




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

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

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (10.45 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the 2018-19 Queensland state budget handed down by the member for South Brisbane. As a father of three wonderful children, my wife and I instil in our family the importance of living within your means. We teach them the importance of participating in work and earning money for effort. One of my children has become a really good saver and prefers to spend mum and dad's money instead of her own, so she has certainly caught on to something there. I am sure that members in this chamber would agree with me the importance of living within your budget and instilling the importance of this on your children. All we want to see is the very best for the next generation and ensure that the high living standards that we have become accustomed to continue into the distant future.

We all realise that every time we use a credit card we are required to pay it back one day. People, like governments, are sometimes placed in spiralling debt cycles and are forced to find other means to boost their income to service their loans and other expenses. However, unlike people, governments have the ability to create new taxes and increase existing taxes which are disseminated throughout the community with residents paying directly and indirectly, increasing the cost of living to service government debt. Therefore, it is critically important for governments, like people, to live within their means.

Unfortunately for the people of Queensland, over the last 20 years the Labor government has placed our state finances into dire circumstances. What angers residents most is that with all of this debt what do we have to show for it? Labor sold Queensland Rail. Labor sold Queensland Motorways. Labor sold the Abbot Point Coal Terminal. Labor sold the port of Brisbane. Labor sold Forestry Plantations Queensland, the Cairns Airport, the Mackay Airport, the state's share in Brisbane Airport, privatised wind energy assets and privatised gas pipeline assets. Golden Casket was sold, as was Powerdirect Australia, Sungas and Sun Retail. Allgas distribution businesses were sold. With all of these fire sales debt continued to mount to historic levels with an interest bill that amounts to \$7,000 a minute, \$220,000 an hour, \$10 million a day, \$71 million a week or \$3.7 billion a year. Queensland is headed to a \$83 billion debt bomb and residents have the right to ask: what do we have to show for it?

Our road networks are bursting at the seams. They are reaching capacity or are at capacity and beyond. Every time there is an accident on the M1 motorway, the whole northern Gold Coast road network goes into meltdown, yet within the northern Gold Coast corridor vast tracts of land are being opened up for development without the necessary infrastructure to cater for that massive growth. We tell people to park their cars at local train stations and take the trains to work—if they run on time—yet this government does not provide ample parking for commuters.

The \$3.7 billion interest bill on the debt would build the roads we need and the car parks we need to attract more people on to public transport. That money would build the roads of tomorrow today. It would build the highway networks and the ring-roads around Brisbane and the Gold Coast. It would

build congestion-busting infrastructure. It would fund state-of-the-art learning facilities to give our students the best possible start in life. That money would fund lights at ovals in my electorate for the Coomera Cubs Baseball Club, the Helensvale Hawks cricket club, the Coomera Crocs cricket club and many other sporting facilities.

At the last election the Albert electorate was renamed Theodore and its boundaries were changed significantly.

Ms Pease: 'Red Ted'?

Mr BOOTHMAN: Unfortunately, it is named after 'Red Ted'. My electorate lost all of the northern areas around Beenleigh, Yatala, Ormeau, Kingsholme, Cedar Creek, Willow Vale and the northern parts of Upper Coomera to other electorates. A large percentage of the Albert population was redistributed out of the new electorate of Theodore. The new boundaries of my electorate of Theodore include Guanaba in the west, Helensvale in the east, parts of Upper Coomera and Coomera in the north and Park Lake and Pacific Pines in the south. Sitting right smack bang in the middle of my electorate is motorway exit 57, the Oxenford interchange. At the last election, both major parties promised to upgrade exit 57.

An opposition member interjected.

Mr BOOTHMAN: There is a lot of sunshine. I will get to that. The vast majority of the residents of my electorate believe that the upgrade of exit 57 is congestion-busting infrastructure. Earlier this year, the residents of my electorate witnessed tree clearing next to the Oxenford Tavern, which is located next to exit 57. Many residents asked me with much excitement, 'Are they finally going to build the slip road to give us direct access to the M1 northbound?' In a bid to find out, I emailed the Department of Transport and Main Roads. I must say that the email that I received back was rather deflating. It destroyed the hopes of the residents of my electorate. The email states—

Dear Mark

I am writing to advise you that the Department of Transport and Main Roads will be installing solar panels on the western side of the Pacific Motorway (M1), Oxenford interchange (Exit 57).

The email said that the solar panels were going to be installed above ground, which I suppose would help. The email stated further—

The solar panels will help offset the power used to light the M1 underpass at Exit 57.

Works associated with the installation of the solar panels has started today and are expected to take approximately eight weeks to complete. This schedule may be impacted by weather and is dependant on approval of a network agreement with Energex. All work will be undertaken during the day with no impact to traffic, including during Games time.

Mr Minnikin: Solar panels.

Mr BOOTHMAN: We got the solar panels. The email states further—

The area will also be fenced to deter vandalism of the solar panels once installed.

I trust this information is of assistance to you and your constituents.

When I put this email on Facebook, my Facebook account went viral. There was a frenzy. This email went out to thousands and thousands of people and virtually every single one of them expressed their dismay and shock that the government could be that obtuse. Cars and trucks trying to turn on to the northbound lane of the M1 motorway from Tamborine-Oxenford Road—the old Pacific Highway—and Heathwood Drive are forced to wait in a queue behind vehicles trying to drive across the motorway. If there were a dedicated slip lane there, those vehicles could easily slip up around the side and go straight on to the motorway. The problem is that the Department of Transport and Main Roads put the solar panels where the slip road needs to go.

I have nothing against solar panels, but why can they not go on the roof of a local school or even on top of the bridge? There are plenty of dead pot plants at the top of the bridge. The member for Broadwater would see those dead pot plants on a daily basis. The solar panels should have been put up there.

An opposition member: They can't. They're muppets.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. They are muppets.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr McArdle): Order! Member for Theodore, that language is unparliamentary. I ask you to withdraw.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I withdraw. If the department could extend an additional lane along the M1 motorway between Helensvale Road and Brisbane Road, that would alleviate an enormous amount of congestion at that point of the M1 motorway.

It is good to see the Minister for Police in the chamber. As I have said, my electorate is a growth corridor of the northern Gold Coast. Police resources on the northern Gold Coast are stretched. They received 22,000 calls for service and 58 officers were looking after those calls. That is an enormous amount of work for 58 officers. I plead with the minister: we need more police for the northern Gold Coast. The residents of my electorate are desperate for more police. They feel that the safety of their children, their houses, their cars and their properties should be treated equally with those of everyone else throughout Queensland. I plead with the minister to please give my electorate more police.

Recently, sound barriers were installed in Helensvale along the rail line. Many residents have come to me to complain and express their frustration over these new sound barriers. In an answer to a recent question on notice the department admitted that, in certain sections, these sound barriers are lower than the previous ones. The minister promised to get his department to check the decibel levels after the Commonwealth Games. Today, I asked a question on notice to see whether that has occurred. The residents of my electorate want to know the answer, because they believe that the noise level is in breach of the legislation.

Although this was not part of the budget, recently Coomera State School received some fencing which was desperately needed because a major Commonwealth Games facility was located down the road from this school. It would have looked terrible for Queensland education to have that rundown fence at that school.

The budget allocates funding to Helensvale State High School for additional classroom spaces, which they have already started work on. When it comes down to it, this is a typical Labor budget, with five new taxes that are simply cash grabs. The thing with new taxes is that the costs will be passed on to small, medium and large businesses, but it is the small business operator and the consumer that will be most impacted. Labor's inability to manage finances will mean the next generation will be forced to pay off its debt bomb.