2020. Just last week I participated in a community sleep-out with St Vincent de Paul on the Gold Coast with about 140 other business and community leaders. What an eye-opener that was to see, to understand and to be able to empathise. Two or three homeless people came and shared their stories with us. I am so grateful for the work that that organisation does. I am really looking forward to seeing what the government's plan is to address this issue, because all we have heard so far is a lot of talk and a lot of rhetoric.

I will not be supporting this bill before the House. I have made my feelings quite clearly known. It is disappointing. I am concerned about the future in terms of the funding proposals. If the government were a commercial business, it would not be allowed to bypass its superannuation or long service obligations. It seems that in the world of 'Labornomics' there are two sets of rules: there is one set for them and the unions and another set where they can just flaunt what is conventional wisdom. Quite frankly, I feel very sad and concerned for the future of not just Queensland but also my kids and future generations to come.

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (9.01 pm): It is a pleasure to stand here to support these appropriation bills as the representative in this House for Deception Bay, North Lakes, Rothwell, Mango Hill, Griffin, Burpengary East and parts of Kippa-Ring. It is an honour to be a part of a government that is delivering on its promises to build better communities. All of our election commitments are included in this budget and have been paid for by smarter savings. It is an honour to be part of a government that will grow and diversify our economy, restore front-line services and generate jobs—jobs now and jobs for the future.

I can point to some particular initiatives that will build better communities, build jobs and build the local economy in the communities of Murrumba. Firstly, there is \$6 million in 2015-16 in joint funding to commence the construction of the Bruce Highway-Boundary Road interchange at a total cost of \$105 million—the state government is contributing \$21 million—all without selling assets. This will make such a difference to the lifestyle and community health of the residents of North Lakes and Deception Bay. It means less time queuing to get onto the highway and less time on the highway away from their families.

This project funding is part of more than \$18.8 billion that will be invested in Queensland's overall transport infrastructure over the next four years. That also includes \$175.9 million in this budget in joint funding to widen the Gateway Motorway to six lanes all the way between Nudgee and Bracken Ridge with a total cost \$1.2 billion. Although this traverses mainly the electorates of my fellow members, the members for Nudgee and Sandgate, it is of vital interest to my community. Approximately 50 per cent of the workers in my electorate travel up and down the highway each day to work.

The Gateway Motorway upgrade is part of the \$10.1 billion infrastructure funding program in this state budget, with almost \$4 billion committed to Queensland's road and transport network. This \$10.1 billion infrastructure funding program will support 27,000 jobs across the state this year and over the next four years. Of these jobs, 10,500 will be supported by roads and transport related projects such as the Boundary Road overpass. I would like to add that 10 per cent of the workers on the Boundary Road and Gateway Motorway projects will be apprentices and trainees, as they will be on all government projects. That is another initiative that we have promised and we will deliver. That is a great opportunity for the young workers in Deception Bay, North Lakes, Rothwell, Mango Hill, Griffin, Burpengary East and Kippa-Ring.

Secondly, we are delivering great improvements to schools for the families in the Murrumba electorate. Bounty Boulevard State School is getting \$3.68 million in this budget to keep building new classrooms. Mango Hill State School is receiving \$3.9 million to build their new classrooms. That is \$7.6 million invested by this government in local classrooms, and it is badly needed. Bounty Boulevard has 1,155 pupils this year from prep to year 6 and it has only been open since 2011. Mango Hill has 656 pupils and they started with just 212 students when it opened in 2012. Surely this must be the fastest growing school region in Queensland. The locals can trust Labor to keep delivering the infrastructure they need in their schools.

This investment is part of a record \$12.4 billion Education and Training budget in the first Palaszczuk Labor government budget. It includes a \$456 million Capital Works Program, an increase of \$64 million over the last LNP budget. Local schools will also be boosted by a \$500 million Schools and Hospitals Fund. This program will deliver \$230 million to boost maintenance of Queensland schools over three years from 2016-17, as well as \$70 million in this budget for schools maintenance and refurbishment for Queensland schools. This will tackle the backlog of maintenance left from recent years. It is a jobs-generating initiative for businesses in places like Deception Bay, North Lakes, Mango Hill, Griffin, Rothwell, Burpengary East and Kippa-Ring because the refurbishment is going to be done by companies from these and other areas. Not only that, local schools in Murrumba will get 12 new full-time-equivalent teacher resources over the next three years in an initiative that will allow teachers to teach. This initiative will provide curriculum coordination time, more teacher release time and more support for principals and teaching principals for our local schools. That is part of our election promise to deliver an extra 875 teachers this year as part of 2,500 teachers during this term.

Thirdly, I am glad to say that this budget delivers for local sports clubs. We have funded a multisport facility for North Lakes including two senior fields and one junior field; construction of a clubhouse including four change rooms, public toilets, kitchen, club room, office, official's room and a three-bay storage area; car park; pathways; and field lighting up to 200 lux. An amount of \$460,000 has been put aside in this budget, with \$263,000 allocated next year for this project. It is part of a \$176 million spending program in 2015-16 to stimulate greater grassroots participation in sports and recreation, and that includes the Get in the Game scheme.

Get in the Game, the latest name change in a long-term scheme, allocates funding of more than \$80 million over three years to assist sport and recreation at the grassroots level, a \$10 million increase over the previous LNP budget. Get in the Game has been a vital lifeline for local clubs both in Murrumba and across Queensland. We are glad to support these clubs because not only do they promote the benefits of physical activity and a healthy wellbeing but they also bring everyone together and they help create a friendly local community.

There is something else that will be welcomed by the residents in the Murrumba electorate, and that is the Home Based Business grants program. As part of the Queensland Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow initiative, the government will fund \$1 million in the Home Based Business grants program over three years. It will support stay-at-home parents who want to establish and develop home based businesses. We have many start-up businesses being born in Murrumba, especially in North Lakes: web based entrepreneurs and young mums and dads who have great ideas and great drive to create these new start-up businesses. I am really looking forward to going out to local businesses and businesspeople and introducing this program, along with Advance Queensland initiatives such as the \$40 million Business Development Fund to assist innovative and emerging industries and the \$24 million Startup Queensland program to increase start-up business formation.

What I will really enjoy from this budget is seeing the completion of the Deception Bay bus interchange. Let me talk to honourable members about the Deception Bay bus interchange. This was something that was trumpeted in the last two LNP budgets but we are going to deliver it. It was their signature project in the area. They loved it so much, they announced it twice. But what was there when I became the member? Two pop-up canvas-topped shelters on the side of the road. 'Here is our big project for you, Deception Bay: two pergolas. Please do not lean on them.' After two budgets these temporary measures were as far as they got with this project, and in less than six months we have finalised the design and we have started construction.

Over the last few months we have often heard the LNP complain that we have simply handed in their homework. Well, you have abandoned your homework; you have dropped it on the ground. We had to pick it up, complete it and hand it in because you could not do it.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr WHITING: I will take that interjection. I will refer you to the Queensland Auditor-General's report which was lodged on 26 March. They have marked your homework on that and they gave it a C. Gee, you cleared some backlog there! But you need a proper program of ongoing maintenance, and that is what we have done. We have incorporated that report and put it into our budget initiatives. I cannot wait until they mark our homework; it will be better than your C.

It is an honour to be part of a government that is delivering on its promises to build better communities in Murrumba and delivering on our election commitments to the people of Murrumba. It is an honour to be part of a government that will grow and diversify our economy, restore front-line services and generate jobs in Deception Bay, North Lakes, Rothwell, Mango Hill, Griffin, Burpengary East and Kippa Ring. Jobs now and jobs for the future!

 **Mr BLEIJIE** (Kawana—LNP) (9.11 pm): Let us start with the member for Cairns, who said this evening that Treasurer Curtis Pitt will go down as one of the greatest Treasurers in Queensland's history. I was waiting for the encouragement; I was waiting for the nods; I was waiting for the agreement from the Labor members, the 'hear, hears!'—and there was a deafening silence. It says a lot about someone who has to stick up for himself when his 30 other colleagues do not stick up for him. I could feel the cringe when the member for Cairns said that Treasury Curtis Pitt will go down as the best Treasurer in Queensland's history. I was watching the education minister over there when the member for Cairns said that. The minister looked at the member for Cairns and did not know whether to smile, to laugh or to cry, so she went straight back to her phone or signing documents. I think that the member for Cairns and other members on that side will regret the day that he made those remarks.

The reality is that this is a bad budget. We know that this is an accidental government with an accidental Treasurer. We know that the health minister could probably fulfil the role of Treasurer, but he is just not there yet. Queenslanders will see in good time that it is a bad budget. It is a budget with a big maroon bow around it.

Ms Grace interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Member for Brisbane Central, I am not sure if you have spoken yet but I have you on my list.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Order, member for Kawana and member for Brisbane Central, everyone has had a bit of fun. I will also remind members that it is disorderly to interject, but it is highly disorderly to be interjecting from someone else's seat. Members can return to their seats or otherwise they can be quiet.

Mr BLEIJIE: Mr Deputy Speaker, on that fine advice from you can I encourage all honourable members to please return to their seats because we are going to need the interjections as we progress in the next 18 minutes. I was speaking about the member for Brisbane Central.

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Come a bit closer, Ray! I am not sure whether the member for Brisbane Central has spoken yet, but I will get to her electorate in a minute because I have a few things to say about the member for Brisbane Central, her electorate and the policies which will impact on her electorate. I also have some things to say about the member for Redcliffe, the Attorney-General, of course the Treasurer, and the police minister.

As I said, this is a budget wrapped up in a big maroon bow as jobs for the future. We are talking about apprentices, traineeships and young people trying to get jobs, and when they open this book they will see it is all fiction. What they are expecting when they open this book of jobs is how the jobs are going to grow in the future and where the jobs are going to be in the future, but what they will find is a plan to have unemployment increase in the future with projected unemployment to rise in Queensland. How that can be a projection of good jobs for young people in Queensland, I do not know. It is not a budget about jobs: it is a budget about paying back union debts for the election; it is about taking entitlements off public servants; it is about raiding super funds; it is about fiddling with—

Mr Stevens interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: Yes, I will take the interjection from the member for Mermaid Beach. I will deal with my electorate of Kawana and the Sunshine Coast, then we will get to the nitty-gritty of the budget and then the shadow police portfolio.

Talking about local infrastructure, we had a plan going into the election. Hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars were to be spent on infrastructure on the Sunshine Coast, but of course the Labor Party has now snubbed the Sunshine Coast. I note that the member for Noosa is here today, and he would particularly note that in 2016 his constituents will need the hospital and they will need access to the hospital.

The Labor Party delayed the Sunshine Coast University Hospital by three years. They bought the block of land, they grew some grass on it, then said they were going to build it and then delayed it by three years. When we got into government we got the contract signed on the dotted line. We did the deal. We got the best outcomes for the people of the Sunshine Coast. Not only that, we brought forward construction of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital by six months. That was the first priority of the

Campbell Newman LNP government. We got on with the job. We made sure that the kangaroos were appropriately moved on to another paddock and the hospital was built. As the member for Kawana, I am immensely proud when I drive past the hospital site. It is skipping along, it is very much being built and due to be opened in late 2016.

The problem is that the LNP had a plan for road infrastructure around the hospital that was going to be funded by the plan that we took to the election; however, because the Labor Party are an accidental government that was elected without plans, policies or any idea how to fund these important projects, the first thing they did was cancel the road infrastructure around the hospital. The Mooloolah River Crossing was going to provide better access to the north for people going up the motorway in the member for Noosa's electorate, for people getting to the hospital, and ambulance and emergency services going to and from the hospital. It was going to provide traffic decongestion off Nicklin Way going to Maroochydore up the motorway for the people in the honourable member for Maroochydore's electorate. But the Labor Party ripped it up, so there is no more road infrastructure around the hospital. We now have the situation, as we did with the Labor Party during the Beattie-Bligh government days, that the hospital is going to open, 10,000 Sunshine Coast residents will no longer have to travel to Brisbane for health care, and the roads will be the same roads that existed there prior to the hospital being built.

How can the Treasurer think it is good economics to have a road that is only one lane in some areas out the front of the hospital? Imagine the traffic congestion there will be around that hospital. The Treasurer has no idea! It will get to a situation where at the end of next year, when the hospital opens, they will realise there is a problem. They will all be there with the scissors, cutting the ribbons, saying, 'This is a great Labor project.' I have photos of the hospital site when it was a Labor project and there were plenty of kangaroos on the site. The LNP got on with the job. I tell you what: the photos I have from when the LNP was in government and the photos I have from when the Labor Party was in government show quite a contrast.

We see no future planning on the Sunshine Coast. There is no rail duplication, which the LNP took to the election. Those opposite do not care about rail. I know that a few rail upgrades are taking place at Nambour, but for the majority of Sunshine Coast residents there is no duplication and no investment in rail or road infrastructure. The Minister for Main Roads talks about the Bruce Highway upgrades. That is now in uncertain waters. I mention the most dangerous situation, getting off Sippy Downs.

This is not a budget about jobs. This is not a budget about infrastructure. It contains no new infrastructure items. This is not a budget about the cost of living because it increases the cost of living, with car registration increasing by 3½ per cent. Of course, that is higher than the rate of inflation. I reiterate the LNP's commitment to ensure car registration increased only by CPI.

A few weeks ago the health minister actually visited the Sunshine Coast. He found the hospital site and came there. The health minister got a couple of good photos in the local paper, in an article saying that the Sunshine Coast University Hospital was a good Labor project. He then announced that there was a \$1 billion black hole in funding for the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. Apparently the LNP did not fund it and there was \$1 billion black hole. I have read the budget. I have looked through the budget and I cannot find where those opposite have filled this mystery \$1 billion black hole. They have not filled it. That shows there was no black hole. It was misrepresentation by the health minister. He came to the Sunshine Coast and put fear into Sunshine Coast residents that somehow a government would open the hospital in 2016 and there would be no doctors, no radiation services, no maternity services, no water—

Mr Rickuss: No roads.

Mr BLEIJIE: Well, there will not be any roads now because of the Labor Party, but there will certainly be planning for patients.

I will now look at some portfolio related matters. This week I have spoken a lot about the minister who is in witness protection at the moment—that is, the police minister. I was being interviewed on 4BC this afternoon and I said, 'This is a very important matter about'—

Mr Pitt: So they got rid of all of their local programming?

Mr BLEIJIE: The Treasurer should know that the program was discussing the government's policy about body cameras for police officers. They were getting a pretty good run. It was your budget, your announcement. Then the announcer, Ben Davis, was asking me technical questions about the budget. I said, 'It is obviously the Labor Party's budget, but no doubt you have the police minister coming

on to explain this.' He said, 'Well, we have contacted the police minister's office and we have had no reply.' I said, 'Well, of course, it takes 24 hours to get them out of witness protection, so she is no-go on the radio this afternoon.'

Mr Mander: You've got only nine minutes!

Mr BLEIJIE: Goodness gracious! Let's get on to the Attorney-General. The Attorney-General and the police minister are having a battle. I have never seen this before. The member for Lockyer has been here for a long time so I will ask him. Has he ever seen a minister, particularly in a leadership position, hold a press conference to say, 'We are going to start a witch-hunt to find the little birdie that leaked on the government'? Usually you do those things behind closed doors. I have never seen a minister actually call a press conference and tell the media, 'We have a leak in the government. We are going to track it down. We are going to start a witch-hunt.' That is what the Treasurer did today.

Mr PITT: Mr Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. Over the past couple of years I have certainly become adept at listening to the member for Kawana. On this occasion I cannot say anything except that I find his comments offensive and I ask him to withdraw. It is actually factually incorrect.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Ryan): Order! Member for Nanango.

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Treasurer, I am ruling on your point of order. Member for Kawana, the Treasurer finds the statement offensive and I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BLEIJIE: I withdraw. Back on to the Attorney-General. Talking about leaks in the government, we on this side know that there is contention between the police minister and the Attorney-General in relation to the criminal gang laws and funding. Everywhere the police minister goes she is told by police officers, 'Don't touch the criminal gang laws. Keep them in place. Why are you setting up this task force?' But the Attorney-General keeps saying, 'No, we don't like mandatory sentencing. We are going to repeal or replace the laws. We are setting up a task force'—all this sort of stuff. We know that local members are being told by their communities, 'Keep the laws in. We don't want criminal motorcycle gang members back.' We know that there is tension on the other side.

One of the policies that is working very well from a policing perspective is the Safe Night Out Strategy. Overnight in this budget week the government just canned it. It has taken all the money away from the Safe Night Out Strategy. Currently there are community members on boards tackling alcohol fuelled violence who have no idea if those boards will continue to exist. I do not think they will, because all the money allocated to these boards is gone.

The Attorney-General was a member of the federal parliament when this happened, so I inform her that the drink-safe precincts were actually a Labor Party initiative. Then we formed the safe-night precincts. So they were started by the Labor Party, but overnight the Attorney-General and the police minister have just canned all the money for them. We know why. There was a *Gold Coast Bulletin* article.

Mrs D'Ath interjected.

Mr BLEIJIE: I have more to say about you, Attorney. Do members remember that a few weeks ago the *Gold Coast Bulletin* ran a front-page story titled 'D'Ath Vader'? It states—

Exclusive: Attorney-General using the force to keep the peace ... and keep you sober.

This related to a policy announced by the Attorney-General that police officers would go into pubs and clubs and breathalyse patrons.

Mrs D'Ath: Never said it.

Mr BLEIJIE: Ah! I was waiting for that interjection! The Attorney denies it, despite the fact that this was an exclusive given by the Attorney to the *Gold Coast Bulletin* with quotes from the Attorney in the story. But then what happened? The Attorney's office gave the exclusive. The Attorney was quoted in the story about this idea that it would help police prosecute these people by doing the breath test. A few hours later a press release was issued by the Attorney's office saying, 'It's not happening and it was never under consideration'—despite the fact that the Attorney was quoted and gave an exclusive to the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. Did the Attorney get a call from level 15, like the police minister did recently? I table a copy the 'D'Ath Vader' article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*. May the force be with you, Attorney!

Tabled paper: Article from the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, dated 19 June 2015, titled 'D'Ath Vader: Breath tests at the bar' [\[812\]](#).

What a stupid idea: police breathalysing patrons while they are at pubs with their families. Talk about guilty until proven innocent! The Attorney-General is out of her depth. There is uncertainty in terms of the safe-night precincts. Overnight they got rid of the money. The Attorney-General does not know where this policy is going.

I turn my attention to the member for Brisbane Central and her position on safe-night precincts. Where does she stand? One of the biggest entertainment precincts in the state is located in her electorate, but she is about to close them all down! Hundreds of jobs in her electorate will be gone. Hundreds of jobs will also be gone in the Cairns electorate.

I turn my attention to the member for Bundaberg. When I was in Bundaberg with the former member for Bundaberg, Jack Dempsey, I met with the people involved with the safe-night precinct. They were so excited by the then member for Bundaberg. So ashamed is the current member for Bundaberg that she cannot even look up, ignoring that I am saying her name.

If members think it cannot get any better, how is this: the member for Bundaberg has this strange economic sense. I am not sure what degree she has in economics, but she came out and said that a 3.5 per cent rise in registration costs was not a technical rise. If you have X dollars and you add 3½ per cent, that usually ends up in a plus. I went to a public school, but when I went to school a figure times 3.5 per cent equalled an increase. What can we expect from the member for Bundaberg, because this is the member for Bundaberg who during the election campaign said, 'We have a plan. It's not a very strong plan, but we have a plan'? Then when the member for Bundaberg was asked how they were going to pay for all of these things, she said, 'We'll just borrow more money.' So X plus 3.5 per cent ain't an increase and money falls out of trees, apparently! If you believe in leprechauns, there is a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow!

I know a little bit about Bundaberg because my grandparents live in Bundaberg—they were helicoptered off the roof in the Australia Day floods—and they give me the feeling on the ground. I can assure the member for Bundaberg that the support that she received at the ballot box on 31 January ain't there anymore. I can assure her of that. What did the Bundaberg community do? Bring back Jack! Bring back Jack! Bring back Jack! They must be wondering, 'What have we done?'

But it is not just the member for Bundaberg. Let us take the member for Rockhampton. I need an extension of time. I have only mentioned 10 of them; I have another 40 to go! The member for Rockhampton sits there not knowing what he is doing. New Minister Fentiman sits beside him. The ministers sitting over there—Minister Fentiman, Minister Enoch, Minister Miles and Minister O'Rourke—must be thinking, 'Thank God for Jo-Ann Miller!', because Jo-Ann Miller has taken all issues away from the incompetence that we have seen from those over there. Given that I only have 16 seconds left, let me turn to the member for Ipswich—a member who stood in here last night and voted against her own community because she now supports the closure of the Ipswich police communications centre. This is a bad budget. It is a bad budget for jobs and the Labor Party ought to be ashamed of itself!

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (9.32 pm): It gives me great pleasure to rise tonight to support the Palaszczuk government's budget. This is a government that committed during the election campaign to be a government of Queensland and ensure that regional areas were looked after and not forgotten, and that is exactly what this government is doing—looking after regional Queensland. The Townsville region will be a significant winner under the Palaszczuk government's first budget as the city positions itself as a hub of Northern Australia.

The budget includes \$804.6 million for the Townsville Hospital and Health Service, \$43.3 million over the next four years for maintenance in Townsville schools and \$21.2 million for disaster relief in 2015-16 in partnership with the Australian government. But wait, there is more. The infrastructure improvement budget looks outstanding for Townsville with \$542.9 million budgeted for infrastructure improvements in 2015-16, including \$262 million for transport, \$51.3 million for health, \$60.3 million for energy and water and \$35.6 million for education and training, which includes \$10 million for the purchase of new land for a future school in the north-west area of the city.

But more specifically the big-ticket items for the Townsville electorate include \$18 million to construct a renewable energy ready power station on Palm Island and \$5 million to commence work on the new Townsville Stadium in South Townsville. This funding will go towards the business case, a quantity surveyor to determine project costs and a programmer.

There is \$10.2 million to commence the redevelopment of the berth 4 facility at the port of Townsville, \$9.1 million towards the commencement of the construction of an employment related accommodation program for NRL House and \$2 million to commence works on a crisis shelter in Townsville at a cost of \$4 million in direct response to the *Not now, not ever* report by Quentin Bryce.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr STEWART: It is happening in Townsville, member for Nanango. It is happening in Townsville. Why is the Palaszczuk government investing so heavily in Townsville? I will tell members this: it is not for my good looks, that is for sure. It is not because we were forgotten about under the years of the former government either and it is not because Townsville suffered from the 'no public servant need fear me' saga either. It is because the Palaszczuk government gets it. It gets it. It is the Palaszczuk government that appointed the Minister Assisting the Premier for North Queensland as the only regional minister to do so.

In those five months, the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland has achieved the following for North Queensland. She has reopened the office of the Premier and cabinet which was closed by the former government. It just goes to show how much the Newman government considered and valued the north. It closed that office. But wait, there is more. What else has she done? She ensured the first community cabinet was also held in Townsville to listen to that community—and there is more. She has worked with the Minister for Tourism to secure the DestinationQ conference in Townsville later this year. But wait—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr STEWART: I know those opposite are loving every minute of it. There is more, too! The Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland also secured a new primary school and secondary school for north-west Townsville—something we heard the member for Hinchinbrook saying that he had been working on since 2011. This minister could do it in five months. Five months it took this minister to do it. The Premier selected the member for Mundingburra to be the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland because she is the best person for the job. She has proven this by achieving more than what the member for Hinchinbrook could achieve with those schools over those five years.

