



Speech By
Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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

 **Mr POWELL** (Glass House—LNP) (8.11 pm): I rise to address the 2019-20 Queensland budget in my capacity as both the member for Glass House and the shadow minister for state development, manufacturing, infrastructure and planning. I want to start, as I should, with what this budget means for the electorate of Glass House. First and foremost, I serve as the member for Glass House. I am very honoured to have done so now for four terms. I am very keen to ensure that that community of communities continues to receive what it rightly deserves in budgets from both sides of politics.

Over the past couple of days I have been talking to a number of my constituents, primarily on social media, about what the budget means. I have had the comment that they would like me to start with the positives in terms of what this budget means for the electorate of Glass House. The good news I can give members of the Glass House community is that \$956,000 will be spent over the next two years at the Woodford P-10 State School. That will go towards refurbishing learning spaces. This is particularly important for two reasons. Firstly, those learning spaces have not really changed since my father attended the school in the 1960s. Nearly a million dollars worth of investment is well overdue and will go a long way at that fantastic educational facility in the electorate of Glass House. Secondly, as members of the Woodford community and the broader community know, for some time now we have been pushing to make that a P-12 school or a college campus. The excuse that is always given is that the facilities are not up to scratch to accommodate senior students. It is my hope that after two years of \$1 million worth of refurbishment we may get that school into a position whereby it can then accommodate years 11 and 12.

Another aspect that I am rather pleased to see—I note that the Minister for Education raised this yesterday morning in a ministerial statement—is around early childhood development programs. They are a fantastic service that provides intensive multidisciplinary services to kids who suffer from a range of disabilities. We are talking about things along the lines of autism, intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments, physical impairments, speech language impairments and vision impairments. There is one such service based in Caboolture East State School. These services identify kids who are at risk of not being able to progress through normal schooling or even special schools because of their disabilities. They get these kids into the program and wrap a whole range of intensive multidisciplinary services around them to ensure that they are ready, when they take that step into school, to excel. Having visited the service in Caboolture East State School I can say that it is a wonderful opportunity for these kids. That there is \$63.6 million worth of funding over four years to continue that, not only in Caboolture East State School but also across the state, is great news. Also, I welcome the half a million dollars that will go towards professional development for the staff there. I know that that will be well received and I look forward to sharing that news with that service.

Members in the Glass House electorate will hopefully finally see the first sod turned on Labor's commitment to build a new QFES, rural fire brigade and SES complex in Maleny. Money is in the budget for that. Hopefully they will also see, as you and I have been fighting for for some years now, Mr Deputy

Speaker McArdle, traffic lights being installed at Beerwah State School, at the intersection of Kilcoy Beerwah Road and Old Gympie Road. That is an election commitment that has been a long time coming and that hopefully we will see some action on soon.

That is where it stops. I hope that those from the electorate who are listening will continue to listen as I explain what is not in the budget and why it is not in the budget. One of those things is subsidised bus services from Mooloolah Valley to Maleny State High School, from Peachester to Maleny State High School, and from D'Aguiar and Delaneys Creek to Woodford P-10. Another is traffic lights at the intersection of Campbells Pocket Road and the D'Aguiar Highway in Wamuran. There is nothing for the Mount Mee Road between Ocean View and Dayboro, something that the residents of Ocean View have been calling for for many years under consecutive Labor governments—an area I picked up in the last redistribution. Sadly, there is nothing for Maleny Kenilworth Road—not north of Conondale, not between Maleny and Witta and not between Witta and Conondale. The minister should hear this not from me but from 13-year-old Olin Stratford. On 5 June he wrote to me and said—

My name is Olin Stratford. I am 13 years old and sending you this email because I feel strongly about the safety issue on Maleny-Kenilworth road. I live on Maleny-Kenilworth road and roughly every 3 weeks the Maleny Emergency service crews rush passed my house to a MVA (Motor Vehicle Accident). I would like to know if the government has any future plans to do something about this? I think these crashes occur because people are enjoying the view of the valley and not paying attention to how many bends, curves and vertical drops there are on this road.

I made my own slogan as I continue to research this local issue.

“Enjoy the drive, come home alive.”

Sincerely,

Olin Stratford

Local State Emergency Services Cadet

I am sorry, Olin, but there is nothing in this budget. There are no plans. There is nothing in QTRIP for Maleny Kenilworth Road. Know this: I will continue to lobby and do what I have to do to ensure that upgrades are made to that road as soon as possible and that plans are not left to languish longer and longer so that emergency services vehicles continue to go past Olin's house.

