



Speech By
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MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

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

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (4.56 pm): This is my 10th budget as the member for the Cleveland district—formerly the Cleveland electorate, now the Oodgeroo electorate—and it is the worst and most irresponsible budget of the 10. Labor have set 70 per cent of those budgets and have been in power for over 80 per cent of the last 30 years or so, so all of the long-term, systemic and cumulative problems—like our unsustainably high level of state debt and infrastructure deficits—have occurred on the watch of successive Labor governments. Ambitious Labor premiers and treasurers over the last 30 years or so decided to not live within their means. Traditional Labor budgets over the long term have left our state in a parlous economic situation.

It was largely during Premier Bligh's time during an economic mining boom that debt levels soared to unsustainable heights. Debt is climbing once again under the current Premier and Treasurer. If I may channel Kath and Kim for a moment, this is the Treasurer's 'look at me, look at me, I can be Premier' budget. It is a budget that puts her ambition to be Premier above the needs of the state government's finances and the people of Queensland. Sadly, the Treasurer confuses big taxing and big spending on the state's credit card with high achieving. This bad Labor budget repeats the mistakes of some of the worst Labor budgets of the past. If you understand that it is all about the Treasurer's ambition, then you begin to make sense of this power-seeking budget.

This budget has been described as one of taxes, debt and unemployment. The budget can be further characterised in various ways. It is a terrible tax budget with record high levels of tax, five new taxes, and more to come. The waste tax is a terrible tax and will impact on small businesses. Every Queenslanders indirectly will pay for the sins of one council. Redlanders will be paying for an Ipswich problem. How is that fair to Redlanders? The waste levy will also add an expected \$1,400 to the average cost of a new home, according to Master Builders. Thousands of young couples who want to buy their first home in the Redlands will pay more. How is that fair to them? The government will be tempted to roll out more taxes; for example—I predict—like a recreational fishing licence or fishing tax. What was needed, however, was the LNP's economic plan of no new taxes.

This budget is also a debt denial budget: \$83 billion of state debt and no plan to pay it down, not even to stabilise it. There is not even a plan to make a plan; not even a thought bubble; not even whispered aloud. It is an intergenerational theft budget, a shocking act of theft from our children and grandchildren. This Treasurer is loading future generations of Queenslanders with today's unsustainable debt.

The Treasurer is guilty of stealing from Redlands children—stealing their future lifestyles and prosperity, stealing their jobs and opportunities. What was needed was the LNP's economic plan to not load up unsustainable debt on the generations to come.

It is also a splurge spending budget. The Treasurer is spending like there is no tomorrow, and on the state's credit card—using money we do not have instead of living within our means. What was needed was the LNP's economic plan to not spend more than we earn.

It is a discriminatory budget. It discriminates against the Redlands. While I have said that the government should first live within its means, whatever it does spend within an affordable budget should be spent fairly and evenly, treating people equally. This budget, however, discriminates against Redland City people with respect to the infrastructure spend. Of the \$45 billion infrastructure spend, up to \$1.5 billion is the fair share that Redland City should receive—calculated per person or calculated per state seat, depending on whether you calculate three or four seats for Redland City—but this budget delivers not one big-ticket item in Redland City, a region of 150,000-plus people. There is nothing in terms of road duplications, rail duplication, busways, metros or major hospital upgrades like the ICU unit that is needed. There is nothing big. What was needed was the LNP's economic plan to govern for all Queenslanders, to spend fairly and evenly in all of the regions across the state.

This is also a ratings risky budget. The record spending and record debt put our ratings at further risk. Let us not forget it was a Labor government that lost the state's prized AAA credit rating, having gone broke in a mining boom and before the GFC. With budgets like this one over the next four years, there is no plan to get our AAA credit rating back. Every Redlander will pay more state taxes, levies, fees and charges just to meet the ever-growing interest payments, not to ever pay off the principal. Now this Treasurer has put our current rating at risk with unaffordable spending and unsustainable debt which she has no plan to get under control. What was needed was the LNP's economic plan that provides a steady and balanced approach to the state's finances.

Lastly, this is the 'saved by coal' budget. The higher than expected coal royalties saved the government's budget. How ironic that the budget of the anti-coal crusader the member for South Brisbane was saved by coal! I am sure that irony will not be lost on those in South Brisbane who thought she stood for renewables and climate change only to find that she was happy to bank large amounts of coal royalties in the government coffers. What was needed was the LNP's economic plan that balances the long-term phase-out of coal and the responsible phase-in of renewables.

Speaking statewide, this budget was a chance to treat all Queenslanders fairly; to bring down rising state debt; to live within our means; for real and solid surpluses over the forward estimates; to bring down the cost of living and doing business; and to bring down unemployment, especially in regional towns. Instead of being fiscally responsible, the Treasurer has blown out the debt to spend big on herself, to save herself from the Greens.

This should have been a fair budget for the people of Redland City and the Cleveland district. In particular, the government had the chance to deliver a fair share of infrastructure funds but it has not. The state budget tragedy started badly for the Redlands, with an epic fail to recognise Redland City as a distinct region. Labor failed to provide a separate regional action plan for the Redlands, though the ALP member for Redlands publicly said that she supported our plan for a separate budget region. Instead, Redlands was lumped in with Greater Brisbane, hiding the government's failure to deliver in Redland City. This lack of recognition of the Redlands demonstrates that the three Labor state MPs for Redland City are ineffectual.