The Palaszczuk government gets it. For those in the opposition who still do not quite understand, I will explain it in a little bit more detail. With the recent release of the federal government's white paper on Northern Australia, the time is right to grow the north to ensure that it is able to accommodate the exponential growth. In the recent *State of the tropics* report, it highlights that the tropics emerges as a critical global region with a unique set of development challenges and opportunities. The tropics covers only 40 per cent of the world's surface area but hosts approximately 80 per cent of its terrestrial biodiversity and more than 95 per cent of its mangrove and coral reef based biodiversity. The tropical world's economy is growing 20 per cent faster than the rest of the world and many tropical nations are important contributors to world trade, politics and innovation. The tropics is home to 40 per cent of the world's population and 55 per cent of the world's children under the age of five. By 2050, some 50 per cent of the world's population and close to 60 per cent of the world's children are expected to reside in the tropics. This is why the Palaszczuk government gets it. The Premier understands where we are heading.

Advances in technology are providing a platform for expanding business opportunities, enhancing prospects to reduce poverty and improving education and health outcomes. Incomes are higher, infrastructure is more accessible and life expectancy is the highest it has ever been. The federal government recently released its much anticipated white paper on developing Northern Australia. The opening paragraph states—

The north has untapped promise, abundant resources and talented people. It is also Australia's closest connection with our key trading markets and the global scale changes occurring in Asia.

Northern Australia, as I said, encompasses 40 per cent of Australia's land mass and has approximately one million people living in that same area. The white paper cites how the federal government sees the way forward in developing trade and business opportunities for Northern Australia. Page 60 of that paper states—

... the Government can help protect people and industries from increased biosecurity and health threats as more people and goods navigate international borders. This means bringing together research bodies, institutions and individuals in the north and across Australia, and partnering with regional countries to develop new technologies and greater capacity to protect northern investment. This will also generate new commercial and employment opportunities in tropical agriculture and health sectors, positioning the north as a global leader.

While the federal government sees Northern Australia as Darwin, the Palaszczuk government sees an opportunity and a necessity to establish Townsville as the hub of Northern Australia. The opportunity is to harness the northern region of the state by creating synergy between Mackay and Cairns and west to Mount Isa. The idea of northern cities in competition with one another is 20th century

thinking. This region has 21st century eyes and looks at ways that we can work together to create, develop, enhance, promote and maximise opportunities to meet the needs of a rapidly changing global network of trade, education, resources and knowledge.

Mr Speaker, I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*. It has been approved.

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker, this is why the Palaszczuk government is investing in Townsville. But it comes with its challenges.

The greater Townsville area has a total population of approximately 237,000 which is expected to reach 362,000 by 2036. Around 30,000 will live in the inner CBD. The top 5 industries by numbers of workers in the area are:

- Health care and social assistance at 16.6%
- Retail trade at 11.6%
- Accommodation and food services at 9.2% which I might add were in very high demand over the week-end due to the very successful V8 Supercars in Townsville
- Construction at 9%, and
- Education and training at 8.3%

As you can see Mr Speaker, the Townsville region is a very diverse area indeed. In fact:

- Our agricultural production consisting largely of sugar and beef cattle is worth around \$657 million
- In the 12 months ending 31 March this year, 1,626 residential buildings were approved for construction
- 3,841 residential dwellings were sold in the last calendar year, and
- 16,680 businesses were in operation in the 2013-14 financial year

Our major private sector investment projects currently under construction include:

- \$24 million in the stage 2 development of Fairfield Central Shopping Centre by Lancini Group and Fairfield Land Pty Ltd
- \$80 million for the Science Place, a research and education centre at James Cook University (which is partly funded by the Australian Government and the CSIRO)

Mr Speaker, during the election campaign, Labor continued to say that we were committed to being fiscally responsible, that we would kick start the ailing Townsville economy. All this we inherited from an LNP Government who was hell bent on slashing jobs to reduce costs as their solution for repaying the debt. Well Mr Speaker, some three years later and we know what happened with that strategy. The slash and burn approach coupled with the downturn of the minerals sector was the perfect storm to send the Townsville economy into a flatline. Currently we have unemployment at 8.7% and youth unemployment around 17% with a 22% commercial vacancy rate.

The Queensland Government is a major employer in the region providing employment opportunities for 14, 013 people supporting:

- 3,331.4 km² of national and regional parks
- 150 state heritage sites
- 8 hospitals and health facilities
- 4 customer service centres
- 1,764 km of roads
- 1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander partnership regional office
- 1 Office of the Premier and Cabinet
- 12 fire stations
- 633 police officers, and
- 5 courthouses

Easy to throw stones, but how does Labor plan to reinvigorate confidence and breathe life back into the Townsville economy. How does Townsville plan to provide the necessary services and position itself as the hub of northern Australia as we prepare for a future in the tropics?

Mr Speaker, it started just over 5 months ago and today will be enhanced through the first budget handed down by the Palaszczuk Government. One that is focused on growing jobs and one that is focused on a very bright future for this state and for Townsville.

This budget will provide specifically for the Townsville electorate:

- \$14.753 million to complete construction of 28 new social housing dwellings on Palm Island in response to the increasing numbers of families living on the island.
- \$16.765 million to assist people with a disability and their families to access support services
- \$1 million to upgrade the wastewater treatment on Palm Island and support healthier environmental conditions on the island.
- \$617,000 to continue the construction of 1 house and 1 unit in Townsville in 2015/16 at a total cost of \$771,000 as part of the Elderly Parent Carer Innovation Trial
- \$4.946 million to ensure children in need of protection have a safe place to stay

- \$1.765 million to support the needs of children in out of home care
- \$109,000 for individuals and community groups in Townsville to improve access to individual support services
- \$1.842 million to respond to domestic violence and family violence
- \$5.782 million to local organisations to support families to safely care for their children
- \$5.053 million to deliver support to vulnerable individuals and assist them to get their lives back
- \$796,000 for services to support young people in Townsville including information, advice and referral services
- \$120,619 for refurbishment of the Hermit Park State School Music Room
- Townsville State High School will be allocated a full time equivalent Guidance Officer in 2016, up from their current part-time allocation
- \$2 million for Jezzine Barracks Community Amenities including a playground, picnic shelters and park furnishings
- \$3.4 million over two years (2014-15, and 2015-16) to upgrade the perimeter security system at Cleveland Detention Centre including modifications to physical security barriers to prevent access to roof tops.
- \$380,000 to complete the upgrade of CCTV cameras in the Townsville Watchhouse
- \$199,000 to upgrade one tennis court surface to an international standard including fencing to support tennis in Townsville
- \$50,000 per annum for 3 consecutive years to support the operations of the North Queensland Conservation Council
- \$444,000 to complete land acquisitions by the Coordinator-General in the Townsville Eastern Port Access corridor within the Townsville State Development Area to facilitate an infrastructure corridor of regional, state and national significance
- \$2 million towards a drop-off zone for the Pimlico State High School
- \$20 million towards the upgrade of the Townsville sewerage Treatment Plant
- \$5 million towards the Dalrymple Road Bridge in the Townsville City Council
- \$78,000 towards the Mike Reynolds Early Childhood Centre for refurbishment
- An additional 8 full time teachers across state, state high schools and specialist schools over the next three years

Mr Speaker, I have spent a great deal of time highlighting the investment the Palaszczuk government is doing in the Townsville region and specifically in the Townsville electorate. But more importantly Mr Speaker, this government is investing in a future in Townsville where innovation is incubated and harnessed. It is a place where business and trade will be done on a global scale. Where the quality of life will be envied by every other lead nation in the world. A place where education and knowledge is relished and celebrated.

Mr Speaker, I commend the Bill before the House today.

 **Miss BARTON** (Broadwater—LNP) (9.40 pm): It is always a great pleasure to rise to speak as the member for Broadwater in this House but, unfortunately, it is not a great pleasure to speak to this the fourth budget that I have seen introduced into this House. At the end of the day, we on this side of the House know that this budget is bad for jobs, this budget is bad for growth and, ultimately, this budget is bad for Queensland. We will see that this is a budget that delivers increased unemployment. We talk about wanting to create jobs in Queensland, but the only jobs that the government is creating are those in an artificially inflated Public Service. We will see unemployment continue to rise and we will see economic growth continue to decrease. This budget delivers not for the people of Queensland but merely seeks to deliver tricks and raids on the Public Service purse.

This budget proves that Labor had absolutely no plan for Queensland. This was an opportunity for the Labor Party to show that it could manage an economy. This was an opportunity to show the people of Queensland that the plan that the Labor Party talked about was a plan that would deliver jobs, was a plan that would deliver economic growth, job-creating infrastructure and would, as I said, deliver confidence in the Queensland economy. But we continue to see people lose their confidence not only in the government but particularly in the Treasurer. I think it is fair to say that the people of Queensland were prepared to give the Treasurer a go. They were prepared to give him an opportunity to put out his plan for Queensland, a plan for growth, his plan for jobs. But at the end of the day, he has no plan to reduce debt in this state, he has no plan to regain Queensland's AAA credit rating, he has no real plan to increase the number of jobs, with the exception of artificially inflating the Public Service; his only plan is to raid the public servants' piggy banks. The hallmark of this budget, the first budget of this Treasurer, and his legacy will forever be the fact that his first idea, his light bulb moment, was to go and raid the long service leave entitlements and the superannuation entitlements of Queensland public servants. We on this side of the House know that that is something that should force the Treasurer to hang his head in shame. We will see debt continue to rise because, as the member for Kawana said, we will see things continue to be put on the credit card. All we will see in this state is debt rise.

Time and time again I have said that the government does not create jobs. It is not the role of the government to create jobs; it is the role of the government to create an environment within which business can create jobs. We on this side of the House know that to be absolutely true. I think it is a real shame that the Treasurer has not taken this opportunity to try to foster economic confidence in this government—to try to foster confidence generally in this government—and allow the private sector to create the much needed jobs that this state will need. It is so disappointing, because I know that there are so many fantastic projects that were funded right across Queensland—funded in electorates that were held by the former government and funded in electorates that were held by the Labor Party—that were all about creating jobs and were all about the all-important infrastructure that was needed right across this state.

As we all know, health is absolutely crucial in this state. When it comes to health, the legacy of the Labor Party is a Tahitian prince who steals money from the people of Queensland and a government that forgot to pay its nurses. I contrast that legacy—a legacy of debt and deficit—and the nonpayment of nurses with a government, when we were in power, that saw regular increases in salaries for nurses, a government that saw waiting lists cut, a government that saw service increases, a government that was committed to making sure that health services in this state were delivered to the people who needed them the most and a government that was committed to making sure that local communities were able to decide what it was that they needed. It is disappointing that we will not see the government commit to the wait-time guarantee—a guarantee that this House voted for. The arrogance of the health minister means that he will continue to ignore the will of this House, the democratically elected House that represents the people of Queensland. It is disappointing that the health minister would come into this House and flagrantly ignore the will and the wishes of the people of Queensland. The 89 members of this House represent the people of Queensland and it is disappointing that the health minister would be so flagrant in his disrespect of the people of Queensland and their representatives.

Education is another hallmark of every government. I believe that education is the greatest gift that you can ever give a child. That is why I believe that we need to support great teachers and great results. It is really disappointing to see that \$180 million has been cut out of the Great Teachers = Great Results initiative. That means that this government does not care about professional excellence in teaching and that this government does not care about boosting autonomy in schools. What we on this side of the House know to be absolutely true is that communities need autonomy so that they are able to make decisions for themselves. The member who spoke before me was a school principal in Townsville. Although I may not agree with his politics, I respect that, as a principal, he was the right person to make decisions about his school, not bureaucrats sitting in George Street in Brisbane. People in local communities should be empowered to make decisions.

It is also disappointing that a government that holds only 48 per cent of the seats in this House will make sure that electorates that are held by the government will receive 60 per cent of the listed education capital funding. I think it is really disappointing that the government would seek to play politics with education funding in this state. Not only is education the greatest gift that we can give a child; it is the foundation of every single person's future in this state. The future generation, the next leaders of this state, are sitting in schools right across Queensland. It is disappointing that the Labor Party seeks to play politics with education in this state.

I have talked about the need for job-creating infrastructure. In this debate many opposition members have spoken about the fact that the job-creating infrastructure in their electorates has been cut, cut, cut. Not only have we seen job-creating infrastructure cancelled; we see a government that seeks to claim credit for job-creating infrastructure that is not even theirs. The upgrade to Pacific Fair on the Gold Coast and the upgrade to Jupiters casino on the Gold Coast are prime examples of the private sector creating jobs in Queensland. Of course, it is not only the private sector infrastructure projects that the government is seeking to claim credit for; it is the projects of the LNP that this government is seeking to claim credit for.

Mr Cramp: Exit 54.

Miss BARTON: I take that interjection. The government talks about exit 54. Between 2009 and 2012, was the Labor Party talking about exit 54? It was not. It was the LNP that delivered funding for exit 54. It is the LNP that has been delivering vital upgrades along the Bruce Highway. Time and time again we have seen Labor taking credit for LNP planned infrastructure and LNP funded infrastructure. When we talk about infrastructure that the Labor Party is not funding, a prime example—and one that is particularly important for the Gold Coast—is stage 2 of the Gold Coast Light Rail. In the lead-up to the last election, the LNP government made a firm commitment to provide funding for stage 2 of the light rail. The LNP was overwhelmingly endorsed on the Gold Coast. Going into the election, the LNP

held nine of the 10 seats on the Gold Coast; after the election, having regained the seat of Gaven, we now hold 10 seats on the Gold Coast. That was with funding commitments for exhibit 54 and the light rail.

It is so disappointing that the Deputy Premier seeks to come into this House and talk about the importance of public transport infrastructure, yet she is not prepared to find a way to fund it herself. Instead, she cries poor and claims disappointment that the federal government does not want to fund public transport infrastructure. It has been a long time since I have studied constitutional law and it has been a long time since I have had a chance to look at my own pocket copy of the Australian Constitution, but, if memory serves, within the some 39 subsections of section 51 I do not remember seeing public transport listed. Public transport is not within the domain and the realm of the federal government. At the end of the day, the federal government made it very clear that it was prepared to support infrastructure projects provided that certain conditions were met. The ALP government knew exactly what those conditions were going to be and they do not meet them. They knew exactly what it was they were going to have to do in order to get infrastructure funding for this state, but they were not prepared to meet those conditions. Having come to the table knowing exactly what the conditions are, they cannot suddenly claim that it is disappointing that a government that does not actually have remit or control over public transport is no longer going to fund that kind of infrastructure.

The other thing that I want to touch on that is particularly relevant to the Gold Coast is, of course, the issue of law and order. Coming from the Gold Coast, I am acutely aware of just how well received were our government's antibiotic laws and the boost in support and funding for the Queensland Police Service officers, who work tirelessly, day in day out, to make sure that we can keep our communities safe.

Mr Krause: And the CCC.

Miss BARTON: And the CCC. I take the interjection from the member Beaudesert. It is so disappointing not only that the Labor Party does not care about infrastructure on the Gold Coast but also that the Labor Party does not care about keeping Gold Coasters safe from criminal gangs. At the end of the day, we have a government that wants to open the gates at Coolangatta and allow criminal motorcycle gangs back into the Gold Coast. That is so disappointing. However, they do not want to just reopen the gates for criminal motorcycle gangs in Queensland, and particularly on the Gold Coast; they also plan to scrap the Safe Night Out Strategy. That was a well-planned, well-consulted and evidence based policy designed to make sure that responsible people are able to go out and enjoy themselves in entertainment precincts on a Friday or Saturday night if they wish. Drink-safe precincts provided help to people who needed support while sobering up. They also ensured that we could deal with those people who wanted to perpetrate alcohol fuelled violence. Coming from the Gold Coast, it is so disappointing to see that the government intends to rip \$24 million out of the Safe Night Out Strategy.

While I have touched on the light rail, it is about more than that when we talk about this government slapping Gold Coasters in the face when it comes to transport. As we all know, a few weeks ago in this House the Labor government voted to increase car registration by 3½ per cent. At a time when we want to support Queenslanders and ease the cost-of-living pressures, it is so disappointing that this government would seek to increase the cost of living for Gold Coast families and Queensland families by increasing the cost of registration by 3½ per cent. It is also disappointing that this government does not want to support commercial fishermen and fisher women in this state. I know that the shadow minister will be touching on this issue in her contribution. As someone in whose electorate there is a lot of commercial fishing, I find it really disappointing that this government does not want to work with the industry and does not want to support it.

I said that I would speak about my electorate. For the past three budgets that I have had the pleasure of speaking to, I spent the majority of my time talking about funding for my electorate. However, the reality is that the Labor government has not really funded anything in my electorate. I will acknowledge that there is funding for the Runaway Bay Sports Super Centre and the Runaway Bay sports centre as part of Commonwealth Games infrastructure. I acknowledge that, as part of a bipartisan effort, both the LNP and Labor governments are committed to making sure that there is investment in Commonwealth Games infrastructure right across the Gold Coast. However, it is disappointing that the things that I fought for, which were fully funded in the lead-up to the election, have been absolutely ignored.

The Minister for Main Roads comes into this House and talks about how important it is that we support flashing lights at schools, yet one of his first actions in my electorate was to cancel flashing lights at Labrador State School. I would think that, in addition to not playing politics with education, if

there is one thing that you do not play politics with it is the safety of our children at schools. I cannot believe that the first action of the Minister for Main Roads in relation to my electorate is to play politics with the safety of children. He should hang his head in shame that one of his first actions is to scrap the funding that I had fought for and that was committed for flashing lights in my electorate. Not only has he scrapped funding for the flashing lights at Labrador State School, a school on a main road where there are regular random police checks to ensure that people do not speed, but also he has scrapped the \$1.5 million that I had to upgrade the intersection at the front of Coombabah State School where, last year, two children were hit by a car crossing the road. It beggars belief that, when we are talking about wanting to make sure that schools are safe for our children, the things that the government would attack most are road safety initiatives and road safety projects at the front of schools. That \$1.5 million was absolutely vital and I had been fighting for it for years. I was so proud that I had funding for that project. It was committed funding, it was there, it was fully costed and it was fully funded. That \$1.5 million would have gone a long way to improving safety at the front of that school. It is really disappointing that the minister thinks it is okay to scrap that kind of funding. It is really disappointing that, in light of two children being hit by a car at the front of that school last year, the minister would scrap that funding.

This government has scrapped not just road safety projects within the electorate but also security upgrades for Coombabah State High School and Biggera Waters State School. Again, those projects were fully costed and fully funded. It is really disappointing that, when it comes to the safety of our children, the Labor Party would seek to play politics. The Labor Party is ripping out of my electorate money that would have funded those vital projects. When the Labor government was formed, one of the first things that I did was to touch base with the ministers to stress the importance and the need for those projects. I had hoped that we would be able to put politics aside when it came to the safety of our children. When we were in government, I had seen that things such as the flashing lights project were not decided on the politics of the member; they were decided on the needs of the school. I had hoped that the new government would be as fair as the LNP had been when it came to the protection and safety of our children. I can see now that the LNP was far fairer than the Labor Party is ever going to be and that the Palaszczuk government cares not for the safety of children in Queensland but only for itself. It is really disappointing that in 2015 we would have a government that seeks to play politics on such issues.

At the end of the day, this is a budget that is bad for Queensland. It is a budget that is bad for growth. It is a budget that is bad for jobs. We have seen the Treasurer mislead the people of Queensland. His solution to managing the debt is to shift it from one book to another. His solution for managing debt is to raid the piggy banks of public servants. He should hang his head in shame. It is an absolute disgrace.

I assure those constituents who have already taken the time to write to me or call me and express their dissatisfaction that I will fight each and every day to make sure that their entitlements are protected. It is clear that the Treasurer does not give a hoot about the superannuation entitlements of public servants and he does not give a hoot about the long service leave entitlements of public servants. This is a bad budget for Queenslanders. The Treasurer should absolutely hang his head in shame.

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (10.00 pm): I rise in the House today to speak in favour of the first budget of the Palaszczuk Labor government handed down by the Treasurer on Tuesday. I congratulate the Treasurer on a real Labor budget—one which will grow jobs now and jobs for the future in Keppel and across Queensland.

During the 14 months I campaigned as Labor's candidate for Keppel between 2013 and 2015, locals all over Keppel told me about five issues most important to them: health, education, jobs, asset sales and the Great Barrier Reef. The community was concerned about the 194 full-time jobs the LNP cut at our local hospitals. Some 194 nurses, doctors, health professionals and administration staff who delivered babies, treated sick local people and worked to promote health and wellbeing across our great region—gone. Nurses reported being spread too thin, working long shifts and overtime and not having enough nurses available to cover those who were sick. One nurse told me that they were so run off their feet that they struggled to even get to the bathroom on a normal shift.

Local people were concerned about our schools. Teachers were also being spread too thin. There were oversized classes and teachers told me they lacked administrative support. Parents told me they were concerned about the declining amount of one-on-one time their children were getting with their teacher because of the growing class sizes.

The issue of unemployment and growing jobs in our region was another important issue that local people raised, and continue to raise, with me. The unemployed talked to me with desperation in their eyes—desperation for a job. Young people told me about how difficult it was for them to find a job or an apprenticeship. Tradesmen told me of their struggle to find work.

Public servants told me horror stories about the 'box man'. A mysterious man, whom they had never seen before, would walk into their workplace with an empty cardboard box, creep up behind them, tap them on the shoulder and quietly break the news that they no longer had a job in the Queensland government. 'Pack your box with your belongings and leave,' they were told. For public servants sacked by the LNP it was a nightmare they longed to wake up from. Fear across the public service was rampant.

The Great Barrier Reef is the beating heart of the Keppel electorate, and locals told me that they want to protect it for our future generations and for the local jobs the reef supports. Last but not least, local people said that they do not want their assets sold.

This budget is a budget that delivers solutions to all of those issues locals raised with me. It provides for a record spend in education—with nine new full-time teachers, a new full-time guidance officer and new classrooms at local schools in Keppel. It includes \$6.5 million to complete the final stages of the intensive care unit at the Rockhampton Hospital. It includes more nurses and a legislated nurse-to-patient ratio—a commitment which I know local nurses are celebrating.

The \$180 million Advance Queensland program will be a catalyst for nurturing the knowledge based jobs of the future. Central Queensland is ready and open for business and we want to take advantage of any opportunity that the Advance Queensland program will present, to create jobs now and jobs for our future.

The budget also includes an additional \$100 million to protect our Great Barrier Reef. The budget delivers solutions to all of those issues locals raised with me without selling assets. This budget delivers for Queensland, this budget delivers for Central Queensland and this budget delivers for Keppel.

Since Tuesday I have received dozens of messages of support and congratulations to the government on handing down a budget which recognises Central Queensland as an important economic powerhouse of this state. Under the LNP we were forgotten. That was why I ran for parliament. I was sick and tired of those opposite cutting, culling, forgetting, neglecting, ignoring, slashing and burning Keppel.

Friday, 20 February 2015 was a harrowing day for Central Queenslanders. I have talked in this place many times about the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Marcia. It is incredibly disappointing that I cannot recall the member for Callide ever mentioning in this place the impact of Tropical Cyclone Marcia on his community. I know that the people of Banana endured a harrowing experience too.

Councils that were hardest hit, like the councils in Keppel, Livingstone shire and Rockhampton regional councils, identified important infrastructure projects that would assist in their recovery and the state subsequently sought \$198 million of support from the federal government for joint category D funding on a 50-50 basis with the state. But the Abbott government showed its true colours when it comes to supporting regional Queensland, approving a measly \$27.75 million—absolutely nothing compared to the \$198 million needed to get Central Queensland back on its feet.

Tony Abbott had the gall to say that the overall impact of Tropical Cyclone Marcia was 'not of an exceptional nature compared to Tropical Cyclone Oswald or Yasi'. His words are a real slap in the face to local families and businesses that had their lives torn apart by an extreme natural disaster.

