



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (6.00 pm): The 2017-18 budget of this Labor government has already registered as a disappointment to the people of the Cleveland district. The budget fails in so many ways. Labor's budget does nothing to tackle Cleveland's unemployment and underemployment and will cause cost-of-living increases to car registration, power and water, among other areas. In fact, the RACQ condemned the government for continuing to charge, in their words, the 'highest or second highest' registration in Australia. In contrast to Labor's increased cost of living, the Liberal National Party has announced in response to that that a Liberal National Party government would freeze family car registration.

Despite Labor's raids on public servants' super in last year's budget, we are still hurtling towards an \$81 billion debt. Again, I contrast that with when the LNP were in government and debt came down. A standout bad measure in the current budget is the \$400 million cut to road funding, and Labor must hear the vote of the parliament that condemned them for it. I also note that the RACQ condemned the government for the same cut to funding and investment in roads.

The state budget has very little in it directly for Cleveland residents who have once again been left out in the cold. North Stradbroke Island workers are being sacked and sent to Labor's burgeoning unemployment queue. Unemployment, especially youth unemployment, has worsened in Redland City under Labor's watch. Unemployment across the state will remain at six per cent, offering little to the unemployed and underemployed in the Cleveland district.

The sacking of the 30 per cent Quandamooka Aboriginal workforce from the mine is absolutely disgraceful. Labor cannot claim to care for Aboriginal people while they are sacking Indigenous workers and cutting Indigenous jobs on North Stradbroke Island. Thirty per cent of the workforce are Indigenous at the mine and are being sacked from very good and dignifying jobs. Thirty per cent of them are being sacked because of Labor's laws. Everyone on that side of the House voted for legislation that will sack 30 per cent of the workforce that are Indigenous. The Quandamooka people are having their jobs taken from them and are being sent back to the unemployment queue, and that is an absolute disgrace and shame.

Labor's infrastructure freeze on major projects to the Cleveland district has now extended for three budget years and has set in as a permanent ice pack. For three long successive budget years now, very little has been invested in areas such as Cleveland's public transport, state arterial roads or the Redland Hospital.

The LNP in government delivered essential infrastructure and services for the people of Cleveland such as at Redland Hospital. At Redland Hospital we invested in a new palliative care service. Smaller waiting lists were achieved for dental care and elective surgery. We built a new

ambulance station and completed construction of the emergency department extension, including a paediatric section and 10 new short-stay beds. In addition to that, we funded the new nurses and staff who were needed for the new expanded ED facility that Labor forgot to budget for. We were opening a new extended emergency department but Labor forgot to plan for the nurses and the other medical staff who would be needed.

We boosted rail services, with 450 additional peak hour seats. We built critical school buildings like the Cleveland High year 7 building and the Bay View State School hall. We invested in fishing and boating and marine infrastructure such as the new boat ramp and pontoons at the William Street boat ramp, Cleveland, and we upgraded the Wellington Point boat ramp. We protected jobs on North Stradbroke Island, among other achievements—all while repairing the unsustainable state finances of debt and deficits left behind by Labor. Sadly, Labor's third budget does very little. The people of Cleveland do not want three or four more years of a do-nothing Labor government, with higher taxes, higher cost of living, higher cost of doing business, a ballooning Public Service and record high levels of debt.

Much more is needed to fix, however, the congested state arterial roads in and out of Cleveland. Labor's cuts to train services on the Cleveland line are hurting and need to be reversed, peak and express services need to be restored, investment in tourism needs to be boosted and job-creating infrastructure on Straddie like the Dunwich harbour redevelopment is required. Sadly, the infrastructure freeze on major projects extends widely throughout the electorate, with no new major projects confirmed in health, transport and roads, police and emergency services, among other things—with the only exception being a hall for Cleveland high school. The huge majority of residents of Thornlands, Birkdale, Ormiston, Wellington Point, North Stradbroke Island and Cleveland will get very little value from this budget. There is nothing major in health, public transport, main roads or marine and boating infrastructure.

What about the freeze on health infrastructure? There is no major commitment to any aspect of Redland Hospital that is visible in the budget. The hospital provides health services to a growing and ageing region. It is important to continue progressing the planning to expand the hospital precinct footprint on government owned land north of the current site. The LNP in government took the view that it is critical that this state land be set aside for the long-term expansion of the hospital and to not be sold off. Locals are worried that a broke Labor government will get desperate and flog off the land as another Labor asset sale, just like they did when they sold the income-producing Mount Cotton driver training centre, after the member for Capalaba gave assurances that there would not be any asset sales of land or anything that would impact Redland City. After that commitment, that was then sold. This land north of the Redland Hospital is far too important for the future health needs of the ageing and growing Redlands community. I will continue to fight to protect that land from another Labor asset sell-off.

