



Speech By
Hon. Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Record of Proceedings, 5 June 2014

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

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

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

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

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

As one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy, our \$23 billion tourism industry plays a major role in creating jobs across regions and creating wealth that allows us to put more police on the street and more teachers in our schools. From my department's perspective, we aim to make

Queensland an irresistible drawcard for tourists and investors, supported by a dynamic and profitable small business sector. This will be achieved through funding for Tourism and Events Queensland of \$98.7 million, continuing the momentum gained over the past two years towards our goal to double annual overnight visitor expenditure from \$15 billion to \$30 billion by 2020. For TEQ some \$49.5 million has been allocated across three years, which was not in the forward estimates when this government came to office.

Our DestinationQ strategy has flourished. The annual DestinationQ forums commenced in 2012 and have become Queensland's annual premier industry and government event. Forum outcomes have developed Destination Success, a 20-year plan for Queensland tourism. Our formal partnership with the Queensland Tourism Industry Council has enabled us to reinvigorate our tourism industry after years of neglect by Labor. Through our international tourism marketing efforts, we will be targeting growth markets to further promote Queensland as a destination of choice for visitors from China, India, South-East Asia and beyond. This budget sees ongoing provision for regional tourism via the \$7 million regional tourism organisation fund, which is double the amount allocated by Labor, so our 13 regional tourism organisations can market the uniqueness of their destinations. TEQ will be able to maintain its solid focus on attracting and supporting events that deliver benefits to regions across Queensland. In the past financial year, we invested in 44 major events that attracted almost 690,000 visitors, contributing some \$290 million into the economy, while our Regional Development Program supported a total of 85 events in towns spread across Queensland.

Attracting aviation and tourism investment remain high priorities. Our \$8 million Attracting Aviation Investment Fund will continue to boost aviation route capacity into Queensland, while our highly successful Tourism Investment Attraction Unit remains the one-stop shop for tourism investment in our state, working with international investors and domestic projects to facilitate new and revitalised tourism infrastructure, including eco opportunities. In 2013-14, 16 tourism investment attraction initiatives were delivered and case management assistance was provided to 48 tourism investment proponents.

Small business is the backbone of Queensland's four-pillar economy and this budget upholds our commitment to provide support for this crucial sector. In 2014-15, \$7.7 million will be allocated to support small business services, including enhancement of the popular Business and Industry Portal, or BIP as she is affectionately known, and the continuation of the highly successful Mentoring for Growth program. During 2013-14, the BIP received over 2.3 million unique visitors, which is more than double the previous year, saving small businesses more than \$250 million in time and money during the past two years.

Under the government's one-stop-shop initiative, business content on the BIP is set to double in 2014-15, incorporating information from nine state government departments. In September we will stage the popular Small Business Week, with a range of free and low-cost events and activities to give small business owners and operators the chance to hear new ideas, connect with other businesses and access information and services to help them grow and become more productive. To the year ending April 2014, our Mentoring for Growth program has provided assistance to over 370 businesses and more than 100 mentoring sessions. I take this opportunity to place on record my sincere gratitude for the 291 mentors who have so far contributed more than 1,300 hours of their time.

I also place on record my sincere thanks to my ministerial staff; my assistant minister, the honourable member for Cairns; my department; Tourism and Events Queensland and board members; and GOLDOC and board members. Without them, we would not have been able to achieve what we have these past 12 months so that we can look forward with confidence to the future.

I now turn to my wonderful electorate of Currumbin. The Newman government's commitment to addressing law and order problems has yielded significant results on the southern Gold Coast. An increase in police numbers and tough new laws have resulted in massive reductions in crime. Recent Gold Coast figures indicate that robbery is down by 18 per cent, unlawful entry has decreased by 30 per cent, assault has dropped by 15 per cent and theft is down by 12 per cent. The budget allocates \$3 million as part of an \$18 million commitment over four years for South-East Queensland police helicopters and \$795,000 for the Gold Coast police hub, which will provide a more visible and flexible police presence on our streets and in our neighbourhoods.

Another big winner in the Currumbin electorate is education, with huge benefits through the \$11.8 billion education budget. All nine schools will share in almost \$1.2 million through Great Results Guarantee funding. I see the minister in the House and I thank him for that. Currumbin Valley State School is set to benefit further with \$500,000 through the capital works education program for additional accommodation. Community groups in Currumbin are also big winners, with this budget allocating \$100,000 through Get in the Game funding for the Tweed Heads and Coolangatta Surf Life

Saving Club and \$100,000 for the Palm Beach Currumbin Sports Club. It is good to see \$4.3 million allocated for improving access and safety on Gold Coast Waterways. The establishment of the Gold Coast Waterways Authority in 2012 and the continual investment in this authority has resulted in various safety benefits for the popular and busy Currumbin estuary.

The most vulnerable members of our society will be supported in this budget. In Currumbin alone \$7.61 million will be allocated for disability services funding to assist those with a disability and their families where necessary, \$70,000 is specifically dedicated to child services in the area and \$280,000 through community services funding will promote and support excellence in the delivery of human services. The Gold Coast South Home Assist Secure service, which is located in Tugun, will receive \$540,000 following the \$530,000 allocated last year and \$1.813 million has been allocated to allow non-government organisations in Currumbin to deliver specialist services that will assist in addressing the issue of homelessness in our communities.

Our beloved Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary is also set to benefit with \$100,000 allocated through the Koala Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre. After unsuccessfully lobbying the former Labor government for so many years, I am proud to be part of a government that has provided a significant sum of money to enable the sanctuary to plant 15,000 fodder plants to feed injured koalas.

Considering the state of our finances, it is pleasing to see that there are no services cuts, no new taxes and a strong commitment to law and order and revitalising front-line services in Currumbin contained in this budget. What we have is a stronger plan for a brighter future for Currumbin and the rest of Queensland.