I am proud, however, that the Palaszczuk government is standing up to fill this critical local need with funding for a \$40 million disaster recovery package, including \$25 million for the Yeppoon foreshore revitalisation and \$15 million for the Rockhampton riverbank redevelopment. This \$40 million announcement is the start of big things for Central Queensland. It is history in the making.

Unlike the Abbott government, the Palaszczuk Labor government will not abandon our communities on the road to recovery. The physical recovery after a cyclone is one aspect of recovery, but the emotional recovery can be just as important. Seeing important elements of the community rebuilt, such as the foreshore and the riverbank, will deliver a cash injection to the local economy and boost community morale.

The Yeppoon foreshore and the Rockhampton riverbank are both spectacular community spaces, where I have many fond memories as a little girl growing up in Central Queensland. For a long time our local councils and communities have had dreams of grandeur for these places. The Palaszczuk Labor government's investment in the foreshore and riverbank will transform these spaces into two

stunning showpieces of our region—both places where families can enjoy quality time together; where locals will relax and meet for coffee; business colleagues can network; and tourists can ponder our region's wondrous history. Both will be places the people of Rockhampton and Livingstone can all be proud of.

The Mayor of Livingstone Shire Council, Bill Ludwig, said the funding announcement for the Yeppoon foreshore is a game changer. The Mayor of Rockhampton Regional Council, Margaret Strelow, said the Rockhampton riverbank redevelopment funding announcement is the start of the city's renaissance. This budget is good for Queensland and it is good for Keppel. I commend these bills to the House.

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (10.07 pm): I rise to speak to the appropriation bills which are before the House. I know we all get quite excited when we have an opportunity to stand up and speak in this wonderful House. It is incredible but sometimes we hear ludicrous statements in this House. I have to call the previous speaker out.

In the previous budget there was an increase in the Health budget of seven per cent. There was an increase in the Education budget. Can I say that if it is the case that there is a nurse who is too busy to go to the bathroom then the same situation probably exists there as exists at Kingaroy Hospital where there are eight vacancies because we are unable to fill those positions because it is difficult to encourage people into the regions. Ask the administrators, ask the health board, because I dare say that there is something wrong there. I think that the member should be talking to the health minister about that individual's situation. In relation to class sizes—

Mr Rickuss: She made it up.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: You cannot make this stuff up. There is not one state school in Queensland that has overcrowded classrooms. If there are, bring them on—tell us all about it. You cannot even name those schools. But just like the budget: they can say what they want and do something else. The Treasurer said he was going to pay down debt in this budget; there was no paying down of the debt. He is going to deliver surpluses—again, another fail. He is going to deliver a plan; I am still waiting to hear the plan.

Mr Costigan: Gonna, gonna, gonna.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Gonna, gonna, gonna. This budget is bad for jobs and this budget is bad for growth. It is typical of a Labor government, as we have heard. It is typical of a Labor budget, as we have heard.

For the Treasurer to go to mums and dads in Queensland and say to them, 'This is how I am going to fix it,' just shows his inexperience. Guess what? Grab your Westpac credit card and use it to pay off your NAB credit card, because that is what this Treasurer is doing. Then he is going in to raid our public servants' nest eggs, their superannuation. It is just incredible.

When I was looking through the Budget Strategy and Outlook, Budget Paper No. 2, I read, 'Principle 5—Target full funding of long term liabilities such as superannuation ...'. That is interesting. Then the Treasurer wrote, 'Consistent with the long-standing practice of successive governments ...'. I do not need to read the quotes again—we have heard them several times already today—from all of the other Labor treasurers who have ridiculed this new Treasurer because it is just incredible.

Government members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! Member for Nanango, take your seat. I know it is late in the night. We will have some order. I call the member for Nanango.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, for your protection. I still recall the day I first walked into the Treasury as the assistant minister to the treasurer in 2012 and on my desk was the incoming government brief. There were folders of them. Treasurer, I am sure you remember your incoming government briefs. The one that we opened on that first day—I can still remember opening it up—said that the state of Queensland's finances were unsustainable. So that is the legacy that the previous Labor government left us. What was the legacy that the Newman LNP government left this Treasurer? They got an incoming government brief that said that they had a budget and debt position that had broadly stabilised in that short period of time. Now, after this budget, we have no chance of getting our AAA credit rating back—incredible.

But where does agriculture sit with this government? We all know because we have heard—

Miss Barton: They didn't even mention it.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: The Treasurer does not even mention the word 'agriculture'. He did not mention 'fisheries'. Interestingly, he would not mention 'forestry' because that is not even in the honourable member for Rockhampton's title. He is the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries. He has Sport and Racing as well, but in the portfolio that I am shadowing him he does not have 'forestry'.

Mr Costigan: They've dumbed it down.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: They have dumbed it down. But I know it is still there because the word 'forestry' is in the budget papers. Budget Paper No. 2 talks about the economic performance and outlook. I found this really interesting because we all understand that almost 80 per cent of the state is in drought. We understand that. For those people out west in those circumstances it is diabolical. The minister, I am quite sure, is with me on that. The drought funding that is in the budget—which I will get to—relates to that as well. So we know that the state is struggling in some parts.

But it is interesting that this Labor government seems to think that because 80 per cent of the state is in drought that means agriculture is going down the drain, according to the economic performance and outlook. It says that, because we have 80 per cent of the state currently drought declared, the agricultural sector is unlikely to do anything, so let's pack it up and not count it in. Come on, Treasurer, we should be seriously supporting the agricultural industry and supporting all of those areas in that sector.

Mr Rickuss: What about horticulture?

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Yes, horticulture. We have eggs, we have pork—we have all of these other areas of agriculture in Queensland that want to be fought for. They want to be encouraged to have better trade. You do not just count agriculture out because there is a drought in the state. Be proud of it. Be proud of it, please! Do not write it off in the budget just because of the drought situation. There are other areas of agriculture, fisheries and forestry within the economy that we can be so proud of, and we need to support those people out there on the ground.

It is just incredible, and I cannot not touch on the fact of the job cuts within the department. Why would the minister write down his budget and take some 138 staff positions out of the department? I can see the Treasurer over there shaking his head, because he is worried that I have not looked at it properly. Well, I have. Treasurer, I have probably read a few more of these than you. We have the figures. Honestly, the departmental officers, I am quite sure, are all sitting around wondering which 138 positions are going. They will not be in the corporate sector in Ann Street—no, they will not be there. They will be on the front line because they are increasing the corporate sector—maybe that is the media or helping out.

Mr Costigan: Spin doctors.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: Spin doctors—that is the word I was looking for. I know I have touched on the drought, but one thing I want to be really serious about is the fact that of those 138 positions we are seeing eight positions go in QRAA. We have seen an increase in drought funding, and I am very encouraged by that. This is carrying on from the hard work of Dr John McVeigh, the then minister, when he secured record drought funding from our government. I know the Leader of the Opposition touched on that, and I commend him for his speech in the House today as well.

It really defies logic—and the member for Keppel will know this because the QRAA applications will be coming from her electorate as well—that we are not only reducing service level expectations, we are not only saying to our staff, 'Don't rush. Slow down', but also taking people out of that vital area. People on the ground do not think necessarily that QRAA is getting it all right at this stage of proceedings, so we need to encourage the minister to have a look at what is going through QRAA. But we certainly do not need eight fewer positions in QRAA.

People out there in the regions wanted to see some encouragement for research and development in this budget. That is the way of the future. We have had some successful trials, but unfortunately it does not seem to be a priority. What I did see throughout the budget papers is Labor's commitment to Greens preferences. I know that Andrew Cripps spoke about this. It should not come as any surprise that they stated in the budget papers that they intend to reinstate the vegetation laws to 'implement changes to the vegetation management framework to appropriately manage and minimise the clearing of vegetation'. Are you kidding me? The people on the ground who know how to manage their land are having their rights stripped away from them by the relevant ministers who are acting under pressure from their green colleagues within the cabinet. I find this incredible—absolutely incredible.

I am encouraged by and welcome the money that will be contributed to the Panama disease tropical race 4 program, which is providing surveillance to delimit the disease and tracking to determine the extent of the spread of the disease. I acknowledge that this is much needed and I am very much

looking forward to the eradication of this disease. We need to be careful that all of our eggs are not put in one basket because there are always so many biosecurity issues that are happening—hence, again why I am so surprised that those FTEs have been ripped out of that department.

I mentioned the forestry industry. I note that it has been forgotten in the minister's title and it has been forgotten in the budget—or at best it has been quite neglected. When we were in government, we allocated some \$1.4 million towards a new forest and timber research and development program to drive innovation in the industry. The former LNP government was committed to ensuring that the future of the agricultural sector was strong. We revitalised the Emerald and Longreach agricultural colleges, and I probably have missed something there while I am talking about revitalising things. It was the LNP government that had to put the whole department of agriculture back together, because it was dismantled under the previous Labor government. It was thrown halfway out to DERM and halfway out to one of those other big megaportfolios and there was no department of agriculture at all. It is no wonder the previous Labor government got rid of the Dalby agricultural college, the Burdekin agricultural college and all of those good people with all of that wonderful knowledge.

There are other areas that I want to touch on in the short time I have left. I am really pleased with the work that the LNP government did in relation to the child protection sector. It astounds me that we have to sit here on this side and hear that apparently we do not care about children in protection. I find it completely abhorrent that that has been said over and over again. The LNP government put some \$406 million into child protection—

A government member interjected.

Mrs FRECKLINGTON: It is interesting to hear those opposite laughing because they probably have never looked at budget papers before. If they go back and pick up the budget papers from the previous government, they will see it because it is really obvious. The papers are numbered on the front so it is quite easy to find. You just need to have a look. It is exactly the same in that it was the LNP which found the money to deliver an extra \$868 million to the NDIS. Our plan delivered one of the biggest single increases in disability funding in the whole country, and that certainly warrants me saying that here in the House today.

I will turn now to my electorate. I have left it to last because, unfortunately, we are back to having a typical Labor government. My electorate had a crossbench member for 12 years, so that was a dreadful time and we only got thrown a scrap here or there. It was not until I was able to stand up in the House, like the member for Townsville, and then I could list all of the amazing things we were so lucky to introduce under the LNP government.

The first thing I do with the budget is I grab my fluoro and I go into the capital budget paper and I look particularly at education and at the schools, because I have 36 schools in my electorate. Not one school within my electorate got one cent—that is right, not one cent. Not one school in the South Burnett, the Somerset or the entire Nanango electorate got one cent. One thing I will mention is over the border in the electorate of the member for Callide, Jeff Seeney, and he has spoken about this a lot. The Wondai State School library burnt down and thankfully we have the money in here for the Wondai library. It is not in my electorate but I am sure Mr Seeney will not mind if I talk about it because I have no schools in the Nanango electorate with anything in the capital statement.

I am very pleased that Sean Choat, the former member for Ipswich West, and I spent the last couple of years working so hard towards an upgrade for a small section of the Brisbane Valley Highway. Unfortunately, it is only \$1.1 million and it is only a small section but we will continue to lobby extremely hard to get the money for the Brisbane Valley Highway. Whilst I was in government and sitting on that side, we were able to deliver overtaking lanes. I was very pleased because I was only there for two years and 10 months but I was able to deliver four overtaking lanes for my electorate. Whilst this is a little scrap and it is in the Ipswich West electorate—so it is over the border again—I am still proud because I fought very hard for it and my people drive on it all the time so I am happy with that. I will mention one more thing just over the border in the electorate of Glass House. My great friend and colleague Andrew Powell, who is sitting over there, has fought very hard for upgrades to the D'Aguiar Highway. I am extremely pleased about his hard work.

Incredibly, in the jobs plan, the only plan for Wide Bay in the capital budget paper is the overhauls for the Tarong and Meandu mines, but they have to happen anyway. They have been announced; they have to happen. Interestingly, the document says that those overhauls are going to create 1,500 jobs. Guess what? If we are lucky, those overhauls will bring in an extra couple of hundred jobs. I do not know where they get 1,500 from. That is just incredible to me. Obviously my electorate got no jobs either.

I am very pleased that the police minister was able to say, 'We're not going to stop building the Kingaroy Police Station. It's half built. We're not going to stop, everyone. We're going to continue to build it so I can reannounce it because that will be the only announcement for the Nanango electorate—even though the member for Nanango announced it last year, but don't worry about that. We're not going to stop the building. It's going to keep going, so that's great.' It is already half built and I am looking forward to getting all of our great local coppers into that much needed building.

I am extremely disappointed that this government has decided not to support the South Burnett clubhouse. I have talked about that in this House on many, many occasions. I will be talking to the health minister because I do need to talk to him because the Kingaroy regional hospital was not even mentioned in this budget at all, even though it is a priority for regional hospitals and the health minister knows it is because it was the No. 1—

(Time expired)

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (10.28 pm): It is going to be very hard to compete with that previous speech, but I will try. I made a commitment to the people of the Maryborough electorate at the 31 January election that I would put Maryborough first. I am very proud to be part of a Labor team and the Palaszczuk government that has delivered for Maryborough. We had 18 years in the wilderness—15 years with One Nation and an Independent and three years with the LNP.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I would like to know where these members' doctors are because for three years they had no voice and now they have a voice. It is a miracle! I cannot believe it. Going into this term, I knew the people of Maryborough were struggling. They were hurting. They were being whipped, they were being flogged by the LNP. We had to get Maryborough going again. We had to reinstate all the services that were taken away by the LNP. We had to get our local economy moving, and the Palaszczuk government and this budget will do that. I am very, very proud of this budget. Over the last three years the LNP turned their backs on the electorate of Maryborough. They denied resources.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I hear the opposition telling me that they did not. I will give them a little bit of a fact: ours is the only hospital on the east coast of Australia without a pathology unit. Those opposite ripped it out. It will be a Palaszczuk government that will reinstate it.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Order! Member for Maryborough, take your seat. We will have some quiet.

Mr SAUNDERS: Mr Deputy Speaker, I do not need your protection from lightweights. During the election campaign we made a commitment to regional Queenslanders and especially to the electorate of Maryborough. I am very happy to be standing here tonight because the Maryborough people knew that we were going to keep our promise. That was the way we were going to move forward. We were not going to attack the small businesses, the farmers, the public sector workers or the industry workers. We would not take away from families to deliver to the state's wealthiest. We would not deny any pensioners their rights in order to deliver them to big business and we certainly would not sell assets, and I am proud of that.

I have the pleasure tonight of seeing these commitments delivered and it is a very, very good budget for the Maryborough electorate. For too long the people of the Maryborough electorate have been denied vital improvements to their communities. I promised the people of the Maryborough electorate that I would be Maryborough's voice in Brisbane, not the voice of Brisbane in Maryborough, like the former LNP member was.

I would like to thank the Premier and also the Treasurer because they listened to the people of Maryborough; they listened to my voice. I stand here tonight and I will tell the opposition and the member for Burnett what we have delivered for Maryborough. St Helens State School on the Maryborough-Hervey Bay road sees 8,000 cars each way each morning. For three years the LNP promised that we would get lights and a safer entry and exit for the schoolchildren and the parents. Did they deliver?

Government members: No!

Mr SAUNDERS: No, they did not deliver. Shame! Who delivered? The transport minister came up. I made representations to him, and I see the transport minister in the House tonight. I would like to thank him as would the parents and students of St Helens State School. The minister for transport and main roads came up and guess what we got? An amount of \$2.1 million, and I am grateful, along with the people of St Helens State School—the students. I say thank you very much to the minister.

Not only that, we had a floodway between Torbanlea and Hervey Bay. For years the LNP had thought bubbles. Every election they wheeled out the same ad, 'We're going to improve it.' Guess what? It will be done. I say thank you again to the minister. There is \$1.8 million to make the road from Torbanlea to Howard flood-proof so that students do not have to go through water to get home. I say thank you very much to the minister.

When we look at the budget for the Maryborough electorate, I am very proud to announce what the Palaszczuk government is delivering: \$3.68 million for children in need of protection; \$1.95 million to support the needs of children in out-of-home care; Aldridge State High School, Bauple State School, Maryborough State High School—sporting facilities upgrade. We have also got a guidance officer for Maryborough State High School. I say thank you very much to the education minister. We are on track in Maryborough now. Due to the record spending in the budget, Maryborough schools will not be left behind. There are flashing lights for Sunbury State School and, once again, I thank the minister. These lights were promised but were never, ever funded.

While we are on the subject of education, I have an article here from the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin*. I listened to the member for Keppel talk about overcrowding in classrooms. An article in the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin* on 16 January 2015 states—

MORE than 700 Rockhampton region students are among 58,000 across the state being educated in oversized classrooms.

I would like to table that article.

Tabled paper: On line article from the Rockhampton *Morning Bulletin*, dated 16 January 2015, titled 'Rocky kids crammed into classes' [\[813\]](#).

Mr Hart interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I was just curious. The other great thing with the budget is that we are reinstating the concessions to pensioners. It is a fantastic thing in the budget for my pensioners. An article in the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* on 5 June 2014 states—

SOME Pensioners are living in fear after the announcement of cuts to concessions in the State Budget.

So we have reinstated those concessions. This budget has been absolutely great for the Maryborough electorate. I am so proud to stand here and be part of the Palaszczuk government.

Honourable members interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: When we look at the budget for the Maryborough electorate, we see that this budget is a game-changer. The LNP left Maryborough city as Detroit city. We are on track now to get Maryborough moving.

Honourable members interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Maryborough, just a moment. Members, I am struggling to hear the member for Maryborough. There is far too much audible conversation and too many interjections that are not being taken. I know it is late at night. The member for Maryborough has the call.

Mr SAUNDERS: I said it before and I will keep saying it till the cows come home: I am very proud to be part of this Palaszczuk Labor government and very proud of the Treasurer. I am proud of all the representations I have made to the ministers. The difference between this government and the LNP government is that when I have made representations to the ministers, they have listened, they have heard my concerns and they have acted on my concerns. These are not my concerns; these are the concerns of my constituents. These are the people who come through my doors every day and talk to me and tell me the hardships they endured under three years of the LNP. They do not want to go back to—

Mr Bennett interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: Do not start on hard yakka. Do not start there. I am very, very pleased to say that I am part of this government.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Miss BARTON: I rise to a point of order. The Minister for Main Roads is interjecting and he is not sitting in his correct seat.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you for your guidance on the matter but I am well aware of that. The minister knows the protocols of the House. The member for Maryborough has the call.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Lockyer. I really do not need your assistance. The member for Maryborough has the call.

Mr SAUNDERS: With improved local services and investments in the local industry, the electorate of Maryborough can finally start to rebuild. But this is not the end; this is just the beginning. These are the first steps in bringing Maryborough back from the ruthless LNP government of the past. I commend the bills to the House.

Mr BOOTHMAN (Albert—LNP) (10.38 pm): I rise tonight to make a contribution to the debate on the 2015 appropriation bills. On Tuesday we witnessed a typical Labor budget: full of spin and no substance, a budget that has no plan for the future and will do little to promote jobs in the wonderful state of Queensland. I say to those opposite, who have chosen to steal from the public servants' superannuation funds and repurpose long service leave, rob the future of our students in terms of the uncertainty of the Great Results Guarantee funding after mid-2016 and force up the cost of living when it comes to registration: how can we expect this budget to be a responsible budget?

This budget is bad for jobs; it does nothing for growth. The Albert electorate is the home of the tradie. It is a key cornerstone of the economy. This budget has economic growth down cumulatively over the next three years, unemployment up cumulatively over the next three years and unemployment growth down cumulatively over the next three years. The lifeblood of the Albert electorate is growth. We have to have a strong economy. Our residents, our workers and our small businesses will suffer without a strong economy. For people sitting around the kitchen table looking at Labor's car registration hikes and future dramatic electricity hikes due to the fact that this Labor government is dumping government debt onto the electricity companies, it is evident that this government has no interest in dealing with the cost of living.

A government member interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take the interjection from the honourable minister. That is because of the hard work of the previous energy minister, Mark McArdle, in writing down \$8 billion of gold plating that the previous Labor government put in. I will quote from the *Australian* newspaper because it puts it so simply—

If you are having trouble understanding the Queensland budget, here is a simple question.

I have two bank accounts. I transfer part of an overdraft from one account to another. Am I better off?

According to Queensland Treasurer Curtis Pitt, yes.

Total public sector borrowings, which include both government debt and government owned corporation debt, will increase by nearly \$5 billion by 2018-19. So much for debt reduction!

Let us not forget that superannuation is sacred to workers and retirees. It is our nest egg after many years of hard work. It is the workers' money whether you are an employee or an employer; it is not the government's personal piggy bank. The hide of this government! To come into this chamber and present a budget that rips the payments from government workers' super funds is disgraceful. Workers now have to potentially sacrifice their hard-earned super to pay for this and previous Labor governments' debt rampages. In precarious economic times, with countries at the gates of economic abyss, this government wants to raid workers' super funds to pay for their mistakes. It is in these precarious times that we must insulate these funds to ensure the viability of the super system. To do the contrary is ludicrous!

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take the interjection from the member for Toowoomba North. Madam Deputy Speaker, it does not stop there. Those opposite plan not only to raid super payments, but long service leave. If the private sector tried to pull this trick, all the unions in this state would be up there rioting in the streets and protesting. How can a government come into this chamber and say that they are delivering for the workers when they are pinching their entitlements?

The residents of the Albert electorate have been passionate about fighting crime and forcing outlaw gangs out of our region. We want drugs off our streets; we want thugs who have committed deplorable crimes locked up. We all witnessed on TV the brazen acts of these criminal gangs as they claimed to own the tourist capital of Australia, the Gold Coast. The LNP drew a line in the sand and took a hardline approach. The good people of the Gold Coast own this town; not criminal gangs.

The Labor government wants to go soft on crime, with less money and fewer resources. They have decreased grant funding to the Crime and Corruption Commission for outlaw motorcycle gangs by \$1.8 million over the next two years and decreased staff by seven. It is good to see the Labor government is continuing the LNP government's commitment to deliver an extra 267 police officers, but I hope that this is over and above attrition rates.

I found it amusing that the Minister for Main Roads claimed responsibility for the upgrade of exit 54. I would like to remind him of the passionate work of local hardworking MPs such as Michael Crandon, the member for Coomera, Bert Van Manen, the federal member for Forde and me in achieving and announcing this fully funded upgrade prior to the last election. Once again this is just another example of this government taking credit for the LNP's work.

The Upper Coomera region has grown rapidly over the last couple of years. With limited upgrades to M1 interchanges around exit 54, this has led to a progressively worsening traffic situation for motorists and extensive delays, leading to downtime for local businesses that must transport their products to and from Upper Coomera and the Coomera region. This is a project that all of the local LNP members were truly passionate about, and it is a project that will create an enormous number of much needed jobs through the creation of the new Coomera town centre. This is a project on which the previous state and federal LNP governments worked extensively.

If the new Labor government is committed to claiming projects, then I am sure they can claim the new Energex powerlines along the river. This is a project which my former colleagues Michael Pucci and Michael Latter and my current colleague Jon Krause and I were very passionate about. Residents along the Logan River will be forced to enjoy their afternoon views of the Logan River with the added bonus of a high-voltage powerline. Under the previous LNP government the former minister for energy, Mark McArdle, brought Energex to the negotiating table with the community and council to seek a better outcome for all communities.

Logan Village dates back 150 years and is a key cornerstone in the history of the Logan area. I quote from the Logan City council website, which states—

Logan Village was a key site in the overall development of the region and the river traffic, which originally serviced it. Its initial role as head of navigation for the river with a major wharf and a store constructed in 1862 to service Robert Towns' plantation ...

The future of Logan Village now entails a high-voltage powerline through the heart of the town. This government has forgotten the residents of the Logan River.

In the budget I have also noticed funding of \$1.5 million for the Tamborine-Oxenford Road near Hayes Road. This is a project I have championed with the support of my local community. Work started some time ago, and we expect it to finish by the end of September. This is a precarious piece of road, and I greatly appreciate this much needed funding to rectify safety issues.

