



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR LOGAN

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr Costigan: Great effort!

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

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

Over the past two years, our government has undertaken the great task of reforming child protection services. With landmark child protection reforms, vulnerable Queensland families will receive more support than ever, with \$406 million over five years going to family services and better child protection in this year's state budget. Through legislation, we have strived to create a safer community for young people. Logan will further benefit from a \$3.1 million allocation to the electorate

that is dedicated to protecting our young people and children from harm or who are at risk of harm and whose parents cannot provide adequate care or protection for them.

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

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

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

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

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

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