With no new hospital commitments in three budgets, health has stagnated in the Cleveland district and is at risk of going backwards under this government. There is no clear commitment for items such as the needed intensive care unit, a rehabilitation area or a beds wing. There is not even a plan for an extra single car park that has been announced. I call on the government to reverse their infrastructure freeze at Redland Hospital.

I turn to the government's failure on public transport and road projects. The infrastructure failure of this government to the Cleveland district is also evident in the failure for three years in a row to invest in road funding—and it is clear in Labor's rail fail on the Cleveland line. There should have been funds to fix congestion on major arterial roads that are important to Redland City commuters, such as Cleveland-Redland Bay Road, or to go towards upgrading the increasingly dangerous intersection at Shore and Wellington streets. Instead, it has taken the federal LNP to help fund state road improvements like the \$3.5 million commitment to a basic intersection upgrade of Shore and Wellington streets. Again, I call on the roads minister to cooperate with the federal government and Redland City Council and to consider investing a small amount of funding to optimise the project. Why would you look a gift-horse in the mouth—another level of government largely paying for your road?

With regard to Rickertt Road, which is a Brisbane City Council road and one that is very important to commuters in the northern part of the Redlands in suburbs like Wellington Point and Ormiston and Birkdale, I want to acknowledge the role that federal LNP member Andrew Laming has played in the past, delivering the duplication of this road on the Redland City side, or the Bowman electorate side—his electorate—of the bridge over Tingalpa Creek. To go even further, the federal LNP government and federal MPs Ross Vasta and Andrew Laming have teamed up with the LNP Brisbane City Council to deliver an upgrade to the Greencamp Road corridor, including the duplication of the intersection with Rickertt Road. Again, we see only the LNP doing the heavy lifting on delivering roads while Labor

watches, does nothing and criticises those who are doing something, to the point where the Mayor of Redland City, Karen Williams, stated of the last budget—and it is also applicable to this budget I believe—

... the absence of funding in the State Budget for Redlands roads highlights the need for alternative and innovative options to be considered to clear traffic congestion hotspots.

Mayor Williams went on to say that residents have—

... made it very clear to us ... that congestion was a major issue, and we know the worst choke point is Cleveland-Redland Bay Road.

Sadly, the mayor reluctantly had to conclude—

While this is a State-controlled road, we do not expect it to be on the State Government's roads agenda any time soon so we need to find other ways to upgrade the road, which is one of the major links within our city ... The reality is we just cannot afford to do nothing. As this road does not seem to be a priority for the State, we have to convince them that it is for us and we are ready to work with them and the private sector to complete the work.

In other words, they have to find some other innovative way to solve it because the state will not do what it should do. Mayor Williams stated that a report previously commissioned by a cross-boundary working group showed that the worst traffic congestion within the Redlands was identified as mainly on state controlled roads. For 16 of the last 19 years, Labor have been in government at a state level and those roads have fallen behind in that time. That is, for 80 per cent of the time, Labor have been in government and the roads have fallen into disrepair.

The report also identified Cleveland-Redland Bay Road as a priority for consideration. Not surprisingly, no progress has been made by Labor over three budget years to ease congestion on this state road. When the roads minister was asked in parliament, he did not even know the road existed. This is a major arterial thoroughfare through the Redlands City area and the Minister for Main Roads did not even know that it existed. No wonder there is no attention to the state roads in the Cleveland district.

This budget fails to address Labor's cuts to train services on the Cleveland line. Labor's failure to heed early warnings about train driver shortages and closed shop union practices resulted in huge cuts to services on South-East Queensland lines. The Cleveland line was one of the hardest hit of 12 lines by Labor's cuts to services. Cleveland commuters who need the train to get to work in the city or to get their children to school are angry as they have had to reschedule their lives around reduced services. In some cases, they have been left stranded at stations, their children have been left stranded on their way home from school and others have not been able to utilise the reduced services and have reverted back to driving to work in their cars, further clogging our already congested roads. Labor's rail fail has been an unmitigated disaster for Cleveland commuters.

To reverse Labor's cuts to services, I have initiated Cleveland's 'save our rail campaign'. This campaign has the support of the local community who want Labor to achieve the following: one, ensure there are no further cuts to services; two, reverse all current cuts; and, three, restore previous services, starting with peak and express services, until all services have been returned. Locals and I have been hindered from restoring services by the incompetence and division that exists within Labor. First, there have been three transport ministers in two years. Second, when I raised the matter in the House in question time about cuts on the Cleveland line and impacts to my commuters, I asked the Premier to meet with affected local residents. She refused to be available to listen to the reasonable concerns of local residents, and instead she offered for the Deputy Premier, the transport minister, to meet with them. She basically said that we should see the Deputy Premier about it.