The Albert electorate is home to the Northern Darlington Range and houses many species of flora and fauna. It is a natural wonder admired by local residents and tourists alike. We are blessed in having so many volunteers who give up their precious time to participate in grassroots environmental programs. To my utter shock and disbelief, Labor has slashed grassroots environmental grants programs, whereas LNP delivered \$12 million over three years.

The Great Results Guarantee funding has been heaven-sent for our schools. It has empowered our principals, our teachers and our school staff to achieve remarkable results. We have seen fantastic results in NAPLAN, which clearly demonstrate that the Great Results Guarantee funding model works. Time and time again I hear from parents who are excited to see their children take a renewed interest in education. Seeing students show off their newly found skills is heartwarming for our educators.

At an open education briefing on 20 May 2014 it was stated—

Our 2014 NAPLAN results see Queensland continuing to improve. Queensland has outstripped the nation in improvements since NAPLAN tests began, with the most important improvements being seen in the early years of schooling. This is great news for the future of Queensland, but we must continue to focus on literacy and numeracy.

It was further stated—

We are on a trajectory of improvement that is clearly evident and some of the notable educators who have influence around the world have highlighted the work that we are doing in Queensland and recognise us as the fastest improving jurisdiction in Australia, but we are coming from a long way back and we need to acknowledge that.

When it comes down to it, our educators, our director-general and the previous minister for education, John-Paul Langbroek, can certainly truly be proud of their achievements.

I find it incredible that on page 12 of Budget Paper No. 4 there is no mention of Great Results Guarantee funding beyond mid-2016.

Ms Jones: It is the same as your budget paper, darling—exactly the same.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I repeat for the minister: there is no Great Results Guarantee funding beyond mid-2016.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! Minister, the member is not taking interjections.

Mr BOOTHMAN: We understand the importance of numeracy and literacy—giving our children the best start in life, empowering educators to build a better tomorrow.

We in this chamber have witnessed the Treasurer saying ‘Jobs, jobs, jobs’, but nearly every pro-job project in the Albert area was started under the LNP government. This further emphasises this current Labor government’s lack of experience and blatant self-endorsement while stealing the entitlements of everyday hardworking government employees. This budget has nothing but a whole lot of spin, delivering nothing but lip-service: no plan, no vision.

 **Mr RUSSO** (Sunnybank—ALP) (10.52 pm): I rise in this House to speak in support of the appropriation bills, the Queensland budget 2015-16. Before I proceed with my prepared speech, I will go off script—

An opposition member: Don’t do that.

Mr RUSSO: I am going to, because it is important that you guys listen to this. This is a report card on our budget, which you guys have been criticising continually. Someone else, some independent person—

Opposition members interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Sunnybank, you have the call, but your comments will be directed through the chair.

Mr RUSSO: PeakCare Queensland is a not-for-profit organisation with a membership base comprising non-government organisations involved in providing child protection, out-of-home care and related services. A network of supporters made up of individuals or other entities with an interest in child protection is part of PeakCare. I will relate what PeakCare had to say about youth mental health services. Today in this House we heard the Premier speak of the importance of the Barrett centre. PeakCare had this to say about our budget and restoring the Barrett centre—

PeakCare has held longstanding concerns about the lack of specialised youth mental health services in Queensland. Member agencies have similarly reported their concerns about assisting children and young people to access suitable services.

PeakCare is pleased therefore that the budget allocates an amount of \$11.8 million over four years to honour the Government’s election promise to ‘rebuild mental healthcare for young people’. The Government’s budget papers state this will be expended on:

- additional day services and expanded youth residential mental health services in Townsville, and
- initiation of a Commission of Inquiry into the closure of the Barrett Adolescent Centre with the aim to restore and improve mental health services in the **south-east corner** of the State.

PeakCare welcomes the opportunity that a Commission of Inquiry will present in examining the best range of options for improving youth mental health service models and their delivery.

That is something positive about the budget that I thought honourable members opposite would be interested to hear. I would also like to outline some of the benefits that will flow to my electorate of Sunnybank.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! There is an awful lot of conversation on both sides in the House. If members feel the need to have a conversation, please leave the chamber.

Mr RUSSO: There are a number of great institutions in the Sunnybank electorate that will benefit from the Palaszczuk Labor government budget: the QEII Jubilee Hospital, the Acacia Ridge TAFE Queensland SkillsTech campus and great schools.

I have visited QEII hospital a number of times. I had a memorable visit with Minister Bailey, the member for Yeerongpilly, on 12 June. My second visit was with the Queensland Nurses’ Union on 2 July. The patients and staff at the QEII Jubilee Hospital will benefit greatly from the record investment being made by the Palaszczuk government to restore and expand health services. The Palaszczuk government’s first budget will restore balance to the health system, with significant investments in front-line services, patient safety and preventative health.

The budget will address real issues created by those opposite and will reverse cuts to front-line services. There will be \$110.7 million over four years, in addition to internal funding, to offer up to 4,000 additional places to new Queensland nurse and midwifery graduates and 16 new nurse educator positions in Queensland's hospital and health services.

I had the pleasure of being able to visit this great hospital and its hardworking, dedicated staff. It has become abundantly clear that the hardworking staff at this hospital are truly dedicated to patient care—

Ms Jones: They looked after my granddad when he was dying. They're brilliant.

Mr RUSSO: I take that interjection—and provide a great service to the people of the Sunnybank electorate. The hardworking staff at the QEII hospital have spoken of the difficulties caused by those sitting opposite with the severe and unnecessary cuts to staff at the QEII hospital and other hospitals in the south metropolitan area. By severely reducing staff, for reasons completely unknown, the previous government put patient safety at risk, in addition to placing stress on nurses, staff, patients and their families, who were greatly affected by those unnecessary, cruel cuts. The record investment to restore and expand health services will be greatly welcomed by the people in my electorate.

It is obvious that the nurses and staff perform an outstanding professional role and are genuinely compassionate and committed to the welfare of their patients. The Palaszczuk Labor government is committed to ensuring that this does not continue under its watch and is genuinely committed to restoring the nursing staff ratios in the Metro South region.

I now turn to the Acacia Ridge TAFE. This campus delivers over 120 pre-apprenticeships and post-trade programs to more than 22,000 students each year. The Acacia Ridge campus provides a safe, modern, world-class facility for its students. It boasts state-of-the-art facilities for engineering and automotive and has an automotive precinct and electrical training facility. The budget, as the Treasurer said in his first reading speech, is about creating jobs now and jobs for the future. The budget has five key priorities: skills and training, enhancing business productivity, boosting government services, fostering emerging and innovative industries, and growing our regions. The budget also delivers an additional \$34.5 million in funding to restore TAFE over the next four years to ensure more Queenslanders are job ready. This injection of funds will greatly enhance the ability of the Acacia Ridge TAFE campus to prepare students for skills that will be matched to jobs—jobs of the future.

The last highlight that I want to address about the budget in support of the Appropriation Bill is the increase in funding for our schools in this state. As a result of Labor's election promise to commit an additional 875 teachers as part of 2,500 total new teachers in this term of government, the Sunnybank electorate is expected to receive up to 10 new full-time-equivalent teacher resources over the next three years across state, state high schools and special schools as part of this initiative, which may include letting teachers teach, providing more curriculum coordination time, more teacher release time, more specialist teachers in high schools, more deputy principals and more support for principals and teaching principals. I commend the Appropriation Bill to the House.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before calling the honourable member for Beaudesert, again can I ask that the conversation in the House becomes much softer than what it is and, if you need to have a conversation, please leave the Assembly so that you can do it.

 **Mr KRAUSE** (Beaudesert—LNP) (11.02 pm): A couple of weeks ago I was driving up Tamborine Mountain Road from Canungra and I actually passed the member for Sunnybank driving down the road.

Mr Russo: I was lost!

Mr KRAUSE: I had not even got to that yet, but I take that interjection. I passed the member for Sunnybank driving down Tamborine Mountain Road towards Canungra. I saw the red sign on the side of his car and I thought, 'What's he doing here?' As it turned out, I was going to say that he was taking the scenic route to O'Reilly's. A number of other members may have taken the scenic route to O'Reilly's as well. The whole Scenic Rim local area is a very scenic route and I encourage all members opposite to visit O'Reilly's again, and I know you probably had a very good time on your little love-in up there recently. I do not know if members opposite knew that it was in the Beaudesert electorate, but I belatedly welcome you all to O'Reilly's. In fact, in about two weeks time it is the 100th anniversary of the proclamation of Lamington National Park, so it would be a good excuse to visit again. Unfortunately I was not given an invitation to welcome you all to the Beaudesert electorate a couple of weeks ago. I would have really welcomed that opportunity, but it was not to be.

Another event held recently in the Scenic Rim was Eat Local Week, which included Lamington National Park. Tourism and Events Queensland funded Eat Local Week to the tune of about \$20,000 from last year's budget. I encourage the Minister for Tourism to provide some funding for that event next year as well because it is a fantastic event for the region to encourage the local tourism industry and to encourage people to be more aware of what is really in our backyard in South-East Queensland.

I agree with one thing that the Premier and Treasurer have said in relation to this budget: this truly is a Labor budget. It has taken a little while since the election, but with this budget a line is drawn in the sand. The people of Queensland can now see how this government is going to govern. As you peel back the layers—peel back the spin—applied to the tricky manoeuvres deployed by the Treasurer, we see that this budget is really made up of Labor's DNA: more debt, higher power prices and little, if anything, for businesses in our community that create jobs for Queenslanders. This budget is bad for growth. It is bad for jobs. Indeed, the budget papers predict that, despite millions of dollars being thrown at employment programs, unemployment will stay at 6.5 per cent. Nineteen new bureaucracies are being created and dozens of reviews being undertaken, but Labor's own budget predicts unemployment will stay at 6.5 per cent.

The shiftiness of this budget starts with the shifting of \$4 billion worth of debt from the government to the books of the GOCs, including Energex, Ergon and Powerlink. I know the Treasurer thinks that GOC debt is not actually government debt, but the ratings agencies do. They look at Queensland's credit as a whole and they are not impressed. Under this government, Queensland will never recover its AAA credit rating—a rating that was very carelessly surrendered by Anna Bligh and Andrew Fraser when they went on a spending binge in the last term of the last Labor government when government expenses went up by around nine per cent on average per year each year.

I can tell members who else will know that GOC debt is real debt, and that is every Queenslanders who pays an electricity bill. The extra debt loaded into Energex, Ergon and Powerlink will put upward pressure on power prices. This is madness after the past 10 years of power price hikes brought about by the shocking policy decisions of Peter Beattie back in 2005-06 and the deliberate gouging of Queenslanders by Andrew Fraser in 2009 when he penned a letter asking for Energex and Ergon to be permitted by the regulator to charge consumers more. It is madness that Labor is doing it again. It is unbelievable, but its actions are pushing up power prices again after three years of an LNP administration that battled to bring them under control. But it is not just this extra burden of debt that will force up power prices. This government, asleep at the wheel, is overseeing Energex and Ergon going back to the regulator to seek approval for even more money to be charged to consumers. About half of an average power bill is made up of Energex or Ergon and Powerlink charges. In April the Australian Energy Regulator made a preliminary decision to reduce the amount that Energex, Ergon and Powerlink can charge by about one-quarter—about 25 per cent—meaning lower power prices for everybody. As a result, the average household's power bill will decrease slightly in 2015-16 according to that preliminary decision and small business accounts will also go down—not by a huge amount but clearly the work that the LNP did in bringing about cost control to Energex, Ergon and Powerlink to ensure that they were operating efficiently paid off and some relief for consumers was at hand.

But this is all at risk because Energex and Ergon want more revenue. They want more revenue and this means more price hikes for Queenslanders. I call on the government and the Minister for Energy and Water Supply to put a stop to this, to direct Energex and Ergon to withdraw their submission which was lodged with the Australian Energy Regulator on 3 July—a submission which asked for permission from the regulator to charge Queenslanders more—and for the government to recognise that enough is enough. It is reflective of the arrogance already seeping into the government that it would allow the GOCs—Energex, Ergon and Powerlink—to tax Queenslanders more through higher electricity prices. It is a drain on our economy, it is an impediment to growth and jobs which those opposite talk so much about and it is also, in some cases, the viability of an entire sector that is being put at risk, including the agricultural sector which represents much of my electorate. The member for Burnett and I have had many discussions about the impact of high power prices that have gone up so much over the last few years and their impact on canegrowers and on other agricultural sectors.

So with higher power prices, more debt and drains on our economy, this really is a true Labor budget. This year, the Public Service is expected to grow by about 3,000 jobs and by a further 10,000 by 2018. Where is the funding for those jobs coming from? Not only has Labor increased car registration by more than twice the rate of inflation but also it has now raided funding set aside for the long service leave entitlements and superannuation entitlements of public servants. I note that Alex Scott from the Together union was none too happy with some elements of this budget. I dare say that this is one aspect that he is not happy about, along with the suggestion that state assets might be sold to QIC, like

Queensland Motorways was back in 2011 when it was sneakily off-loaded by the Bligh government. An amount of \$5.4 billion, set aside for long service leave and super payments, has been raided, but only \$2.6 billion will be used to pay down debt. In any case, under Labor debt will continue to rise.

I also see today that the Treasurer has announced changes to workers compensation laws. No doubt, these changes will send WorkCover premiums up again. Under reforms introduced by the LNP government, WorkCover premiums decreased by on average 17 per cent for businesses. Businesses of all sizes pay WorkCover premiums. If the premiums increase, that will cost jobs. For a government that claims to be all about jobs, Labor certainly acts to destroy jobs by increasing payroll tax—which it is doing in this budget by deferring planned increases in the threshold for payroll tax—putting pressure on WorkCover premiums and implementing an infrastructure freeze. I see that the Capital Works Program for the Gold Coast-Logan region is down seven per cent from last year. How can the government be supporting jobs when it is freezing capital works? When the LNP was in office, nearly every project in the budget was underway. This reduction in capital works will cost locals jobs. Clearly, Labor is taking the region for granted.

A number of programs that were of great benefit to the entire state, but in particular to my electorate, have been abolished, abandoned or cut by this Labor Party government. The Everyone's Environment program was a great program that was introduced by the former minister for environment and heritage protection. It has been cut. That program enabled local community groups to get out there and support their local environment, such as clean up the riverbanks at Canungra, which the Canungra State School Green Team did, or get into some reserves on Tamborine Mountain that had not been maintained properly by the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service and the Scenic Rim Regional Council over a number of years. Tamborine Mountain Landcare obtained a grant from the Everyone's Environment grant program and got in there and cleaned up those reserves. Everyone's Environment is gone. Caring for Our Community is gone. That was a grant program that enabled small grants to be given to community groups to help them with the small expenses that would take a lot of fundraising to meet. That program has been cut, cut, cut.

Despite the Labor Party promise to stop outsourcing, it continues in Health. That says a lot about the Labor Party. It always says one thing before an election and does another after the election. I note the vast improvements in health services that have occurred in my neck of the woods during the term of the previous government, particularly at the Beaudesert Hospital, where the opposition leader, as the minister for health, presided over the recommencement of maternity services and a number of other procedural services.

An honourable member: It's a beautiful hospital.

Mr KRAUSE: It is a beautiful hospital. It is fantastic that, since 5 March last year when it was officially opened by the then minister, Lawrence Springborg and me, over 250 people have come into the world there. But we did not introduce just maternity services; other services have been restored to that hospital as well, which was so abandoned and neglected by the former Labor government over a period of 10 or 12 years. It really just did not give any support, political or administrative, to that region of the world, which has been growing at quite a fast rate for a number of years. There were also improvements to the emergency department of Boonah Hospital. There was great investment in Ipswich Hospital as well, which is a key hospital for the Boonah region. I call on the government, in this budget process, to ensure that funding that was allocated for the introduction of even more services at Beaudesert Hospital is kept so that services planned by Metro South Health can proceed.

I refer in particular to the plans that were in place for the introduction of endoscopy services at Beaudesert Hospital. The equipment that was to be provided out of the budget of the Department of Health was to cost in the range of \$200,000 to \$300,000 per year. I also look for an assurance that operating costs associated with the introduction of endoscopy services will be met by the Department of Health. I know that there were also plans to expand the range of telemedicine facilities that are available at Beaudesert Hospital so that people who need to consult with specialists do not need to travel to the PA Hospital, the QEII Hospital or the Logan Hospital. Telemedicine is a great way of achieving these goals. We budgeted for three of those machines to be put in place at Beaudesert Hospital at a cost of \$60,000. I have correspondence from the Minister for Health, the member for Woodridge, setting out that the number of machines will be based on an assessment of need. There was money in the budget for three of those machines and I think that three of those machines should be provided to the hospital now to provide those services. We do not want that money to be stripped away or siphoned off to another facility. That money was dedicated for a particular purpose and it should be applied to that purpose, because my area is a very fast-growing region.

Some members may have seen recent media reports—in fact, there was a very good segment about it on the ABC, which I know a lot of members listen to quite regularly—about the fantastic growth that is going on in Beaudesert. A 300-hectare property is being developed for around 2,000 housing lots. In addition, there is Yarrabilba, which is a state development area and which was approved by some of the members opposite when they were last in government. Mind you, they did not plan for the infrastructure at Yarrabilba. That area is going to need health services. When Yarrabilba becomes quite a large area it will put a lot of pressure on Logan Hospital and the PA Hospital. So we need to build services at Beaudesert Hospital to take the pressure off those two hospitals. There should not be any siphoning off of funds that were allocated for Beaudesert Hospital. I call upon the government to allocate that money.

The former government also put in place plans for the introduction of a CT scanner at Beaudesert Hospital. Although no definitive time line was put on the delivery of that CT scanner, Metro South Health had committed to doing that in this term of government. I call on the government to ensure that any capital funding that Metro South Health asks for in that respect is provided in either this budget or future budgets.

It is a crying shame that the Mums and Bubs program has been cut. This was a fantastic initiative undertaken by the LNP government to provide home visits for new mums and their bubs to offer some assistance in the first four weeks after birth. That program provided practical help to new mums in nurturing their newborns in those early weeks. It is a shame that that program has been cut. It is incredible that this new government would take an axe to the funding of that sort of program.

Labor has continued to be soft on crime, stripping money away from the CCC, which is fighting criminal motorcycle gangs. Over the years, criminal motorcycle gangs have been a scourge on Queensland and my government's approach to cracking down on them has been very effective. Unfortunately, that money has been taken away from the CCC. That just shows that the members opposite do not understand the risk posed by those gangs to the general public on the Gold Coast and other affected areas.

Mr Rickuss: They don't understand the CCC, I don't think.

Mr KRAUSE: I take that interjection. During our term of government, we brought in a number of improvements to other sectors. Education was one of them. The Great Results Guarantee provided an avenue for school principals to direct funding for literacy and numeracy in the way in which they saw fit and which was best for their community. I see that the budget papers show that that program will be discontinued after this financial year.

In my electorate, principals and teachers at Beaudesert State High School, Boonah State School and a number of other state schools have told me about how great it is that they can look at their kids, see how they need to be helped and actually design programs and spend money in ways that help children with their particular needs. Obviously, the approach of this government will be more top down, because that is the Labor way. It will be more directive from the centre to prescribe the way that schools need to spend that money. It is cruel to have it cut away. I know that all of our schools will feel the impact of this.

In terms of Main Roads, the budget does not fund some projects that I feel should have been funded. In particular, I refer to much needed upgrades to the Beaudesert-Nerang Road around Biddaddaba. Funding for that project has been sought for around 20 years and recently the Department of Transport and Main Roads has agreed to fund it. Unfortunately, upon the change of government it seems that that project has fallen off the radar. However, I will continue to fight for that project because gravel on state roads in such a fast-growing area is not an acceptable standard. It may have been 20 or 30 years ago, but today it is not. We need to see those upgrades go ahead.

In terms of the racing industry, I have written to Minister Byrne and again I call on Minister Byrne to come out to Beaudesert to consult with country racing stakeholders, because they are concerned about the direction of the industry. They are concerned about the lack of direction that this government has given the industry. Sacking a whole board for thoroughbreds, greyhounds and harness racing, based on some of the negative outcomes in the greyhound industry, is a bridge too far. It was an absolute overreaction. I call on the minister to get out there and consult with country racing. It is a big part of the economy in this region. I know that the minister will heed that call, because it is vital for our region.

The government has cancelled payroll tax incentives that were going to come into effect in the LNP's term in government. In Queensland, we need confidence in the economy. This confidence cannot come until we have a government with a clear direction to place Queensland's finances on a firm

footing. We are not going to get that from this Labor government. I know that the Treasurer is patiently hoping that growth will come in such a measure that revenues will take care of the deficit and all of the debt, but coming into this place and presenting a budget full of smoke and mirrors, and shifting debt from one place to another, will not create the confidence that business needs to invest and create jobs.

(Time expired)

 **Hon. AJ LYNHAM** (Stafford—ALP) (Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines) (11.22 pm): This government will live within its financial means. The world's financial markets have been a roller-coaster lately, with volatility substantially increased, reflecting the issues in Europe with Greece and, closer to home, concerns about China's economy and the Shanghai stock market also contributing to destabilising international markets. Basic economics is enough to tell me that uncertainty is one commodity that the global financial markets fear and abhor. Stability and certainty are the commodities that are now required. Thankfully, the path our state treasurer has detailed in his 2015 budget is responsible and achievable and is a case of living within our means.

This government is working to create the solid economic foundations that will ensure Queensland can grow and prosper. While the federal government sets the national agenda, state governments have a key role to play in responsible policy setting to promote and further the state's economy. My portfolio encompasses both the Department of State Development and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, both of which are tasked with driving the economic development of Queensland across industry sectors. My Department of State Development has a clear charter to partner actively with business to promote commercially and environmentally sustainable developments to proceed and our total expenditure this financial year of \$620 million will be used to do just that.

However, during fiscally challenging times getting returns for the state means we have to be more prudent with Queensland's money. A clear example of this is the department's \$900,000 decision to renew its commitment to QMI Solutions to assist local suppliers gain the opportunity to tender for work in major projects across the state. QMI is a not-for-profit organisation that originally began as the Queensland Manufacturing Institute. It identifies opportunities for buyers to replace imports and buy local goods, generating jobs and business opportunities across Queensland. The government has been partnering with QMI Solutions since 2008 to deliver services that support the state's local industry policy. This partnership has generated work for Queensland firms on projects such as the new-generation rolling stock project at Ipswich, the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital and the Moreton Bay Rail Link. QMI has made a real difference for business in Queensland, securing in the last year \$330 million in contracts across the transport, rail and construction industries. This budget allocation for QMI is a targeted, responsible investment that is delivering tangible results in contracts and jobs for Queenslanders.

Also, in the not-too-distant future the government will name the preferred bidder for the multibillion dollar Queen's Wharf integrated resort development in Brisbane. This once-in-a-generation development will remake the George Street precinct of the central business district, creating 3,000 jobs during construction and 8,000 very important ongoing operational jobs, delivering additional community benefits such as hotels, retail, restaurants and, most importantly, enhanced active public space.

As the most decentralised state in the nation, Queensland's regions play an integral part in the prosperity of the state. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics and Queensland Treasury data show that the regions contribute about 95 percent of the state's total agricultural and mining exports. While there have been shifts in the mining sector, regional Queensland continues to drive development opportunities. The size of Queensland's regional economies, at about \$100 billion in 2010-11, exceeded the combined size of the Tasmanian, Northern Territory and ACT economies at that time. For that reason, we recently announced our new Building Our Regions program. It is an infrastructure bonanza that will pump \$200 million over the next two years into regional projects, supporting about 600 jobs across the state. The importance of the regions to our state's economy cannot be overstated, which is why we have made the decision to bring forward funding of \$100 million to this financial year, instead of commencing in the 2016-17 financial year. The program will fund critical economic infrastructure including airports, transport and road projects, flood mitigation projects such as levees and drainage works, and community infrastructure such as water, waste water and sewerage projects.