The Redlands' fair share of the \$45 billion infrastructure budget is up to \$1.5 billion, but sadly we see nothing invested anytime soon in major road duplication, rail duplication, major hospital upgrade et cetera that will benefit Redlands. This was the chance to put an end to Labor's three-year-long infrastructure freeze. Instead we get four more years of freeze with no big-ticket items. It was the government's chance to show Redlands the money. Sadly, all the Labor MPs could manage was to vote for and in one case speak for record high water price increases for the Redlands and vote for higher power prices.

Mrs Lauga: That was eight years ago.

Dr ROBINSON: We are still paying for them today. I refer to the freeze on health and hospital infrastructure. If Redland City got its fair share—up to \$1.5 billion—then Redland Hospital would be getting a major upgrade like Ipswich, Logan, Caboolture and Nambour hospitals. I wish them well, but this should have been equally applied to the Redlands. There is a need for a new ICU, rehab beds, an expansion of the palliative care service to a full 10-bed unit—and even just car parking. Even more could have been done with our fair share. While the maternity water-birthing suite is to be provided in response to my Better Redlands plan, much more is needed. Our ED waiting times continue to grow under this Labor government.

In terms of transport and main roads, if we got our fair share then much more could have been done. Cross River Rail is of questionable value to the Redlands, if it is ever fully realised. It appears that it may not even connect effectively to the Cleveland line and may not save much time at all. How will it save time if the Manly to Cleveland section remains a single track? It does not achieve anything without the duplication of that rail line. To date these questions have not been sufficiently answered. The rail duplication would benefit Cleveland and Redland commuters in the short to medium term and save them time—now and soon—going to and from the city. This duplication has been promised by Labor before but is not yet built. It is another unfulfilled Labor promise, not unlike Cross River Rail I suspect.

The budget even fails to address Labor's 40-plus cuts to train services on the Cleveland line. I suggest it should spend some time fixing that before it tries things that are much bigger. Commuters are being stranded at stations. Robert Dow from Rail Back on Track spoke of a case of a person who was waiting 44 minutes, stranded at a station on the Cleveland line, because the train was deemed as 'express'—not because it was planned that way but because it was full, it did not stop and the person had to wait.

Since Labor withdrew funding for the Eastern Busway in the 2011 budget and forward estimates, after committing to the Redlands to fund it solely with state funds by 2026, the busway project has not gone ahead on Labor's promised scale.

In terms of roads, there should have been funds to fix congestion on major arterial roads: duplicating Cleveland Redland Bay Road, duplicating Mount Cotton Road, even upgrading the Shore and Wellington streets intersection. For the Shore and Wellington streets intersection, the LNP federal member has put \$3½ million on the table. Our commitment was for \$5 million. That would be an \$8½ million build and would provide plenty of funds to do it. Labor had an opportunity to stump up the money and move on, but instead the minister has blocked the funding and reversed TMR's previous determination that the intersection is not safe. It has loaded a \$4 million contingency on a \$6 million project. That is pretty typical Labor economics.

In terms of North Stradbroke Island, the \$11 million funding to the Straddie ETS is welcome, though too little too late. It is playing catch-up and falls far below the identified economic need created by Labor's rushed shutdown of mining and the sacking of workers on Straddie. I could say much more on that if I had more time. To bring in laws that shut down a mine and sacked workers in such a rushed way, in a short period of time, causing such hardship to the workers, is disgraceful, particularly when you think that we are trying to close the gap on North Stradbroke Island between the Quandamooka people and the opportunities they have and non-Indigenous people. Some 30 per cent of the Sibelco workforce were Aboriginal workers who are being sacked and will be sacked by the end of next year. That is a disgrace that only widens the gap and does not close it. There are many things we could say about that. It took the visit to the island of the shadow minister for tourism, to flag some of these things, for the Treasurer to suddenly turn up and announce the \$11 million in the lead-up to the budget. I thank the shadow minister for his good work.

There is a freeze on education infrastructure. If Cleveland district got its fair share, we could build a new high school or create a second campus of Cleveland high school on the under-utilised old DPI site and make significant investment in Wellington Point State High School. These things are needed and I invite the education minister to look at these important projects with me for the medium to long-term planning. With the growth of Cleveland District High to 2,000 students and almost 100 per cent capacity, new buildings are needed now. This budget does provide some funding for a new building in response to my plan for a better education in the Redlands. At the same time the minister could come and reassure the principals of my IPS schools that she is not going to cave in to the union and cut or reduce their funding or autonomy given that the report from the previous IPS review was mainly positive.

The federal LNP has renewed its commitment of \$247 million to the chaplaincy program in terms of education. Our chappies in our local schools in Redlands and across Queensland do a great job, but across the nation more than 3,000 schools do not know whether Bill Shorten is going to cut funding for their chappie, let alone what other political agendas he plans to foist on them. If I lose them, I will not be a happy chappie.

Mr Costigan: And you won't be alone.

Dr ROBINSON: There will be many of us. In terms of water, if Redland City got its fair share we would be able to put the dam gates back on the Leslie Harrison Dam. The member for Capalaba knows how important that is to the local community.

In terms of recreational fishers and boaties, I welcome the continuation of my plan for a better bayside with the announcement of a new artificial reef for Moreton Bay off Point Lookout. I have long called for many more artificial reefs to continue the LNP's rollout of reefs throughout the bay. Wellington Point is one that I will continue to signal. In summary, this bad Trad budget discriminates. It has record debt. It hits many records and records that are—

(Time expired)