I was disappointed that the Premier did not care enough to come for herself, but I followed her advice and sought a meeting with the Deputy Premier. After waiting for weeks, the Deputy Premier finally replied to say that she would not be meeting with me and my community because she was too busy. We were not told, 'I'll meet you in a month or maybe two months. You'll have to wait because I'm so busy.' There was no time for me and my community to be able to meet with her. This was in complete disregard to the clear instructions of the Premier in question time.

Why would the Deputy Premier ignore the instructions of the Premier? I think we all know why. The Deputy Premier believes she should be the Premier herself. She refuses to work in a team with the Premier. We saw this with the Carmichael mine, where she led a cabinet revolt to force the Premier to soften her position on the mine. Again, I ask the Premier: will she meet with my commuters, as I asked in the parliament many weeks ago, now that the Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport refuses to follow her instructions?

While we are still on rail, the government have completely mishandled the Cross River Rail. Both major parties know that a rail solution across the river is needed. The Liberal National Party had a cost-effective solution, but sadly Labor rejected it and went their own way. Labor slapped together a business case, one that did not address all of the issues, had flaws in it and was kept secret from Queenslanders. The plans did not synchronise or integrate well with the Brisbane City Council's plans. Further, despite some funds being provided in this budget, the project is massively underfunded and cannot at this point head towards any idea of completion. The government also have kept the full cost of the more than \$15 billion from the public and have no plan about how they will pay for it. These matters rightly saw the federal government not be in any hurry to approve this secretive, flawed, non-integrated, underfunded and expensive solution. Labor have been so caught up dreaming about Cross River Rail that they have taken their eyes off other important aspects of public transport, like the duplication of the rail line from Cleveland to Manly and the Eastern Busway.

Regarding the Eastern Busway, Labor withdrew state funding for the project in their 2011-12 budget—I believe it was roughly then—prior to the LNP forming government. The LNP government discovered that there were no funds set aside for the Eastern Busway. As such, Labor had killed the busway. This reality was at odds with the promise made by Premier Bligh, together with then transport minister, Anastacia Palaszczuk, that if the federal government did not help with the funding, the Labor state government would go it alone and build the busway from state funds only. Does that sound familiar to anyone? They were going to fund a piece of public transport infrastructure themselves. Did they do it with the Eastern Busway? No, they dropped the whole project. However, both I and Mayor Karen Williams never gave up on the Eastern Busway to Capalaba. We do not need a rolled gold solution, just a practical busway.

I want to give a precis on this. Unfortunately, some confusion still exists about whether the Eastern Busway is in Labor's plans or not. The member for Capalaba is spruiking that it is, but when transport officers are asked they say that it is just the transit way, the bus lanes. That needs to be clarified for the member for Capalaba before he continues to spruik the Eastern Busway returning. I would be very excited if it is being returned, but we need to clarify that. I would be happy for the minister or the Treasurer to do so.

The government seem to have no interest or plan to improve facilities or provide more car parking at Birkdale station and Cleveland station. They took the previously budgeted park-and-rides away from those stations and gave them to Thorneside to prop up the current member for Capalaba. For them to do that means they must be very worried about him going into the election. The people in Cleveland would like to see those car parks put back. The theft of those car parks from the Cleveland station has made the Cleveland station redevelopment unviable in my view and in the community's view.

Labor's cheap and nasty North Stradbroke Island plan via their still secret ETS is way behind schedule and grossly underfunded. The 2,000-plus residents, the mayor, the Redland City Council, businesses, business groups, community groups and Indigenous traditional owners have called on the government to dramatically increase funding to plug the gap that they left when they prematurely closed the mine and started sacking 150 workers—30 per cent, as I have mentioned, who are Indigenous—and putting a further 150 jobs at risk with their job-cutting and job-destroying legislation.

I could go on further, and perhaps at another time I will highlight the further impacts on the people of North Stradbroke Island. I am glad that they are a resilient people. They do have a bright future in terms of their own potential, but it is very important that governments get on board and support that and not make it more difficult.

We see the situation with recreational fishers and boaties. We delivered so many things in terms of boat ramps, pontoons and artificial reefs. We still have an artificial reef that we would like to see in the Wellington Point area.

We see a freeze in many other areas. As I have already mentioned, in education I am very happy to be part of delivering the Cleveland State High School hall. The tender process is underway and will be finished soon. Construction will commence later in the year. I will say one other thing in terms of education. The member for Capalaba has claimed that the TAFE was run down under the LNP. I have had eight years of dealings with the Alexandra Hills TAFE. It was never run down. Over that time it always had its struggles and its ups and downs. Steve Davies and I certainly continued to support our local TAFE. It is incumbent on the member for Capalaba to produce the evidence. I have asked on notice for the facts and details, but they have not been provided. It is now a challenge to him. This government has failed in terms of this budget.

(Time expired)