This government is focused on creating jobs and supporting economic development in our many vibrant regional Queensland communities. As a government with many regional members, we know that our strength lies in those regional towns and cities. The new Building our Regions program will fund projects that tackle infrastructure constraints for local businesses in those communities. I want local governments to come to us with projects that will be catalysts in their communities for economic growth and local jobs.

I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated into the parliamentary record.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Furner): Has the minister run the speech by the Speaker?

Dr LYNHAM: I have, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Leave granted.

My department is also delivering job creating projects for Queensland including the expansion of Abbot Point and the Galilee Basin State Development Area. Abbot Point currently has a capacity of 50 million tonnes per annum.

The proposed expansion will increase capacity by 70 million tonnes per annum to cater for additional coal from the Galilee Basin.

The declaration and implementation of the Galilee Basin SDA is a critical initiative to support the opening up of the Galilee Basin and provide an efficient way to transport coal to the Port of Abbot Point in multi-use corridors. We are delivering this project in line with our election commitments and our Reef 2050 Plan, with the dredge spoil to be dumped on the T2 site at the port, and the project to be fully paid for by the proponents.

The draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project will soon be released for the full 20 days public consultation.

The Townsville Stadium Project is another initiative which will be a game changer in North Queensland. This government is delivering on its promise to commit \$100 million to support the development of the Townsville Stadium, with \$5 million being allocated in this year's state budget to move the project forward and enable the development of a business case and funding model as well.

I hope the Federal Government, and other commercial parties which will benefit strongly from the project, will come to the table to ensure we can give North Queenslanders the stadium they want and they deserve.

This government also recognises that the agriculture and resources sectors are vital to the state economy for the jobs, regional growth and significant benefits that they deliver.

We also have a firm commitment to ensuring the sustainable management and use of Queensland's natural resources. These land, water and mining resources play a significant role in the ongoing economic health and prosperity of Queensland.

They support the key agricultural and resource sectors that contribute so greatly to the Queensland economy, provide jobs for many thousands of Queenslanders, and are the lifeblood of regional and rural communities.

Mr Speaker, today's State Budget invests more than \$449 million in 2015-16 across the natural resources and mines portfolio.

It includes \$29.7 million to support drought-affected landholders, protect water resources and underpin the sustainable management and use of our resources.

It delivers measures to help ease the financial burden of landholders crippled by the ongoing drought.

It will also deliver better departmental online services; boost coal seam gas industry compliance and manage public safety risks associated with abandoned mines.

Currently, about 80 per cent of Queensland is drought-affected.

Landholders and businesses alike are doing it very tough.

To help ease the financial hardship of leaseholders in drought-declared communities, the government will forgo about \$4.1 million in revenue by deferring certain rents and waiving water fees during 2015-16. These relief measures are part of the broader four-year \$52.1 million Drought Assistance Package across several departments to support drought-affected communities across the State.

My department will play its part and:

- defer all rural rent payments for more than 7,800 Category 11 primary production and grazing leases (with no penalty interest accrued) in drought-declared areas until 30 June 2016;
- provide a 12 per cent rent rebate to all Category 11 tenures in drought-declared areas, returning a total \$3.2 million in rent to more than 4,660 leaseholders at an average \$686 per rebate depending on property size, location and annual rent paid;
- waive the \$74 annual water licence fee for drought-declared properties for this financial year saving approximately 11,000 water licence holders a collective \$814,000 in fees;
- waive the \$117.50 water licence application fee for new applications seeking licences to take water for stock and domestic purposes until 30 June 2016.

These are practical measures that will help make a difference.

Mr Speaker, one of Queensland's most precious natural resources are the water aquifers of the Great Artesian Basin that lie beneath most of our great state.

The Great Artesian Basin provides vital, reliable water supplies for stock, domestic, town water, industrial and mining purposes.

Sadly, some of this precious water continues to be lost flowing unchecked from uncapped water bores; some of which were drilled a century ago.

That is why the Palaszczuk Government will invest a further \$8 million with the Commonwealth in 2015-16 to support water bore capping and piping works through stage 4 of the Great Artesian Basin Sustainability Initiative in Queensland.

My department will also invest \$13.7 million, including \$7.8 million in capital funding, to modernise and enhance online services.

This will assist our customers to interact with the Department in a new way, making it easier and more convenient to do business and giving users the capability to see a history of all business transactions through online capability.

Mr Speaker, government has a role in supporting the resources sector by providing industry investment certainty, efficient processes and timely decision-making.

Safety in the resources sector is paramount to ensure its long term sustainability and this budget will see a number of measures put in place to ensure that Queensland continues to put safety at the forefront of its priorities.

That is why the government will invest a further \$3.6 million in 2015-16 to fund compliance activities by the Coal Seam Gas Compliance Unit; including investigation of landholder concerns about the impact of CSG operations, including impacts on water bores.

The management of public safety risks associated with abandoned mine sites on State-owned land also rests with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines through its ongoing Abandoned Mine Lands Program which commenced in 2002.

These are long-abandoned, derelict mine sites where the resource company no longer exists and there are no legal avenues available to pursue individuals or companies to carry out site remediation.

This Budget provides a further \$6.2 million in 2015-16 for abandoned mine land management.

This includes funding for ongoing projects at major abandoned mine sites on state land; including the former Mount Morgan Mine site in central Queensland.

It will also support ongoing work to repair and make safe historic mine shafts and tunnels on land in Gympie, Charters Towers and other Queensland communities.

Mr Speaker, as I said earlier the Palaszczuk Government is committed to the sustainable management and use of Queensland's natural resources as well as to support for those sectors that contribute significantly to growth, jobs and the economic prosperity for Queensland.

Mr Speaker, I now wish to turn to my own electorate of Stafford.

Firstly, the Government's commitments to our nurses have been fully met, which will prove most beneficial to the staff and patients of the Prince Charles Hospital in my electorate.

For example, the Government is providing additional funding of \$110.7 million over 4 years, in addition to the internal funding allocated, to support up to 4,000 new one year graduate nursing places.

The Government is also providing additional funding of \$101.6 million over 4 years to support 400 Nurse Navigator positions, assisting patients to navigate across the health system a critical component of our nursing guarantee.

This is part of our \$14.2 billion 2015-16 health expenditure—up by over four per cent.

This health expenditure includes:

- a record \$633.3 million for ambulance services, including funds for 75 additional paramedics
- \$361.2 million over four years to reduce the waiting list for specialist outpatient appointments
- preventative health measures, specifically \$27.2 million over four years for Type 2 diabetes prevention and \$46.1 million over four years for the Healthier Queensland Action Plan. This is designed to stop or manage health problems before Queenslanders require more expensive hospital-based care. This includes expansion of the School Nurse Service, a Queensland Health Promotion Commission and Select Committee, the re-establishment of the Biala Sexual Health Clinic and supporting the Heart Foundation to expand its walking programs.

Mr Speaker, I am very happy that a number of critical projects and services have been funded in my electorate, meeting local needs.

The 2015-16 State Budget contains more than \$300,000 to boost grassroots sport for the Stafford electorate. Wilston Grange Australian Football Club players and supporters will have greatly improved facilities thanks to \$318,000 to build a two-storey multi-purpose clubhouse. The project will incorporate four changing rooms, training, medical, umpire, coach and strapping rooms as well as a community health administration office. Improving local sporting facilities is a priority and I want to congratulate the Grange Gorillas for showing a real ambition to grow and encourage more people to get involved.

Other local Budget highlights include:

- \$1.861 million to construct six new public housing dwellings;
- Up to 3 new full-time-equivalent teacher resources over the next 3 years as part of the commitment to 875 additional teachers. All schools in the Stafford electorate will benefit the commitment in some way.

As well, my electorate will benefit substantially from a range of community services to help those in need, including:

- \$2.703 million for out-of-home care placement services to ensure children and young people in need of protection are supported and safe;
- \$4.361 million of Disability Services funding, committed to assisting people with a disability and their families to access support services; and
- \$1.101 million of community care funding, which provides basic support to assist persons under 65 or an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person aged under 50, with a disability or condition that restricts their day-to-day living, to stay living at home.

This Budget delivers on those commitments and I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr DICKSON** (Buderim—LNP) (11.28 pm): I rise to make a contribution to this budget debate. Wasn't that something else? It was yet another magic trick from the Queensland Labor Party. The old white rabbit is looking a bit scruffy, but it is all those opposite have for the voters of Queensland because those opposite will say anything at an election in order to get across the line. In 2009 they promised the people of Queensland that there would be no asset sales and we all know what happened as soon as they were in power. In 2015 they promised two-thirds of the dividends of incoming-earning assets would go towards debt infrastructure in a plan that would have supposedly raised \$12 billion over a decade, but now the rabbit has come out of the hat and I am not sure that Queenslanders like the look of it. Instead of a magic pudding that includes the dividends of an income-earning asset, Queenslanders now have a plan that puts at risk one of Queensland's greatest fiscal advantages over the rest of Australia, that is, our fully funded public service entitlements.

The Labor government is raiding the funding pool set aside for long service leave entitlements, taking a holiday from contributing towards the defined benefit fund and passing debt onto the balance sheet of government owned corporations. If the Queensland Labor Party had taken its real plan and not the smoke and mirror plan of utilising the revenue of income-earning assets to the election we all know this House would have looked different today.

Shame on those opposite who are raiding the funding pool set aside for long service leave entitlements, taking a holiday from contributing towards the defined benefit fund and passing debt onto the balance sheet of government owned corporations. I am concerned about the Labor government dipping into the surplus of the defined benefit scheme. I am concerned that the Labor government is choosing to cut into this relatively small surplus in this post-GFC, post-mining boom decade of low interest rates, a stalled global economy and highly volatile stock market returns. Any reduction in the surplus position, when the investment returns are below expectation, reduces the capacity of the fund to withstand adverse outcomes.

I know that the Treasurer and the unions are out there telling the Queensland public that superannuation payments are absolutely and totally guaranteed. But what they fail to mention is that future governments and future generations of Queensland taxpayers will have to pick up the tab for this folly if there is a downturn that affects the underlying property and infrastructure assets. 'She'll be right' is apparently not a fiscal approach favoured by the likes of Moody's.

It appears the Labor government is not planning to stop there. We also learned on Tuesday that the Palaszczuk Labor government is considering directing the Queensland Investment Corporation to invest \$30 billion in super assets into state owned companies—the same ones they have just transferred \$4 billion in debt to—rather than picking the best global assets available.

I would like to turn to the racing industry. Just over three years ago this industry was left in a shambles by those opposite. The former LNP government made significant steps to rejuvenate the racing industry across Queensland during the last term of government. We overhauled management and took a number of steps to put the industry on a sound and secure footing for the future.

We did this through a number of initiatives. For the benefit of those new to the House this year, let me briefly touch on those initiatives. With governance reforms we set up a new all codes board, along with three code specific control boards, to give each code a greater say. With integrity reforms a new Racing Integrity Commissioner was appointed and a new racing disciplinary board was being set up. There was a new approach to the provision of racing facilities by refocusing the Industry Infrastructure Strategy and its expenditure of \$110 million over five years. We targeted financial support for country racing. We delivered a new wagering agreement in partnership with Tatts that will significantly benefit the industry by an additional \$850 million over the next 30 years. We delivered Australia's first \$10 million race day for 2016 on the Gold Coast with a seven year partnership agreement between Racing Queensland and Magic Millions.

The former LNP government worked hard to clean up Racing Queensland because we wanted it to be an industry we can be proud of—one that is open, transparent and accountable. The integrity of Queensland's 30,000 strong racing industry should be paramount. That is why the former LNP government provided a fresh start for racing in Queensland by appointing the new Queensland All Codes Racing Industry Board, QACRIB, and the three code specific control boards. These appointments were made through a transparent selection process, at arm's length from government, which was in stark contrast to the past where appointments of the directors to the board of Racing Queensland were shrouded in mystery and open to claims of cronyism.

There is no doubt that the former Labor government drove the Queensland racing industry to the brink of destruction. The serious allegations raised regarding the conduct of those once trusted to run racing were such that the former LNP government undertook a wideranging commission of inquiry into the Queensland racing industry under the former Labor government's watch.

The Queensland Racing Commission of Inquiry found the industry was plagued with serious management failures under the previous Labor government and recommended a number of former board members and senior racing executives be investigated by the Australian Securities and Investments Commission. We would think that those opposite would take note. We would think that they would learn. Have they? Alas, but unsurprisingly, the answer is no. No, they have learnt nothing. Those opposite still see the racing industry as a political plaything. At the very first opportunity it had, the Labor government sacked the racing boards. It is an absolute disgrace.

The very people who were appointed through a transparent selection process, conducted at arm's length from the government, the very people who secured a foundation for the next 30 years for the racing industry in Queensland by negotiating an excellent wagering deal that received interstate praise, the very people who provided investment in country racing and secured the biggest race day in the nation got unceremoniously axed out of pure political spite. We have already seen what happens when you axe a board out of pure political spite with no further thought for the future of an entire industry. Unsurprisingly, and as we would expect, it cost the industry and it also cost Queensland taxpayers.

The Labor government had no one to inform them on immediate priorities. Despite the assurances made by the racing minister on Tuesday this week that he has been top of all things racing in Queensland, Labor has sadly dropped the ball. They dropped the ball on a deal. The state had until 30 June of this year to enter into a joint venture with TattsBet to produce a virtual racing product that was not in conflict with an existing Keno exclusivity arrangement. This was according to Treasury advice. We have heard several times this week from those opposite how sacrosanct advice from the independent officers of Treasury is—unless it does not suit them, apparently.

The former LNP government made the virtual racing product part of the original wagering agreement because we were confident we could get the deal done. Treasury obtained legal advice at the time which suggested the virtual racing product under consideration would not be in conflict with Keno's own exclusivity deal. So, now Queenslanders will not only miss out on \$7.5 million because Labor could not do a deal in time, they will also miss out on a share of future profits from this partnership, which are conservatively estimated at least \$15 million per year. Instead they would prefer to stick with a deal that delivers zero revenue for racing in Queensland. No amount of grandstanding by the Attorney-General or the racing minister can hide the fact that they have left the racing industry exposed out of pure political spite.

The racing minister stood in the House on Tuesday and said he was proud of everything he had done in the racing portfolio. I say that \$7.5 million would be one instance where he could have done better. That money would have been better spent elsewhere. The racing minister cares so much about racing in Queensland that racing warranted one measly line in his media release—one throwaway line that stated, 'A further \$38 million has been allocated in 2015-16 for racing infrastructure projects.' That is it.

To make it worse, these projects were those already begun by the LNP and delayed for no good reason by the minister—for no explainable reason. There was no explanation as to where this money is going. There was no explanation what the government is doing to provide clarity and security for the 30,000 Queenslanders who work within the racing industry.

The racing minister stood in this House earlier today and said he uncovered an unhealthy level of poorly documented agreements and commitments for further funding increases for Racing Queensland. The minister said that these combined factors have led to a perfect storm of financial unsustainability. But this seems to be a storm of the minister's own making. I table a statement released today by the previous racing board.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 16 July 2015, titled 'Statement by previous Board of Racing Queensland' [\[814\]](#).

It states with regard to the financial position of Racing Queensland at the time their term was ended that the financial position for 2014-15 was a loss of \$5 million for the year. This loss was entirely driven by lower than budgeted thoroughbred wagering revenue, driven by the extended closure of Eagle Farm and the unexpected delay in the relaunch of UBET. These revenue shortfalls can be expected to reverse as the drivers are corrected.

As has been well documented, the Racing Queensland board was unable to share its strategy and has been unable to consult with the government, and any suggested strategies were routinely ignored. The racing minister should demand better advice and not take the word of former disgruntled board members from the previous Labor administration area. The racing minister should stop talking the industry down. The racing industry in Queensland deserves better than this.

I welcome the allocation of \$30 million for the brand-new eight-court indoor state netball centre to be built at the Queensland Sport and Athletics Centre at Nathan. It must have been a great day when the sports minister opened the drawer and out popped a fully costed plan that was drafted by Stadiums Queensland at the request of the former LNP government. The Treasurer and the Minister for Sport forgot to mention at their big announcement that they were announcing yet another LNP initiative. I also note that the Treasurer and the Minister for Sport went for the state netball centre light version and that the Firebirds are still without a show court under their proposal.

I also welcome the additional investment in the former LNP government's flagship Get in the Game program, which delivers much needed funds for grassroots sports throughout Queensland. We heard the Minister for Sport fumbling through his answer in reply to a Dorothy Dixier on Tuesday. Only the member for Rockhampton can make Get in the Game sound boring. I did not think it would be possible—but he did. While answering the question, the Minister for Sport of course forgot to mention that Get in the Game was also an initiative of the former LNP government. While answering the question, the Minister for Sport forgot to mention that the previous Labor government had neglected grassroots sports in Queensland and that under the previous Labor government there were no initiatives to reduce the cost of participating in sport for Queensland families.

I suggest that the Minister for Sport looks into the Get in the Game program and gets excited—truly excited, because this is a great program delivering great outcomes across Queensland. I suggest that the Minister for Sport travels around Queensland to see the difference this great LNP initiative has made for hundreds of sporting and recreation clubs and thousands of young Queenslanders. There are many locations to visit, with over 1,400 projects delivering new equipment and training to clubs, over 360 clubs receiving significant facility upgrades and over 67,000 Queenslanders and their families benefiting from cost-of-living savings thanks to this great Get in the Game initiative by the LNP government.

While the minister acquaints himself with this program, I suggest that he also takes a closer look at the forward estimates, which clearly include a Get in the Game allocation well in excess of the \$10 million he referred to. But, then again, maths has never been a strong point for those opposite—which is why Queensland is burdened with \$80 billion in Labor debt. But, apart from rifling through the drawers, where are the new ideas?

I would like to turn my attention to the Sunshine Coast and my electorate of Buderim. I welcome funding for the Sunshine Coast Public University Hospital, but I am very concerned that the government have not committed to providing the road network to support the delivery of the hospital, nor have they provided clarity about expected shortfalls in operational costs. I also remind honourable members that it was a Labor government who delayed the hospital for years before the LNP prioritised the development and started to deliver this essential infrastructure. Labor need to explain to Sunshine Coast residents how they intend to deal with the road pressures and congestion that will be generated once the hospital opens in 2016. Why is this government not willing to deliver the infrastructure to support this new facility?

I have spoken in this House before about the urgent need for clarity on the Labor government's plan for the Mooloolah River interchange on the Sunshine Coast which will provide a critical link to the new Sunshine Coast University Hospital. I cannot stress enough how crucial this piece of infrastructure is. I have said it before: the people of the Sunshine Coast need clarity and they deserve clarity on the Labor government's plan for the Sunshine Coast moving into the future.

The traffic issues on the Sunshine Motorway are worsening by the day, and this could be alleviated by an upgrade, particularly at the Mountain Creek interchange, which sits in my electorate of Buderim. This is infrastructure that Queenslanders on the Sunshine Coast desperately need, but it is unlikely that this budget is going to provide it. Seasoned industry groups like the Property Council see straight through the smoke and mirrors and said, '... they will be building the infrastructure the government can afford, rather than the infrastructure Queensland needs.'

As a local member I am concerned that this budget fails to address unemployment and cost-of-living pressures in my electorate. This budget fails to deliver any real job-creating projects for the Sunshine Coast which will hurt our local economy and see locals travelling to Brisbane for employment.

All things considered, what should we conclude from the budget? I will tell the House what I have concluded from it: the Queensland Labor Party took Queenslanders for a ride at the last election. They said they would not sell assets and now they want to invest Queensland public servant entitlements in energy assets, which is nothing more than asset sales by stealth.

We also know that Labor's election debt reduction plan to merge energy businesses and use dividends has all but been scrapped. We know that financial experts have lined up expressing concern about the direction the Queensland government is taking, extraordinarily brazen in its disregard for public finance accounting standards. This is not fiscal repair; this is a fiscal charade. We also know that the Labor government has \$2 billion worth of election promises and has now told ministers to find the savings through 'offsets and reprioritisations' which have not been identified. Where is this money coming from, and what programs and services will be scrapped?

Queenslanders deserve an answer to these questions and, frankly, Queenslanders deserve better from those opposite. When the headline reads 'Queensland Budget 2015: Public servant super funds to pay down debt', there is something seriously wrong, and those opposite should be ashamed—thoroughly ashamed—of what they have done. When all is said and done, the figures show that Labor will take out \$5.4 billion to reduce Queensland's overall debt only by \$2.6 billion. Where is the rest of the money going?

This budget is also not doing anything to create jobs, with unemployment forecast to remain much the same, despite spending \$1.6 billion on job creation initiatives. Let me say that again: spending \$1.6 billion on job creation initiatives with the budget not showing any improvement in unemployment figures. Then there is, of course, an additional \$1 billion expenditure of Queensland taxpayers' money for thousands of extra Public Service jobs. Someone has to pick up the tab for this folly, and it will be future generations of Queensland taxpayers. This budget proves that Labor has no plan for jobs, no plan for growth, no plan to improve business confidence and no plan to avoid the debt and deficits disaster that they left Queensland last time.

I must comment about the feral pests that the environment minister spoke about this morning. He thinks that we created them all in Queensland. They forget that they were in power for nearly 20 years. They bestowed two million 20-kilogram cats on the people of Queensland and 4½ million wild boars and pigs. What are they going to do about it? And what about their green friends—the National Parks Association and Paul Donatiu? I actually offered to buy some hoes for them so they could go out and dig some of the buffel grass out of the national park and they said, 'We're not going to do that. That is hard work.' They should be doing something to help fix Queensland. They have no idea. They have no plan. They have no strategies. They have no money. But what they are really good at is misleading Queenslanders. They have done it before when they said, 'We won't sell assets.' They are doing it again here today.

Mr Dick interjected.

Mr DICKSON: Minister for Health, you should be the last person to speak up. Do not forget the Tahitian prince and the \$2 billion spent on the payroll system. You were here. You sat in the cabinet room. You were part of the plan.

Ladies and gentlemen, we live in a great state. We know that the LNP has a plan for the future. We are coming back. Look out. The roller-coaster is on its way, my friend, and it is going to roll over the top of you. You had your opportunity to get it right and you let that opportunity slip by when you misled Queenslanders and took the public servants' pay of the future.

 **Hon. WS BYRNE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries and Minister for Sport and Racing) (11.48 pm): I did come into the House with a prepared speech to talk about my portfolio, and I might get around to addressing a little bit of that later down the track. But what we have heard over the length of this debate and, of course, in the most recent contribution is proof positive as to why over there is the most experienced opposition in Queensland's history. What we have seen is a debate that brings no vim, no vigour, no substance, no policy, no anything except looking in the rear-vision mirror, having a rant and rave about their recollections of their time on this side of the House—no substance whatsoever. When the member for Kawana spoke in this House earlier this evening, he had absolutely nothing to say except trying to pick at members across the chamber to get a bite, to find something to say about his own personal agenda. He actually said nothing of substance whatsoever about the budget.

What we saw just then from the member for Buderim is a complete denial of his direct involvement as the minister for racing over the last three years which led to where the racing industry has come to rest today. It is as though it never happened. It is like the three wise monkeys over there

in one person—see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil. The Queensland Audit Office is wrong according to him. KPMG is wrong according to him. He comes in here and tables a statement put out by the dismissed board as though that is proof positive. The proof positive is what was put to the people of Queensland this afternoon, and that sheets home to the member for Buderim. He stands up in this House and starts talking about this Valhalla that the LNP created for racing. What did he really create for racing? He had three years of deficits, no control and no oversight of the spend. He clearly had no idea whatsoever. The ex-minister is sitting there as Pontius Pilate. He had absolutely no idea whatsoever about what was going on in the racing industry. I came into the racing portfolio, and two minutes after I was sworn in we had the *Four Corners* program.

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr BYRNE: It is not as though I oversaw what happened that led to the *Four Corners* program, is it? I was two minutes in the job. That is a legacy from the LNP. We got into this and we had a look at where we sit with this industry. So we had three years with this LNP minister and this great effort of salvaging the racing industry, but what did he do? He spent millions of dollars of taxpayers' money. We had a politically motivated inquiry that resulted in no prosecutions, no cases to answer, zero, zip. There were recommendations from that inquiry—from the LNP inquiry, from that waste of taxpayers' money—but the then minister did not do anything about the ones which actually pointed to the problems and talked about integrity in governance. The LNP did not even provide a response to the recommendations of that inquiry—nothing whatsoever. The minister was sitting there, completely and utterly ignorant of what was going on in the industry.

The industry ran for at least three years in deficit going backwards. In the meantime, the minister was sitting there, responsible and accountable to the people of Queensland. We have atrocities occurring in the greyhound industry. The industry is going backwards financially like there is no tomorrow—to the point whereby at the end of this financial year we will be \$28 million in the hole due to his stewardship. That is exactly where it comes from.

This opposition comes in here with members talking about the brilliant contribution they made to the racing industry. They came in and had a witch-hunt, put their own troops into it and let them run loose with no supervision, no oversight, no sense of responsibility whatsoever. That is what the member for Buderim oversaw. There is a reason why he is down the back and not up here in the shadow ministry and I think it is self-evident to everybody in this House.

If the member is suggesting that the legacy of the LNP and the racing industry in Queensland is something he wants to be proud of, he must be certifiable. I do not know what evidence he wants to put on the table to demonstrate the absolute destruction of the racing industry's prospect enlivened by the LNP. This is his legacy—\$28 million in the hole. That is the legacy of the LNP. It is the same way the LNP ran the Queensland economy.

Mr Perrett interjected.

Mr BYRNE: Well, it is the same way the LNP ran the Queensland economy—with unemployment through the roof and growth crushed. The LNP never had a surplus in the whole time they were here—what are you talking about? There is no economic parameter that LNP members could run over their term in government that served any positive whatsoever in this state. They crushed regional economies; they destroyed confidence. That is exactly what occurred. Go back and remember. That is why they are sitting over there. That is why they have seen the biggest defeat in their party's history. That is why they burned that much political capital in three years. To come in here and try to reminisce about the brilliance of their short term on this side of the chamber is just a complete nonsense. We have not even heard the erstwhile defence from those good old conservative Liberals across there, the economic rationalists. Not one member opposite has stood up in here and given a convincing argument for fundamentalism in economics—not a decent repertoire of ideas coming out of there whatsoever.

I have been listening and listening and waiting to hear the National Party, the agrarian socialists that I love. Where is this spiritual journey, the spiritual destination that we are going to head down in terms of National Party ideology? There has been absolutely nothing so far. Perhaps tomorrow—which we are rapidly approaching—will bring a revelation. I would not mind hearing something that actually sounded like there was conviction in this debate. If there was some conviction across the chamber in terms of economic direction, I would be thrilled, I would be entertained, it would be worth something, but I have not heard anything. Even the Leader of the Opposition this morning was barely conscious in his budget reply speech and it has got worse since then. Nobody from that side of the chamber has actually made a contribution at all to this debate. All we have heard are reflections on the view that the

LNP's time in government was some sort of brilliant moment. The people of Queensland have had a look at that and they voted on it, so if the LNP's idea is to repeat that strategy, I do not think it will go too well for them.

There are a couple of things in the budget that I am particularly proud of. We have made some very substantial contributions, investments or commitments to drought relief. The drought assistance packages that we have rolled out total up to about \$52.1 million. That follows the obligations and the promise we made in the election campaign that we would continue to support those drought affected areas of Queensland. We recently increased the cap for claim on the DRAS program, the Drought Relief Assistance Scheme, from \$30,000 to \$40,000 for those who have a management plan and are in their third and subsequent years of drought. I am very proud that we lived up to that and met that need for those affected in the industry.

In that 2015-16 period, there is also \$5 million for wild dog controls and feral cats over the next three years—although we hope to roll it out earlier than that. That is something else we committed to. There is relief for electricity charges for irrigators at \$2.5 million, there is a waiver on annual water licence fees and so forth. Primary health and mental health support is also being rolled out to the tune of \$1.5 million through the Royal Flying Doctor Service. There is \$4 million worth of support to social and community organisations for the purposes of community wellbeing. So there are a lot of things in this budget that are certainly supportive and validate the commitments that Labor made to regional Queensland, agriculture, sport, recreation, fisheries and forestry.

The lack of criticism that has come from the peak bodies which have looked at the budget says more than anything those opposite could possibly try to imagine. We have worked very closely with many of the peak bodies and peak organisations to ensure their expectations have been addressed in the budget preparation and the budget delivered this week. I am very, very pleased about the fact that those peak organisations have pretty much to the man and woman represented a very, very positive view of what this budget will do for them in their circumstances.

So I do not think there is a greater validation of a state budget than to have an opposition that is unable to actually address any of the elements of it, unable to mount an economic philosophy even that contests what has been done and vast acceptance by the community. Even the budget reply from the Leader of the Opposition has disappeared from virtually every site on which one thinks it might be published. We cannot even have an opposition that asks questions in question time about the budget; they are too busy asking other nefarious questions. By any performance metric that a reasonable person would place over the success of this first Labor budget, it is a gold star performance; it really is.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr BYRNE: Members opposite do not like that. They do not like the fact that they cannot actually find anything to have an argument about. This is the unfortunate reality in which we see those opposite living. They have not actually been able to find anything of substance to address a concern in policy terms or in economic terms or in any other way, shape or form. I have listened to most of what many of them have had to say and I can tell them that they had better lift their game if they are ever going to convince Queenslanders to give them another go at anything because nothing that has been presented here has even gone close to laying a glove on this government. It is an embarrassment.

I can only attribute that embarrassment to one of two things: the opposition is just bone lazy or they are just incompetent—one of the two. There is no other explanation as to why we have had four occasions in two days when the evidence is that they cannot read an SDS. We cannot have a set of questions in question time about the budget measures because apparently other things are more important in budget week. So the entire performance of the opposition up to this point has been a shemozzle, an embarrassment, amateur hour. I look forward to perhaps one day—sooner rather than later—seeing the opposition starting to do what Queenslanders expect and try to hold this government to account. If it keeps going the way it is, that is certainly not going to be the case.

If we have the likes of the member for Buderim standing in this place saying that there is no problem whatsoever with the racing industry, 'It was fine when I left it,' and six months later it is a mess, I can tell him this much: we will not be letting what he has said go by. I am going to prosecute this now with all the vim and vigour I can muster. I assure honourable members that, if there is anybody in this House who is more accountable for the situation the racing industry is in at this moment, it is the member for Buderim. I am going to remind all of Queensland, particularly the entire industry, over and over and over who is responsible. If that is the way he wants to play it, that is the way we will do it.

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (12.03 am): When I came into this parliament six months ago I spoke about the need for economic development and jobs in the Burdekin electorate. We have some of the biggest projects in Australia waiting in the wings and the budget brought down on Tuesday does little to progress those projects and, in turn, create the jobs that we so desperately need in North Queensland. The government went to the last election on a commitment of jobs, infrastructure and the economy and yet already we know that our unemployment rate will barely move during the course of this term of government. In the words of one of our political commentators, job creation is now effectively on the never-never with limited infrastructure projects on the drawing board. Communities such as Bowen and Collinsville are hanging by a thread holding out hope that this budget would finally deliver the projects they so urgently need to kick-start their local economies, to provide confidence for local businesses and, more importantly, jobs. The residents in these communities are sick of treading water. They are looking for dry land and the opportunities that infrastructure development will bring with it. Yet, again, the government has let them down. There are organisations like the Bowen Collinsville Enterprise and the chamber of commerce desperately trying to create development opportunities and they are doing it alone.

The Premier said in this chamber that she was standing shoulder to shoulder with Queenslanders. I can tell honourable members unequivocally that that does not extend to the good people living in Bowen, Collinsville or the Burdekin. The government can provide all the training in the world, but what does that mean if they do not have the jobs for these people to go to? We hear the word 'resilience' being bandied around and I can tell honourable members that I have some of the most resilient communities in Queensland in my electorate, but their patience is wearing thin. How many more times do we have to tell the long-suffering residents of Bowen that the Abbot Point redevelopment is going ahead? How many more times will these people have the rug pulled out from underneath them? Is it any wonder they have become cynical and disillusioned with this government?

This state needs rural and regional Queensland and those communities in the regions need to know that the government will have the courage to deliver the big projects and not be hijacked by the minority groups or the extreme greens. The road networks in rural and regional Queensland are the arteries that provide connectivity between our towns and in many cases are the only travel option for our residents. These roads allow our resources and produce to be delivered to ports and markets in our metropolitan areas. The point I want to make here is that roads in rural and regional Queensland are the links by which our communities survive and prosper, and the Burdekin is no exception. Whilst I am pleased to see that the previously LNP-funded Bruce Highway road projects at Sandy Gully and Yellow Gin Creek have been approved, which will improve flood immunity at these locations, I am bitterly disappointed that priority road projects such as Stuart Drive in Townsville and the Haughton River bridge project on the Bruce Highway have been omitted and that we will have to wait even longer to see these much needed projects delivered. I have publicly stated that the Haughton River bridge is the most dangerous bridge on the Bruce Highway. It floods during the wet season and with its narrow width and lack of side rails, it poses a significant risk to motorists. Stuart Drive in Townsville is acknowledged by the department as a priority road project. It was the subject of a petition that I presented in this very parliament. Given the traffic volumes, proximity to schools and sporting ovals and lack of pedestrian crossing infrastructure, it is in urgent need of a major upgrade.

I also want to mention the Bowen Developmental Road and the need to complete the sealing of the remaining 40 kilometres of the unsealed section of this road. Unfortunately, two lives were lost on this road earlier this year. Given the impending development of the Galilee Basin and increased traffic volumes, particularly heavy vehicles, there is a need to expedite this work. The new Burdekin bypass is also a priority project for this area. When one considers that the government is spending \$43.7 million this year on rehabilitation of the current bridge, one can begin to understand why. The bypass will be one of the largest road infrastructure projects in Queensland's history and it is imperative that a preferred option be settled upon so that detailed planning and design can move forward. The residents of Home Hill, Ayr and Brandon should no longer have to put up with heavy vehicles motoring through their suburban streets 24 hours a day.

I also want to acknowledge the funding made available for the construction of an overtaking lane on the Bruce Highway between Alligator Creek Road and Allendale Drive. As a former member of the LNP government's Bruce Highway transport advisory committee, I am pleased to see that the government is continuing with the rollout of overtaking lanes along the length of the Bruce Highway and the widening of the centre median strip.

I want to spend some time talking about the recently released Northern Australia and agricultural white papers and what they potentially mean to my area in the Burdekin and the broader North Queensland region. The \$500 million National Water Infrastructure Development Fund was a key commitment in the *Agricultural competitiveness white paper*, which was set to accelerate investment in crucial water projects. I have to say that I have some of the biggest water projects in Queensland. I am talking about the development of the Urannah Dam, Elliot Main Channel and the raising of the Burdekin Falls Dam. Collectively these three projects have the potential to change the face of North Queensland. If you add in the development of the Galilee Basin and associated railway line to Abbot Point, construction of a base load power station at Collinsville and the expansion of the Townsville State Development Area, you begin to appreciate the importance of this area to Queensland. Collectively these projects have the potential to create thousands of jobs and inject hundreds of millions of dollars into the Queensland economy, yet what we are seeing in these budget documents is an ambiguous statement—

The Queensland Government is considering bringing forward a number of proposals for economic infrastructure in North Queensland that may potentially be supported under the Australian Government's \$5 billion Northern Australia Infrastructure Fund.

Let me say unequivocally that instead of considering it, the government should be doing it because the money is available and we should be tapping into this funding now. This is about vision. If we are to develop Northern Australia into the food bowl of South-East Asia, we need to be moving forward with these projects and chasing private investment to ensure that we are well positioned to develop agriculture, horticulture and new resource industries in the area.

I would again like to raise how important the development of an all-tide access boat ramp at Molongle Creek is, particularly for Volunteer Marine Rescue. I will continue to advocate for our share of the \$30 million Marine Infrastructure Fund to ensure that this project is delivered. Access to the community at Cape Upstart is via this boat ramp, and I would hate to think what it would mean if Volunteer Marine Rescue were unable to access the ocean in the event of an emergency because of low tide restrictions.

We all know the prevalence of cyclones in the north, and I have long lobbied for a cyclone shelter at Home Hill. During wet weather events the communities of Ayr and Home Hill become separated, and there is an urgent need for a stand-alone shelter to be constructed at Home Hill at the state high school. I would like to think that a portion of the \$23 million made available through the Local Government Grants and Subsidies Program can be utilised for this much needed project. Can I also say, Madam Deputy Speaker, that I cannot recall any other high school in Queensland not having an undercover area for their students, which is currently the case at the Home Hill State High School. The added bonus of constructing a cyclone shelter at this school is that it could be utilised as an undercover area by students which, given the temperatures and the wet season, is certainly warranted. I have previously written to the Deputy Premier and the education minister and I hope they take this on board tonight, as the Home Hill community is now the only community of this size between Cooktown and Yeppoon without ready access to a cyclone shelter in wet weather events.

I also want to acknowledge the \$1 million commitment for the William Ross State High School Trade Skills Centre, a project that has been delivered via a funding agreement with the Australian government. This centre will help deliver the necessary trade skills to our next generation of tradies and provides a much needed alternative for our school students in the area. The William Ross State High School services an ever-expanding population to the south of Townsville, and I have no doubt that the impending development of Rocky Springs, just south of Townsville, will put added pressure on the need to plan and deliver an additional high school in this area in the coming years.

I also want to acknowledge the LNP's funding commitment for a replacement ambulance station at Collinsville, which will see the current station relocated to the Collinsville Hospital in a colocation arrangement. This will provide a much improved service to the people of Collinsville and make for a more efficient arrangement in terms of staff support.

The Abbot Point redevelopment is a signature project for North Queensland. This is a priority project of massive importance not only for Bowen but for the greater North Queensland region. I note in the budget that \$500,000 has been earmarked in this year's budget, which causes me some concern given that \$5½ million allocated to this project has been pushed forward into the 2016-17 financial year. So I ask, Madam Deputy Speaker, is it the case that the government does not see this project going ahead for another 12 months? Because that would be at odds with the minister's public comments that the government is looking to proceed with this project as soon as possible.

Of particular concern to me, though, is the funding made available by this government to the Mackay Conservation Group, who work under the umbrella of the North Queensland Conservation Council. These groups are actively campaigning against the Abbot Point redevelopment and Carmichael Mine, which makes a mockery of the claims by the government that they are committed to these projects. Indeed, you would have every right to question whether this is the best use of taxpayers' dollars at a time when we are calling for infrastructure development in this state.

There is no doubting the importance of the Great Barrier Reef, and recent media attention highlights the need to ensure the government continues the good work of the previous LNP government in protecting and safeguarding the future of the reef. The funding made available in this year's budget to improve reef water quality, control pests and weeds and promote and enhance sustainable agriculture in the Burdekin region is indeed welcome.

The agricultural industry is the lifeblood of the Burdekin, and the potential that exists to develop this area into the food bowl of South-East Asia means that we need to ensure the appropriate mechanisms and farming practices are in place to meet all environmental requirements and conditions. This also extends to tackling the crown-of-thorns starfish, and I want to acknowledge the funding which will support the excellent research work currently being undertaken by the Australian Institute of Marine Science in developing sustainable options aimed at ridding the reef of this pest.

One may very well question the commitment of this government to infrastructure development when you consider the funding made available to the Townsville State Development Area. An allocation of \$250,000 in this year's budget from a total budget of \$9.7 million hardly sends a message of confidence to the Townsville and North Queensland business community regarding development of this site. The Townsville State Development Area on the southern outskirts of the city is an area of significance, given its access to utilities, road, rail and sea infrastructure and proximity to the city. The development of this area is a priority for Townsville and the broader North Queensland area and will augment existing industries in that area such as the copper refinery, Sun Metals Refinery and JBS Meatworks. There has been a lot of rhetoric around the development of this area, and I would urge the government to match the LNP commitment during the election campaign to develop this area, which has the potential to create several thousand jobs.

The government has promoted this budget as a jobs and infrastructure budget, and yet when I look at the detail it becomes obvious that infrastructure spending is sadly lacking and rural and regional areas such as the Burdekin have been neglected. I will continue to take up the fight on behalf of the hardworking people of the Burdekin electorate, and I will not give up until we get our fair share.

 **Hon. CJ O'ROURKE** (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Seniors and Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland) (12.18 am): I rise to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation Bill 2015. After three long years of harsh LNP budgets full of funding cuts, job losses and instability, I am proud that the Palaszczuk Labor budget acknowledges the importance of community. I am extremely pleased that it acknowledges the important role that seniors have in our communities. It confirms our commitment to people with a disability, and it proves to the people of North Queensland that we have their back.

It is also a great budget for my electorate of Mundingburra. This government's first budget is a true Labor budget. It is a fair budget. It is a budget with an eye on the future. It is a budget for Queenslanders and the community. A great example in my community can be found in the \$100,000 allocated to fund the Western Lions Junior Rugby League Club and upgrade of the field irrigation system. True to our word, we are a government that listens. I thank the Treasurer for listening and making funding available for this project.

Another really exciting project for my electorate is the much needed additional classrooms at the Townsville Community Learning Centre. This budget allocates \$1.96 million for this essential piece of education infrastructure—an example of the budget's record spending in education.

The good news for education funding does not stop there. JCU's capacity is set to expand, with \$16.6 million provided in Tuesday's budget. This funding will establish the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine. I am pleased to say that I will shortly be touring the tropical health and medicine building construction site with the institute's director, Professor Louis Schofield.

I am also really proud that disability funding has been allocated to my electorate in this budget. This Labor Party has a tradition of supporting our most vulnerable people, and this government continues that proud tradition in the budget by providing \$14.9 million to assist people with a disability and their families access necessary support services in my electorate.

The transition to the NDIS is at the forefront of my portfolio of Disability Services. The NDIS is not only the biggest social reform since Medicare was introduced by a Labor government in 1975; it will transform the lives of people with a disability, their families and communities.

I would like to use this opportunity to address the concerns raised by the member for Aspley in her budget response speech. The member seems to be under the impression that Queensland's progress to transition to the NDIS has stalled. This is surprising given that, under the member's watch as minister, Queensland had to be dragged kicking and screaming to sign up to the NDIS heads of agreement after a huge public outcry.

It is surprising that the member for Aspley was critical of this year's Disability Services budget given that my department delivered \$579 million over three years to the LNP's fiscal repair. In 2014-15 alone there was a reduction in the Disability Services budget of \$108 million. It is surprising that, under the member for Aspley's watch, there were a total of 347 redundancies of permanent employees in my department.

Unfortunately, it was the former LNP government that stalled on improving disability services, and probably one of their lasting legacies is that they did not sign up for an NDIS trial site in Queensland. This Labor budget provides almost \$2 million to trial an early launch. The launch will involve testing the process for approximately 1,600 people, with 600 of those receiving their approved packages before the official start date of 1 July 2016. While Queensland is ready and raring to go with the early launch, we are waiting on finalising the agreement with the Commonwealth.

As Minister for Seniors I am pleased to be part of a government that is all about putting seniors first. Our budget has allocated \$56 million in core concessions, including energy, water and transport, for age pensioners and Seniors Card holders. This funding will reverse the federal government's harsh cuts. Like those opposite, it does not care about seniors. I am also happy that, after cuts by the LNP, we are rebuilding the Office for Seniors.

As the Minister Assisting the Premier on North Queensland, I could not be happier with our commitment to the north. The member for Hinchinbrook seems awfully concerned with the performance of others in the House, and I was interested to note that the member was claiming credit for the new state primary school on the Townsville northern beaches. While I join the member in celebrating the expansion of public education facilities in the north, I am somewhat puzzled as to why the member is bragging about his supposed five-year fight for the school. For three of those five years the member was a cabinet minister, yet it took a Labor government to deliver the funding.

Our \$180 million Advance Queensland announcement is a fantastic opportunity for the north, along with the Far North Queensland Economic Summit we will host later this year. This will provide numerous opportunities for business and industry, both nationally and internationally, to invest in the north.

This budget cements our commitment of \$100 million over four years to build a stadium in Townsville—a stadium the federal LNP local member, Ewen Jones, refuses to fund. Opportunities like this will help to develop and grow our economy, creating jobs in industries that many of us cannot even imagine.

Lastly, this budget would not be a Labor budget in the true sense if it did not provide record spending in education and health including funding for extra teachers, new schools in Townsville and nurses and funding to rebuild mental health care services for young people including additional day services and expanded youth residential mental health services in Townsville. This Palaszczuk Labor government's first budget is a budget for all Queenslanders. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Mr HART** (Burleigh—LNP) (12.24 am): I rise to discuss the two appropriation bills before the House. I will limit my comments to the Appropriation Bill 2015. I want to speak briefly about the direction in which the Palaszczuk Labor government is taking Queensland under stewardship of 'Captain Risky' over there.

Mr BROWN: Madam Deputy Speaker, I rise to a point of order. The member needs to refer to the minister by his proper title.

Mr HART: I am sure the member does not need to tell you how to do your job, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Would you please refer to the minister by his proper title, thank you, member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: As I said, I am really concerned about the direction in which the Palaszczuk government is going under the stewardship of this Treasurer. There is no doubt for any of us who in the past have read a balance sheet, looked at a profit-and-loss statement and run a business that this budget is all smoke and mirrors. We have seen in this House on a couple of occasions now that the Treasurer thinks he is an amateur musician—magician.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr HART: I have not seen him attempt anything on a musical instrument yet, but I would not be surprised if he had a go at that as well! The Treasurer thinks of himself as a bit of a magician. There is no doubt about that. We saw that when he pulled the coin from behind the ear of the Leader of the House.

You only have to sit here today and listen to the quality of the speeches from those opposite to know that they clearly do not understand finance—even in a small business, let alone in a state. I would be very amazed if they had actually read the budget papers.

Mr Ryan interjected.

Mr HART: Shortly I will discuss a few things that I have come across in the budget papers. I guess it is not too hard for members of parliament to pick up these budget papers, look through them and see how their electorates are reflected in them. I am the member for Burleigh, so I look for things titled 'Burleigh', 'Miami', 'Palm Beach', 'Varsity Lakes'—any of the government initiatives in my particular area. It is only a matter of scouring the papers. I looked through the budget papers for Burleigh and everything else and I came across one instance involving Burleigh. I will cover that a bit later.

While looking through these documents I came across a couple of other things that I thought I might talk about briefly. I refer to the Appropriation Bill itself. I am glad the Treasurer is here in the chamber. As I have said in this place before, a lot of members on this side of the House are former businesspeople. They have looked at balance sheets, profit-and-loss statements and those sorts of things. Obviously a state budget is a little more complicated than that and there are very good reasons some of the line items are a little hard to follow in some instances.

I refer to page 14—the final page—of the Appropriation Bill that shows the total appropriation. It is interesting to note that the budget for 2014-15 brought in by the previous government was \$46,929-odd billion but the estimated actual came in \$3½ billion short of that at \$43½ billion. The figure for the 2015-16 year is \$52,838 billion. That is nearly \$10 billion more. The only thing that appears to be different is the administered items in the Appropriation Bill under Queensland Treasury. I would not mind an explanation from the Treasurer as to what that \$10 billion is about. I am sure there is a very good explanation for it, but it would be really nice to know. I see one of the minister's advisers dashing off to see if they can come up with an explanation, but the administered amount has jumped from \$6½ billion to \$13 billion. That is a fair sort of jump, isn't it? That is a jump of over \$7 billion, so I am interested to hear what that is all about. The member for Rockhampton said that this was a gold star budget. I think this is a gold star failure. This is an absolute gold star failure. The last Labor government before the LNP government lost our AAA rating. We want a AAA budget—a AAA budget that gets our AAA rating back. However, what we are seeing is a complete fail in this budget.

The real 'Pitt-fall' of this budget is that grassroots organisations are going to have a decrease in grants available to them of almost 10 per cent or a \$580 million reduction in grants. That is really quite sad when you think about it. This Treasurer has invented something that we can call 'Pitt-onomics': it just makes stuff up. For the three years that we were in government when he was the opposition spokesman on Treasury he sat on the opposition benches and talked about borrowings in the state being net debt. Net debt is general debt plus public non-financial corporation sector debt and then you add back the assets that those particular corporations have but you do not take into account any liabilities such as long service leave and a pesky little thing like superannuation payments that you may have to make to someone in the future. If you do that, you end up with a net debt figure that really means diddly squat at the end of the day. The budget figures actually have real debt. They have real debt figures in there. It is only a matter of turning to page 138 of Budget Paper No. 2 to see what happens with gross debt. The LNP had forecast debt to be \$79.79 billion and that—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr HART: That is the point I was just getting to, Treasurer. It is now forecast to be \$77.1198 billion in 2017-18 which is lower. It is \$2.673 billion lower over the whole forward estimates of this budget—except we are transferring \$5 billion into it. We are transferring \$5 billion—

Mr Pitt interjected.

Mr HART: Treasurer, you are transferring \$5.4 billion in and the net result of that is only going to be \$2.6 billion lower. That is 'Pitt-onomics' to me. That really is 'Pitt-onomics'. We probably need to look at the timing of all of this because on page 131 of Budget Paper No. 2 there is a nice graph that talks about equity movement.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Members, the member for Burleigh has the call thank you. I call the member for Burleigh.

Mr HART: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for your protection. Page 131 of Budget Paper No. 2 shows equity movements and in the 2014-15 column—that is, this year before 30 June—\$3.159 billion has been moved in equity between the non-government sector and the government sector. The money that we are talking about that is being robbed from Peter to pay Paul has in fact already moved according to this document. It has already moved. However, referring again to pages 137 and 138, which show the public non-financial corporations sector balance sheet and the non-financial public sector balance sheet, there is a bit of a discrepancy. I am referring to pages 137 and 138 of Budget Paper No. 2. There is a bit of a discrepancy there because this equity has actually moved before 30 June but it does not show up on the balance sheet until next year. Treasurer, there is probably a very good reason for that and if the Treasurer could explain that to me I would be very happy to hear what that is all about. We will see where we go with that.

Earlier I mentioned that this budget is all smoke and mirrors. I just pointed out that that equity movement happened before 30 June and yet this is debt that is going to be lumped on to our energy companies—Energex, Ergon and Powerlink. On 15 April the Australian Energy Regulator put out its determination on future prices of electricity. One would tend to think that the Australian Energy Regulator would look at all aspects of energy, the debt of the companies, the capital expenditures that they are going to go through over the next five years and the expenses that they are going to have, and it would set electricity prices in the future based on that. However, I wonder if it was aware that almost \$2 billion would be moved on to the balance sheet of Energex, Ergon and Powerlink, because I suspect that if it had it may not have set the lower prices that it has determined for the future of electricity prices. After all, those determinations come back to the good work in the electricity sector that the LNP did when in government.

It is a bit sneaky that the Australian Energy Regulator has made a determination without all of the facts. It basically has made a determination without all of the facts, so it is no wonder that Energex and Ergon are asking for price increases. If the state government is going to save \$600 million in interest payments by shifting this debt from the government sector to the public non-financial corporations sector, somebody is going to have to pay that interest. If our energy companies are going to have to pay that interest, where are they going to get that money? The government has already said that it will not be cutting back on staff levels and it will not be cutting back on front-line services, and I seriously doubt whether the ETU will let it do too much in that regard. So how are they going to make the money to pay that \$600 million, Treasurer?

How is that going to happen? The only way that I can see that happening is through the price of electricity going up. The price of electricity is going to go up. We have the members opposite telling us that this is a good budget. I think I might have just shown them that this is not a good budget at all. Moving debt from one pocket to another does not solve anything, but it could very well lead to an increase in electricity prices. The people of Queensland will hold the Treasurer to account if their electricity prices go up because of something that he has done.

We know full well, as the Treasurer knows, that the levers of government move slowly. It takes a long time for the actions of a government to take effect. The actions that the LNP government took over the past three years are now coming to fruition. They are reflected in increases in business confidence—increases in business in general—and the lowering of electricity prices. I suspect that it will take a couple of years for the poor outcomes from this budget to have an effect on the Queensland economy.

Government members have talked about austerity measures and Greece all in one sentence. They have said that the LNP's austerity measures could lead us to a Greece type of situation. That is absolutely ridiculous. In fact, the result is exactly the opposite. It is the lack of austerity in Greece that has led to the problems that the people there have now. We see the riots that are occurring because the people of Greece are being forced into austerity in order to try to get their country turned around on some level.

In the few minutes that I have left, I probably should speak about a couple of things that I came across in the budget that relate to my electorate of Burleigh. There was one line item that referred to \$1.6 million for the Burleigh fire station. Earlier this week the police minister made a ministerial

statement about the renovations of a number of stations, including the fire station at Burleigh, and how it was a great Labor initiative and a great step forward. I have to say to the House that I announced that project 18 months ago. That work is well underway. I table a photo of me standing outside the Burleigh fire station, which was taken last week.

Tabled paper: Photograph of the member for Burleigh, Mr Michael Hart MP, at the Burleigh Fire and Rescue Station [\[815\]](#).

I say to the members opposite that if we did not get the \$1.6 million in this year's budget—and members can see in the photograph that there is no roof on this building, there are no walls, there are no floors—our fires might have had a real issue in keeping warm next winter.

I want to come back to something that the member for Keppel said before about overcrowding in schools. The member for Keppel will learn over the years that there are systems in place to protect our children from those sorts of things happening. I say to the member for Keppel that there is a formula in place that determines teacher numbers. That formula has always been in place. It was in place under the former Labor government and there was a minor tweak made under the LNP government that took away the decimal point of a teacher. In some instances it is a bit hard to have a decimal point of a teacher. But the formula has not changed. On day 8, the number of teachers per classroom in every school is determined. It is impossible to have overcrowding outside of the limits that are set by the education department. If there is such a thing, it is an anomaly and it should be taken up with the Minister for Education as soon as possible.

The Gold Coast will not forget what has happened in this budget. I had promised a number of things that were fully funded—the playground at Caningeraba State School, a security fence at Miami State School and a drive-in drive-out facility at Miami State High School. Those projects have disappeared from the budget. They have been ripped out of my electorate. Undoubtedly, they have ended up in some other member's electorate. The member for Mirani said that Labor governments were the only ones that followed through with their election promises. I say to the member for Mirani that this Labor government has not done that in my electorate. It might have done it in his electorate.

(Time expired)



Mr BROWN (Capalaba—ALP) (12.45 am): I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill as presented in this place by the Treasurer earlier in the week. I congratulate the Treasurer on the job that he did. For me, for my electorate and for the greater Redlands, this budget represents the beginning of the restoration of vital services that many in my community took for granted until they were ripped away from them. This budget is not about big shiny projects that make politicians feel good; it is about responsible investments in the future of our community. It is about little things making big differences.

Recently, I met with Heather. She is a long-time resident of Daveson Road in Capalaba. For decades, Heather has been lobbying TMR, ministers, the government and local members for an upgrade to the intersection near her house. There is a rise in that section of the road that creates a blind spot for people turning right onto the main road, Old Cleveland Road East. There have been injuries at this intersection and even fatalities. As part of a number of safety upgrades on this stretch of road, the intersection near Heather's house will get new traffic islands and traffic lights. That work is worth \$650,000, but it will make this road many times safer than it is currently and it will, I am confident, save lives. This project is a fundamental improvement for my electorate.

My electorate will also see improvements in education services, with the provision of seven extra teachers across my electorate and a full-time guidance officer at Capalaba State College. There are a dozen schools in my electorate. All are models of educational excellence, although some are at different points on the journey of self-improvement. I know the difference that these additional resources will make in the lives of kids of the Capalaba electorate. I know that, because it was resources such as these that I benefited from when I attended Birkdale State School. These are fundamental services that are valued by families in the Capalaba electorate. I am proud that we have delivered more teachers and guidance officers in this budget.

There is over \$2 million for public housing in my electorate. That is not necessarily a big vote winner, but public housing is in demand in my area. Some people feel uncomfortable living near public housing. I do not. My fellow residents in my street are some of the great joys that I have—living in a street that has a mix of public housing. Labor's mission is to make sure that people have a roof over their heads, an education, a job and universal health care. In this budget, we have ticked all four boxes for the Capalaba electorate.

Labor lives up to its mission in health through its commitment to \$212 million for more nurses. I know that these additional nurses will be put to good use in Metro South Health, particularly at Redland Hospital, which is a growing hospital service that needs a growing, as opposed to a shrinking, staffing pool. I am proud to be part of a government that understands that we need to provide essential services with the resources to get the job done.

TAFE was something that I campaigned on as a candidate and the Save Our Alex Hills TAFE campus campaign was a major community activity to try to protect my local services. I was pleased to hear the Treasurer's announcement of a \$750 million investment in skills and training on top of the Rescuing TAFE package that we announced during the campaign. The jobs of the future will require the skills of the future. This allocation in is an investment in the most valuable resource our state possesses, our people.

We also have funding for sport, with a recommitment of \$100,000 to my old Rugby club, Redlands Rugby Union, to upgrade the lighting at the fields.

An honourable member: You would have been a halfback, Don?

Mr BROWN: No, I was a fullback. I was carrying a few less kegs back then. We are delivering on water treatment with upgrades to the Leslie Harrison Dam and the water treatment plant there.

Mr Rickuss interjected.

Mr BROWN: I hope so. I was impressed by the facility out there, which was delivered by Labor. Finally, although it is not in my electorate, we have delivered \$20 million for an economic transition package for North Stradbroke Island. This, combined with a major upgrade to Toondah Harbour, will create over 1,000 jobs, which means that the greater Redland City has a real economic future with a growing and sustainable tourism industry. The government has managed to do all these important things and yet build a surplus into the budget, which proves to me that cruelty is not a necessity of government as we saw under the Newman LNP. It shows me that smart allocations of public money can make a better future for our community and allow for investment in the fundamentals: a roof, an education, a job and universal health care. The story of this budget is that of a responsible government that cares. I commend the bill to the House.

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (12.50 am): I rise to make a contribution to the Appropriation Bill in reply to the Labor government's budget for 2015, which was delivered to the parliament on Tuesday. Like many people who live in the seat of Condamine, I listened intently to what the residents of my electorate could look forward to from this budget. Unfortunately, we all listened in vain. The seat of Condamine is experiencing great change and growth, particularly in the Wellcamp industrial area, the Charlton development precinct and the proposed expansion of the Oakey abattoir. That rapid growth is putting great pressure on roads, services and infrastructure and some funding to help cater for that expansion would have been warmly welcomed.

When in government, the LNP worked with the federal and local governments to secure funding for projects such as the \$10 million upgrade to O'Mara's Road and the installation of a water and sewerage system into the industrial estate. I was very surprised when I heard the Treasurer claim credit for the \$103 million road works from Charlton to Nugent's Pinch on the Warrego Highway west of Toowoomba to assist in coping with the increased traffic that will result from the considerable development on the western side of Toowoomba. My surprise stems from the fact that on 10 October 2014, while the candidate for Condamine, I attended the sod-turning ceremony on site with federal members the Hon. Warren Truss and the Hon. Ian Macfarlane, the then transport minister Scott Emerson, Trevor Watts and the then agricultural minister John McVeigh. The project was fully funded on an 80/20 funding split between the federal and state governments. Currently it is ahead of schedule and will be completed in September this year.

The other long-awaited announcement that will significantly impact upon the seat of Condamine is the big one: the Toowoomba second range crossing. This is one of the largest infrastructure projects that this country has seen since the Snowy Mountain scheme and the benefits that it will bring to the state's economy will be immense. The cost savings, particularly to the transport industry in fuel and time, will benefit all who rely on the route to transport produce to or from Brisbane. It is a much needed piece of infrastructure, but it is hardly new news. This announcement was made some time ago and the tenderer has been selected and construction is to commence later this year. While it is great to see funding continue for those projects, it was the LNP that secured the partnership with the federal government to make those vital pieces of infrastructure a reality.

As I stated earlier, the seat of Condamine is going through a period of strong growth on the back of the second range crossing and the private airport built at Wellcamp by the Wagner family. That has presented many new opportunities for businesses to take advantage of an international market that is now on their doorstep. One of the main products poised to be a big winner in this new era is beef production. The seat of Condamine is home to more feedlots than any other seat in Australia and we need to upgrade our road system to a road train or B-double standard to better service the industry. It is encouraging to see that the Labor government has allocated funding for the upgrade of the western rail line, as it is also vital to the development plans in this area, particularly for the beef industry.

We have heard much from this government about it being a job-creating government, but apart from growing the public service sector there has been little to encourage the private sector. To date, all we have seen is to the contrary. We have seen a winding back of the industrial relations laws to grant easier access to work sites for union representatives and the same in the area of workplace health and safety. Government members say that they are consulting with business and industry, but the facts say otherwise. Business did not welcome the changes to those laws and sent many submissions to state their concerns and the difficulties that these changes would inflict on their workplaces. However, all those concerns have been ignored. The concerns of business were no match against the demands of the union bosses and the debt owed to them by the members of the Labor Party. The result of the debt owed to the union bosses by the members opposite, along with the Greens, will be increasing debt that all Queenslanders will have to pay, despite the best magic tricks that the Treasurer has. Moving debt sideways, upside down or any other way will not do it. As any of the landholders in Condamine can tell you, if you move your plant and machinery debt over to your farm debt it does not mean it has magically disappeared. You still owe it. The bottom line has not changed. Even raiding the workers' superannuation and travel entitlements will not stop the rising debt.

Addressing the neglect of the ongoing maintenance of our schools was a key priority of the LNP government. I am pleased to see funds allocated in this budget for the Dalby State High School to replace its amenities block. Recently I visited the Brookstead State School, which will celebrate its centenary in August, and was made aware of the very poor state of its amenities block. There is still much to be done to bring our regional schools up to a standard that would be acceptable to their city cousins.

This budget is one that the people will pay a heavy price for in the years to come. The Treasurer can put as much spin, tricks and jiggery pokery on it as he likes, but it does not change the fact that it has let down the people of Condamine and the people of Queensland.

 **Mr WILLIAMS** (Pumicestone—ALP) (12.57 am): I rise to speak in support of this great Palaszczuk Labor budget outlined in the appropriation bills. I thank the Premier, the Treasurer and the cabinet for the massive effort that they have put into this groundbreaking budget. I see many benefits for my electorate of Pumicestone in the budget, but before I speak of those things it would be remiss of me not to mention where the LNP has dragged Queensland over the past three years.

Those opposite would have the people of Queensland believe that they are ready to govern and that they have a plan. From 1989 to 2012, some 24 years, the smart people of Queensland let them govern for only two years. For the rest of the time, they wandered in the political wilderness. And then appeared the knight in shining armour, Campbell Newman—the hollow and vacuous Campbell Newman—saying, 'I have come with the promise of a four-pillar economy but alas'—

Mr RICKUSS: I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, relevance? Campbell Newman has nothing to do with this budget. I ask you to rule on relevance?

Mr SPEAKER: Resume your seat. I call the member for Pumicestone.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: I rise to a point of order.

Mr SPEAKER: What is your point of order, Leader of the House?

Mr HINCHLIFFE: The opposition whip is really pushing the envelope in terms of that point of order. Tonight we have heard numerous speakers make references that date back many years into the past. I think it is allowable for the member to make some references to recent governments.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you. I call the member for Pumicestone.

Mr WILLIAMS: Then Campbell Newman said, 'I come with a promise of a four-pillar economy,' but alas he only delivered the ruins of antiquity. No wonder those on the other side shudder to even mention his name.

Mr Watts interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Member for Toowoomba North, I hope you remember that you are on a warning from this morning. I would urge members to allow the member for Pumicestone to make his contribution and then we can move forward.

Mr WILLIAMS: The member for Southern Downs has a lot of criticism of this budget but nothing of substance to say, other than to display his limited knowledge of the defined benefit fund and the operation of these funds. I think he is upset that he never thought of the strategy himself. Those opposite are still the same people with the same attitudes they had as part of the Newman government.

Under the LNP government debt rose over those three years by some \$15 billion. They were constantly making excuses during that time, blaming Labor for all their failings. In stark contrast, the people of Queensland are elated that in its first year the Palaszczuk Labor government has delivered a fiscal surplus of \$1.2 billion. We will achieve a surplus of \$6.9 billion across the forward estimates. This government is not a government of making excuses. This is a government of getting on with the job.

The actuarial information clearly demonstrates that the defined fund was overweight by billions of dollars. The actuarial calculations reveal that there is enough money in the fund to meet current and future requirements. It was only wise to take the current contribution of \$600 million per annum and apply that to state debt. The excess in that particular fund would have eventually been returned to the state anyway. That is how defined benefit funds work.

This budget rescues my Caboolture TAFE college. It will receive part of the \$34.5 million to employ teachers, support staff, refurbish the campus that the LNP let run down. More importantly, it will restore the course subsidies. Labor likes people.

This budget delivers to health \$14.2 billion in funding. This will provide increased nursing numbers and extra beds for the Caboolture Hospital in Pumicestone and 75 new paramedics in our ambulances.

This budget provides 977 new police vehicles. To protect our police our front-line police will have body cameras. There will be another 266 new police officers and Pumicestone will share in those numbers.

This budget provides that Pumicestone schools will be able to teach computer coding and robotics to their students more effectively with our portion of the 875 new teachers who will come on board. The school maintenance program is good for our local community. It is good for our local tradespeople and our small businesses that will be able to engage in providing maintenance services to our schools.

This budget provides the local sporting groups of Pumicestone with lighting for their fields. There is \$100,000 in funding for one of the sporting complexes in Caboolture. There is \$100,000 in funding for the netball courts on Bribie.

Further to that, there is \$24,000 in funding for Dragons Abreast. Dragon Abreast are ladies who are all cancer sufferers. They row longboats. This funding is to build long sheds to store those boats in so they are not sitting out in the weather.

This budget also provides an allocation of \$409,000 to assist our homeless people. We have people sleeping rough in Caboolture parks. Many are sleeping on the beach at Bribie. Many of these people, through no fault of their own, have become homeless.

This budget also provides record job funding. Our employment strategies will employ 27½ thousand people. I am looking forward to Pumicestone having a share in that. This budget also guarantees our eligible pensioners up to \$700,000 in concessions, while the opposition's federal counterparts hack away at those concessions.

This is a sound budget delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government. It has been greatly received in my community. I am happy to be part of a government that recognises that we live in a community and not in an economy. This budget has no jiggery pokery in it at all. I commend the budget to the House.

 **Ms FARMER** (Bulimba—ALP) (1.05 am): I was very proud to be sitting in this parliament this week when the Treasurer brought down the budget. Like every member on this side of the House, I congratulate him for what he has achieved. We are surely very fortunate to have someone of his calibre looking after the finances of this state.

I am very proud of this budget for a number of reasons. It delivered Queensland's first operating surplus in 16 years. It took a responsible approach to managing debt and proved to the Queensland people that we did not need to sell our assets in order for our finances to be managed. It focuses on front-line services like health and education. It is about jobs now and jobs for the future. It delivered on Labor's election promises. We did what we said we were going to do—plain and simple.

There are these and so many other things about the budget that I already know my community is happy about. I have had lots of feedback in the last couple of days. Some of the other things I have particularly had strong feedback on are: the nurse-to-patient ratios and knowing we are going to relieve our highly respected nurses and contribute to better patient safety and better health outcomes; the \$700 million package to help up to 37,000 extra Queenslanders a year access skills to be job ready; the injection of over \$31 million to tackle domestic violence; the focus on supporting parents through the \$6.6 million investment in the PPP parenting program. I do a shout out to Katherine Howson and Sarah Murray from my local who welcomed the Premier, Treasurer and the minister in my area this week and brought along their bubs. I thank you for giving them such a warm welcome.

My constituents are also happy that we have set aside over \$347 million to make up for the cuts Tony Abbott so cruelly made to the pensioners concessions scheme. They are really happy and excited about the \$180 million to create knowledge based jobs of the future.

Much has been covered in the media about this budget. It has been fantastic to hear the overwhelming feedback of such a broad and eclectic range of stakeholders. I will certainly be writing to all of my constituents to let them know about the statewide commitments that the Palaszczuk government has made this week.

However, tonight I wanted to talk about just some of the ways the budget addresses some pressing local issues—ones that my community has raised with me consistently over the last 12 months. In times of austerity, I am especially grateful to the Treasurer that these projects were able to be given priority.

Bulimba State School is a vibrant local school, just about to celebrate its 150th anniversary. Like many inner city schools, it is landlocked. The density of its catchment area is steadily increasing and, as a result, the school population is exploding. The budget allocation of \$7 million for additional classrooms and for a resource centre and administration block is going to deliver what the school so desperately needs to cater for its numbers. It will do so in a way that navigates the difficulties that are inherent to the site. We are very pleased to get that commitment. I should add that the school's hardworking P&C has already raised the money to make sure that all of those classrooms will be air conditioned. Well done to them.

And talking about schools, I was also very pleased to know that the Bulimba electorate would benefit from the 2,500 new teaching positions that will be delivered across Queensland from 2016 and 2018 as a result of the Palaszczuk government's election commitments. We are going to receive five of those positions, and I know that they will be a welcome boost to our diligent school communities, as will be our share of the \$300 million maintenance boost for schools.

It was such a delight to be able to tell Father Mark, our parish priest from St Oliver Plunketts, that we have \$300,000 to upgrade the parish pool. He was telling me the story only the other day about how in around 1950 that pool was hand dug. Some of the locals who did that then are still in the parish today. It took a strong community to achieve that then and it is a very strong community still.

The pool has given enormous pleasure to so many people over those 65-odd years, including the successive cohorts of St Ollies primary school students and the redoubtable Cannon Hill swim club. I have even swum in it myself and come last in the parent races on a number of occasions. But I know that all of us have been quite worried about how, like all of us, it is showing its age and about how long it was really going to last. This money is just what we needed. I am looking forward to working closely with the wise Father Mark, and his magnificent offsideer Carol Hewitt and others to whom the pool means a lot, to give it a new face.

One of the big issues in my local area is parking, and particularly around transit hubs. There is just not enough of it, and the increased density of our inner-city area exacerbates the problem. At the Cannon Hill Railway Station the problem is just plain bad—not only for commuters but also for the residents around the station. With the surrounding area now zoned for five-storey unit development, and with the reduction of car parking ratios under the Brisbane City Council's City Plan, our local streets are so overwhelmed that residents can barely get out of their driveways, let alone their streets. And let's not even talk about the commuters themselves, who tell me that sometimes they have to walk up to a kilometre to get to the station. It is a complex issue to address, but this new funding is going to give

us the chance to investigate the best solutions, and to bring the community along with us in the process. I seek leave to have the remainder of my speech incorporated in *Hansard*. The Deputy Speaker has given her permission for this to occur.

Leave granted.

Mr Speaker we are already proud in our area of having the Eastern Group SES operating in our midst. They are the most wonderful crew, and are so admired for their selfless devotion to helping the community. I love so dropping in to see them down the road, and hearing about the incredible work they do. After this Budget we will also have in our area the Queensland Fire and Emergency Service swift-water and technical rescue headquarters, also at Morningside, and \$950 000 has been allocated to complete the fit-out. The refurbished building will become the central location from which to deploy Urban Search and Rescue Taskforce equipment from. I have to say what an absolute honour this is that our community will be home to some of Queensland's bravest men and women—housed through these two critical operation centres.

And what else for the Bulimba electorate? There is \$255 000 for Hockey Queensland to upgrade and refurbish infrastructure at the Colmslie Recreation Reserve. Hockey Queensland has been a resident of the Bulimba electorate for some years now, and I know we all, locally, very much value having them, along with the Bulimba Bulls, the crew from the Colmslie Pool and Rackley Swim Club, Bulimba Cricket and the River City Dragons Boat and Outrigger Canoe Club, at the Colmslie Recreation Reserve site. How lucky are we to have a state-level sporting organisation like Hockey Queensland, and one that makes such a contribution across the state, in our local area. They are part of our local identity and we are pleased to enhance their facilities.

Mr Speaker I echo the statements of the Treasurer when he was delivering the Budget—that Labor Governments will always believe that our most valuable economic assets are our people and our communities. We've shown that by bringing down a budget that delivers for people and communities across the state, and most certainly for the people of Bulimba. I commend the Budget to the House.

Debate, on motion of Ms Farmer, adjourned.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Correction of Ministerial Statement; Social Housing

 **Hon. LM ENOCH** (Algeria—ALP) (Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Science and Innovation) (1.12 am): This morning I referred to funds allocated toward social housing within Indigenous communities. The budget allocates \$129 million, and the hard copy of my speech provided to the attendant stated that fact. However, I inadvertently said \$190 million and I take this opportunity to correct the record.

SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (1.12 am): I move—

That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 9.30 am on Friday, 17 July 2015.

Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT

Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE (Sandgate—ALP) (Leader of the House) (1.13 am): I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

Toowoomba State High School, Wilsonton Campus

 **Mr WATTS** (Toowoomba North—LNP) (1.13 am): I rise today to talk briefly about the Toowoomba State High School Wilsonton campus. I want schools in the Toowoomba North electorate to be vibrant hubs where children learn, teachers teach and communities gather. Currently, the P&C at that school has an e-petition that I would encourage people to have a look at. It is on the parliamentary website at www.parliament.qld.gov.au/workofassembly/petition/e-petitions. I would encourage members to have a look at that petition, because in the Toowoomba North electorate one school does not have an assembly hall where people can gather. I table a proposal that was put together by the school in relation to its assembly hall proposal.

Tabled paper: Document, dated 14 March 2014, titled 'Assembly Hall Proposal Toowoomba State High School, Wilsonton Campus' [816].

Members may ask: why is this important? Toowoomba has some great state schools, but this state school does not have an assembly hall. There is no venue for school assemblies, no venue for indoor sporting activities, no venue for student key assessment tasks and no venue for dance, drama, music or school bands. No indoor sports are included in the PE program. Let me assure members that,

at this time of the year in Toowoomba, people do not want to be sitting outside on the grass when it is four degrees. I think that it is a terrible shame, because the community of Wilsonton is a very proud community. It has a great school community. It is a very vibrant community with young people trying to make the best of their lives and parents who support them very well. I should also note that, at the election the booth in this area voted 61 per cent in favour of Labor, yet when I asked a question on notice about the size of schools and which schools do not have covered areas in which students can gather and assembly halls, not just in Toowoomba but across the whole of Queensland, I found that there is only one school that has over 800 students with no plan for an assembly hall, no plan for an indoor sports hall and no plan for an arts and performance school, and that is the Wilsonton campus of Toowoomba State High School.

I encourage the minister to come and have a look at the school, talk to the P&C, talk to the children at the school and talk to their parents so that she can see that they are very much deserving of an indoor sports hall. There is a lot of conversation going on about whether this hall was funded by the LNP. Our better schools boost funding had included funding for this hall. Had the LNP won the election, this hall would have been built. This school is located in a Labor stronghold west of the divide. I say to the Labor members to not let down the families who support their party. I ask the members opposite to build the students of that school a hall. They deserve nothing less than the very best the members opposite can offer. They are letting them down by ignoring them.

National Perinatal Depression Initiative

 **Ms LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (1.16 am): I rise to speak on an issue of significant concern to many women and families across Queensland and, indeed, the country. As any mother or father can attest, becoming a parent is one of the most significant transitions in life. The perinatal period is considered to be the period from pregnancy through to the first year after childbirth. It is often a time of fluctuating emotion: elation, fear, hope, anxiety, exhaustion. Sometimes all can be felt in a day, sometimes in a moment. It is a critical period for the mental and physical health of both mother and child, with women at increased risk of mental illness during this period. It is estimated that perinatal depression will affect one in seven Australian mothers and one in 20 fathers. For many of those parents, it is the first time in their lives that they have faced a mental illness.

Although perinatal illnesses are among the most preventable and treatable of all mental illnesses, alarmingly, suicide is the leading cause of death for mothers in Queensland in the first year after birth, accounting for as many deaths as all obstetric causes combined, all of which makes the perinatal period a critical intervention point for effective public mental health care and why the introduction of the National Perinatal Depression Initiative in 2008 was so important. This \$85 million program aimed to improve the prevention and early detection of antenatal and postnatal depression and to provide better care, support and treatment for expectant and new mothers experiencing perinatal depression.

Under the funding agreement with the Commonwealth, thousands of new parents accessed screening and counselling services aimed at identifying and treating the illness in the early stages, which is why it is disgraceful that, four weeks ago, the federal health minister, Susan Ley, advised that the Abbott government is ripping up that agreement and with it \$1.6 million from Queensland as of 30 June, only two weeks later. This sudden discontinuation of funding will not only see a reduction in the specialist services available to women during the perinatal period but also potentially increase the number of women needing to be admitted to hospital. Anecdotal reports show that, where there is a perinatal mental health clinical position, the need for inpatient hospital admission and the separation of mother from infant may be prevented in almost every case.

Funding under the national partnership enabled Queensland Health to fund several such positions, giving vital assistance to women needing support during the perinatal period. To cut a program that funds support for vulnerable mothers and infants and families in distress is one of the cruellest cuts the Abbott government could deliver. No wonder the federal health minister, a woman and mother herself, was unavailable to be interviewed on the cuts. No wonder the federal budget, released six weeks earlier, made no mention of the scrapping of this funding. This funding cut represents yet another gap created by the failure of the Abbott government to properly fund public health services across Australia.

For those who experience perinatal depression or anxiety, it is a time of desperation and despair. It is frightening and it is isolating. It is a tragedy and an injustice that we have a federal government that has turned away from vulnerable mothers and families in this country.

Chris' IGA, 60th Anniversary

 **Mr MINNIKIN** (Chatsworth—LNP) (1.19 am): One of the great privileges of being a politician is that you get to meet some extraordinary people and share some incredible stories. I would like to share one of those stories today by telling the House of the 60 years of a small family owned and operated business in my electorate of Chatsworth. In 1955, Chris Nicolaou, a young Greek migrant, settled in Carina whereby he and two business partners purchased a small general store for £3,000. In the mid-1950s, this was a significant investment decision and carried with it the essential feature of all small business decisions, an element of risk.

Indeed, effort for reward and taking a calculated business risk were the hallmark qualities of Chris Nicolaou and his family. After years of hard work and growing a loyal customer base, Chris bought out his business partners and brought his family on board. The family's capacity for sheer hard work and the tireless business hours they invested in the general store was well known throughout the Carina area. Chris' IGA, located in the heart of Chatsworth, has since flourished into an icon on Old Cleveland Road. In June, the store celebrated a significant milestone, 60 years of continuous operation. How many genuine small businesses can lay claim to fame of being in continual existence for 60 years? Not many, which makes the achievement of this wonderful small-business operation even more impressive.

Now, the next generation of the Nicolaou family is proudly carrying on Chris's initial legacy, led by his son, Nick. I have had the pleasure of knowing Nick since my school days at Carina State School. We grew up together in the Chatsworth electorate. I can attest to his strong work ethic and entrepreneurial spirit—characteristics imperative to the survival of Queensland's small business sector.

As I said in my maiden speech a few years ago, I can still remember when Chris's small convenience shop was the only supermarket around the Carina area long before Westfield Carindale opened in November 1979. Since 1955, the Nicolaou's store has grown from a small store into a thriving IGA supermarket and is now an important part of my electorate's business community. The business has continually given back to the local community and over the years has sponsored numerous Chatsworth sporting teams. Customer service has always been at the forefront of Chris' IGA reputation. In fact, my mother often mentioned that, when she received the home delivery of groceries back in the early 1970s, there was always in the bottom of one of the grocery bags a few Freddo Frogs to be found for the kids thrown in free of charge.

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Nicolaou family for their generous spirit and the role they play in the local community, and congratulate my good friend Nick Nicolaou and his wonderful family on this fantastic small business milestone. I take this opportunity to wish Chris' IGA Carina a very happy 60th birthday.

NAIDOC Week

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (1.22 am): NAIDOC Week is an important opportunity to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history. It is also a time to highlight the achievements of Indigenous people in our community. The traditional owners of the land which I am very humbled to represent in this place are the Dharumbal and Woppaburra people. Tonight, I pay my respects to their elders, past and present.

Recently, during NAIDOC Week at Emu Park it was an honour and a privilege to march side by side with my Indigenous brothers and sisters. Young children flew the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags proudly. Highly respected elders marched with pride and several generations of Aboriginal people celebrated their culture, their family and their spiritual connection with the land and sea. I felt the emotion, the pride and the passion in the air. Dharumbal elder Aunty Sally Veve gave an impassioned welcome to country. Evelyn Carte talked about her special connection with the land and Deanna Veve did a great job as emcee.

This year's NAIDOC theme is We all Stand on Sacred Ground: Learn, Respect and Celebrate. It highlights the strong spiritual and cultural connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have to the land and sea. When I joined a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people on a walk up Gawula, it was an honour and a privilege to witness firsthand that strong spiritual and cultural connection that the Dharumbal people have with the land. Gawula is just one of the many sacred places in the Central Queensland region that has great significance for the Dharumbal people. Gawula, located in Cawarral, is a place where Indigenous people can go to reflect on stories of their culture and local history. After a 2½ hour almost vertical climb, we reached the apex of the mountain at 400 metres above sea level. Words cannot describe how absolutely beautiful and emotional it was to stand side by side with my Indigenous brothers and sisters and Dharumbal elder Uncle Wade Mann at the top of the mountain, with 360 degree views across Dharumbal country. Uncle Wade told us stories about the

Dharumbal people's connection with Gawula, about Bduru, the Dharumbal green tree frog totem, and the rainbow serpent. It took another hour to trek down again, but when we arrived we were greeted by cheers, big smiles and high-fives.

Preserving and promoting Indigenous culture and this spiritual connection to the land and sea, is vitally important. It was an honour to be given the opportunity to climb Gawula as part of NAIDOC Week celebrations, the only time when non-Indigenous people can climb Gawula, and to learn about the importance of Gawula to our local traditional owners. I thank the traditional owners for sharing their stories and this sacred place with us.

Cook Electorate, State Budget

 **Mr GORDON** (Cook—Ind) (1.25 am): I note the budget papers provide for approximately \$5m to offset the high cost-of-living pressures that people and communities in the cape and Torres Strait Island face when it comes to the cost of air travel. People and families in Cape York and the Torres Strait are paying arguably the highest domestic airfares in the country. Families and communities in Cook are being slammed at the bowser, the supermarket, when it comes to electricity prices and, in particular, air travel. It gives me considerable pleasure to see that, when it comes to matters of quality of life and the cost of living, the government acknowledge that these communities are doing it tough. It is a tremendous gesture that the government cares and is not oblivious to the challenges that remote and isolated Queenslanders face on a daily basis.

Although there is more to do in alleviating these cost-of-living pressures that Queenslanders face in remote and isolated parts of the state, I see this as a genuine first step in the right direction to showing that governments give a damn. I urge this government to build on the foundation that its first budget has laid and be a government for all of Queensland.

If parties put up their hands to govern for Queensland then they cannot pick and choose where Queensland starts or ends. People who live in the remote and isolated parts of this great state pay the same taxes as everybody else does, they abide by the same laws of the land and play an active role in contributing to the economic and social prosperity of this great state. Consequently, these remote and isolated communities should be afforded adequate and appropriate representation in their parliament.

Inspiring Women's Awards; Pyjama Foundation

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (1.27 am): I rise tonight to speak about a fantastic event that was held recently in Gladstone, the inaugural Inspiring Women's Awards. I was thrilled to attend this event with Minister Shannon Fentiman during her recent trip to Gladstone. The awards attracted 190 attendees, an amazing achievement for the maiden ceremony, and was organised by the Gladstone Women's Health Centre. Tash Fee and her team did a fantastic job in organising the celebration and in shining the spotlight on some inspiring local women.

Irene Dudley was recognised as the first Inspiring Woman of the Year. Irene is selflessly devoted to helping others and proves, through her volunteering and dedication to our community, that one person can truly make a difference. Irene inspires other women with her passion, her strength of character and her determination.

The Young Woman of the Year was awarded to Ruby Lawler. Although Ruby has a rare chromosome deletion disability, she has achieved many accolades in her young life, including attending the Special Olympics as an athlete leader and claiming five medals in swimming events, completing a Certificate III in child care and facilitating her own creative arts group at the Gladstone Community Hub, to name just a few.

There was also another very important award given out, the Heroic Woman of the Year. This award was presented to a woman from the community who could not be publically named for legal reasons. After enduring violent assaults at the hands of her partner and being left with nothing, this woman has drawn on her own inner strength to live independently, now helping and supporting other victims and survivors of domestic violence.

During the ceremony, I was thrilled to accept the first-ever male membership—a significant milestone in the 22-year history of the centre in Gladstone. The membership certificate sits proudly in my office and I look forward to playing a role in assisting the centre in the vital work that it does.

I take this last minute of my speech to also mention that tomorrow is national Pyjama Foundation day. My office has done some very good work potentially for the kids—220 kids in care in Gladstone—who need a special little treat every now and then. We are setting our target for 220 pairs of pyjamas for kids in care in Gladstone. If we can get close to that, I will be a very happy politician in Gladstone to help support the kids in care in Gladstone.

Burdekin Water Festival

 **Mr LAST** (Burdekin—LNP) (1.29 am): On 4 July I had the pleasure of launching the 2015 Burdekin Water Festival. The Water Festival is one of the oldest festivals in Queensland, having run continuously for 57 years. It was the dream of Bob Saxby Snr who had been to Toowoomba and had seen the Carnival of Flowers in 1957. Upon his return to Ayr, he went to see the shire chairman, EW Ford, to see what Ayr could do to promote its underground water supply. A public meeting was then called in late 1957 and it is from that meeting that the Ayr Water Festival came about, the first being held in September 1958. The name was later changed to the Burdekin Water Festival to include the whole district in the celebrations.

In 1958, three young ladies vied for the queen's title, with the winner being named the Water Festival Personality Queen. In 1963, the decision was made to include a junior section, the Water Festival Princess. In 1974, the committee of the day decided to reward entrants for their fundraising efforts, creating the Water Festival Charity Queen title. In the 1990s the committee changed the names of these entrants and winners to ambassadors and young ambassadors to allow young men to enter the quest and it now includes a section called Burdekin Blokes. The theme for this year's festival will be It's a Wild and Wonderful World, which gives the ambassadors plenty of scope, as members could imagine. It's a Wild and Wonderful World is about the people and places around us and everything that goes with it.

The festival culminates in the crowning of junior and senior ambassadors, the Burdekin Bloke and a mardi gras and street parade on 5 September. Ambassadors and blokes also stage events throughout the community such as movie premieres, trivia nights and so on. The National Tree Day event is a tradition for ambassadors and blokes to attend to show their support for Landcare and the environment in general. As a community centred on agriculture, initiatives and issues such as this are held dearly by all residents.

The Burdekin Water Festival promotes and supports all participating local organisations, as the festival is a time when locals work together to celebrate this magnificent area of Queensland. The 2015 Burdekin Water Festival ambassadors will enjoy participating in all of the many events that the committee has planned. I pay tribute to past and present committees for the enormous amount of work they put into making this festival the success it is. When you talk about community spirit, the Burdekin has it in spades and this festival brings the community together like no other event to celebrate all the things that make the Burdekin such a great place to live, work and play.

Smallwood, Uncle A, Men's Group

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (1.32 am): Today I acknowledge the great work being done by a true community champion in the Thuringowa electorate, Uncle Alfred Smallwood, and his particular work with his Men's Group. It is indeed timely to acknowledge his great work in this important area of community engagement and support as we have just wrapped up NAIDOC Week, which celebrates reconciliation in Australia, with a fantastic and very well attended Riverway day out, just after the NAIDOC march up Thuringowa Drive last Friday, where I also had the pleasure of joining the Minister for Health and Minister for Ambulance Services, Cameron Dick, who announced a record \$200 million to address Indigenous health, particularly initiatives for closing the gap.

It was great to present Uncle Alfred Smallwood with a certificate of appreciation for his great work, dedication and commitment to his local community and to the Men's Group itself. That great work is in its 15th year of operation and is entirely voluntary. I have been very impressed by the work and support he provides to the community by way of his Men's Group. The group is a cultural mentoring and support group for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and youth who have a troubled past or have social challenges and issues in the Thuringowa area and the broader Townsville area. Uncle Alfred facilitates his Men's Group for cultural mentoring on a weekly basis and his goal is to take the men out on country to participate in culturally appropriate practices such as hunting, fishing and collecting material for artefacts to make things such as boomerangs, spears, nulla-nulla and so on.

Currently the group borrows a bus from the Salvation Army Townsville Recovery Service and the North Queensland Community Centre to transport participants to and from meetings. I must also acknowledge the great work by the Salvation Army engagement officer Christopher Congoo in this space and his support for Uncle Alfred's Men's Group. Due to these vehicles being owned and used by other organisations, there are times when the vehicles are unavailable for the Men's Group to use and, therefore, volunteers will use their own vehicles to transport participants to and from the meetings. The average monthly attendance of this group is 56 men.

The Uncle Alfred's Men's Group goal is to acquire a bus of their own, to transport the men to and from the meetings and external gatherings as their group expands in attendance. I am working with Townsville City Council and other community groups to, hopefully, see this come to fruition. I and many others in Thuringowa again acknowledge and warmly congratulate Uncle Alfred on his great work in our local community.

Country Racing

 **Mr WEIR** (Condamine—LNP) (1.35 am): Country racing is invaluable to the rural and regional areas of Queensland. It is the social fabric of many small communities that are reliant upon their biannual or annual country race meeting to raise funds and provide a reason to come together and socialise. The significance of these race days to the local economy, as well as providing an opportunity to gather and relax with neighbours, family and friends, should not be understated for the many people who live and work in rural Queensland.

The state of Queensland is divided into eight racing associations with 104 clubs in total, holding almost 290 race meetings every year. My electorate lies within the Eastern Downs Country Racing Association area and includes 17 clubs from the small township of Bell to the Dalby race club located in my largest community. The Picnic Races meeting held annually at Dalby is over 100 years old and has drawn crowds of more than 3,000 people. This year's Picnic Races saw perfect weather, with people travelling from all over Queensland and Northern New South Wales to attend. The Dalby race club ran its 150th Plough Inn Cup race day in 2009, sharing this special celebration with the first race meeting held in Queensland. Last year, I attended the Clifton race meeting and enjoyed the warm hospitality of rural Queenslanders.

The country racing industry employs, directly or indirectly, over 10,000 people who are devoted to the industry and love the work they do. Horse trainers, jockeys, strappers, stablehands, vets, livestock transporters, farriers and produce suppliers are some of the many jobs created in rural and regional centres because of country racing. The economies of small communities are boosted on race days, with motels, hotels and restaurants experiencing more trade. When the TAB race days are held in Dalby, the fuel suppliers see a significant increase in sales directly attributed to the race day. Many jockeys complete their apprenticeship in country areas. It is within the safety of this training ground that they learn their riding skills.

My family has been involved with horseracing for as long as I can remember. We have enjoyed the dust and dirt that sometimes comes with country racing and would not swap it for anything. It has been a part of my life and I hope the support for country racing continues for many years to come.

Premier's Reading Challenge; Deception Bay Reads

 **Mr WHITING** (Murrumba—ALP) (1.38 am): I rise to bring to the attention of the House how we are actively promoting the Premier's Reading Challenge in the Murrumba electorate. Like many parents, I absolutely believe that a love of books and reading is an important building block in helping young Queenslanders get a great education. To promote the Premier's Reading Challenge to students, I have read stories to classes at two great schools in Murrumba and donated books. At Bounty Boulevard State School, I read to about 100 year 2 students and at Deception Bay North State School I read to about 50 years 2 and 3 students. This challenge resonates with me, as I have a four-year-old boy, Guy, to whom we read every night. I was especially pleased to present a copy of his favourite book, *Pirates Love Underpants*, to Bounty Boulevard State School.

The Premier's Reading Challenge reflects our determination to ensure that every child, no matter where they live, has access to a quality education. It reflects our insistence on investing in Queensland's education system, which is why we have committed to employing an extra 2,500 teachers in Queensland's state schools. Contrast that to the federal LNP, whose budget has left Queensland \$466 million worse off in school funding over the next three years, compared to the specific purpose payments in last year's federal budget.

In the Premier's Reading Challenge, prep to year 2 students aim to read or experience 20 books. Students in years 3 to 4 aim to read 20 books and students in years 5 to 9 aim to read 15 books. Students and parents or guardians keep track of their reading progress and the students receive certificates of achievement. Now the Palaszczuk government has extended the challenge to students in years 8 and 9, as well as kindergartens and long day care centres. I hope I have encouraged participation in the Premier's Reading Challenge amongst Murrumba schoolchildren.

I also want to promote another local literacy program, Deception Bay Reads. This is a community created and community-driven program run by community workers Gail Robinson, Jennie Drever and Jan Macintyre. It was initially funded in 2010 by Education Queensland and has been a partnership arrangement with the Moreton Bay Regional Council library services. It is aimed at Deception Bay kids and families who may be socially or economically vulnerable. Deception Bay Reads often brings a box of books to gatherings such as mother's groups, gives books to the kids and program volunteers read to kids and run rhyming sessions. Deception Bay Reads develops parents as the earliest teachers and familiarises children with books and language when they are ready to arrive at prep. I am proud to support the Premier's Reading Challenge and Deception Bay Reads in the communities of Murrumba.

Question put—That the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 1.41 am (Friday).

ATTENDANCE

Bailey, Barton, Bates, Bennett, Bleijie, Boothman, Boyd, Brown, Butcher, Byrne, Costigan, Cramp, Crandon, Crawford, Cripps, D'Ath, Davis, de Brenni, Dick, Dickson, Donaldson, Elmes, Emerson, Enoch, Farmer, Fentiman, Frecklington, Furner, Gilbert, Gordon, Grace, Harper, Hart, Hinchliffe, Howard, Jones, Katter, Kelly, King, Knuth, Krause, Langbroek, Last, Lauga, Leahy, Linard, Lynham, Madden, Mander, McArdle, McEachan, McVeigh, Miles, Millar, Miller, Minnikin, Molhoek, Nicholls, O'Rourke, Palaszczuk, Pearce, Pease, Pegg, Perrett, Pitt, Powell, Power, Pyne, Rickuss, Robinson, Rowan, Russo, Ryan, Saunders, Seene, Simpson, Smith, Sorensen, Springborg, Stevens, Stewart, Stuckey, Trad, Walker, Watts, Weir, Wellington, Whiting, Williams