It is not surprising that these things are not in the budget when we look at how the Premier, the Treasurer and the Labor government have structured and prepared it. People should not take my word for it. Let us look at what some of the media commentators have said about this budget. I start with Sarah Elks from the *Australian*. In an article of 12 June 2019 titled 'Try as Trad might, she can't hide the reality' Sarah states—

Queensland Treasurer Jackie Trad yesterday delivered a Band-Aid budget.

It did little to address the serious systemic challenges that face the state's bottom line: a skyrocketing debt bill, struggling economic growth, a ballooning bureaucracy and rampant government spending.

...

Trad tied herself in knots yesterday, insisting she was still trying to cut state debt, which is now forecast to surpass \$88bn in 2022-23 (plus \$2.6bn in long-term leases).

But here's the kicker: there is no debt reduction anywhere in the budget papers. The helpful bureaucrats from Treasury confirmed as much.

Finally she concludes—

A Band-Aid only works on superficial cuts but yesterday's budget suggests Queensland's economic problems are much deeper.

On 12 June Sarah Vogler in the *Courier-Mail* in an article titled 'Debt bomb is ticking' said—

Queenslanders will soon be shelling out \$3.5 billion a year in interest repayments, enough to fund thousands of extra teachers, nurses and police as the State's debt marches towards \$90.7 billion.

Treasurer Jackie Trad unveiled the massive debt bomb alongside almost \$2 billion in new taxes—including \$476 million in increased gas royalties—in her second Budget ...

A bit tongue in cheek is Michael Madigan's 'Reading between the lines of Trad's speech', which also appeared in the *Courier-Mail* on 12 June. This is a take on what the Treasurer said and what she actually meant. The article states—

What she said:

'Today I deliver a Queensland budget unashamedly focused on our regions.'

What she meant:

'I want to make a formal apology to regional Queensland for the Australian Labor Party's entire 2019 Federal Election Campaign.'

What she said:

'I do so because Queensland is the most decentralised state in the Federation.'

What she meant:

'I keep forgetting you still wield extraordinary political muscle.'

What she said:

'A state that relies ... on the character and resilience of its regional communities.'

What she meant:

'I don't want to harp on this theme but, seriously, I am deeply sorry about that campaign—unforgivable.'

...

What she said:

'Mr Speaker, this is a budget for regional Queensland.'

What she meant:

'And if Bob Brown leads a Green convoy up north during the State Election campaign, I swear to God I'll sic a flock of black-throated finches on him.'

The commentators have been brutal in their assessment of this state budget. After five years in power, all Labor is delivering, despite what it is saying, is higher taxes, more debt, fewer jobs and less infrastructure. You cannot afford Labor because, when Labor runs out of money, it comes after yours. It says it is borrowing more to build. It is not borrowing to build. It is borrowing to cover its wasteful spending. New taxes—I think we are up to the ninth or 10th now—are going to be ripping another \$1.25 billion from the state's economy. We are more than \$90 billion in debt and there are almost 26,000 fewer jobs forecast. That new \$1.25 billion worth of taxes is on top of the taxes that Labor has already inflicted on Queensland since being re-elected. We are now at a total of \$3.45 billion in taxes. As I said, you cannot afford Labor. When it runs out of money, it comes after yours.

It has taken Anastacia Palaszczuk and Labor only four years to strip Queenslanders of their confidence. The March Sensis Business Index ranked the Palaszczuk government as the least popular government amongst small and medium sized businesses for the fourth consecutive quarter. The March CCIQ survey revealed that business conditions and profitability are still rapidly weakening in Queensland. The April CommSec State of the States report ranked Queensland in sixth place nationally—not first, second or third but sixth. The economy is grinding to a halt under Labor. Building approvals in Queensland have fallen every month since February 2018. Queensland's construction work volume is now at its lowest level since December 2006. At a time when the Premier should be delivering jobs, all she has delivered is higher tax, more debt, fewer jobs and less infrastructure investment.

Earlier this week I spoke about the fact that \$9 billion has been slashed from infrastructure during the first term of the Palaszczuk Labor government, and she is at it again. In the 2019 budget papers there is half a billion dollars less than stated in the 2018 budget. The government is not even spending this year what it said last year it would spend this year. A big part of this is that mature governments do not argue about the toss over funding splits. Mature governments get on with the job and get projects built. I can guarantee that the cost of congestion to Queensland businesses far exceeds the amounts the Premier and her ministers are squabbling over with the federal government. The only reason that projects like the second M1—or the M1, for that matter—the Sunshine Coast rail duplication, the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 3 and the Mackay Ring Road stage 2 are not being built right now is because the Premier chooses petty politics over outcomes.

Not only is this government infrastructure investment down; Labor has killed off job-creating private sector projects worth billions. That is why Queensland's roads are congested and getting worse. That is why Queensland schools are overcrowded and students' results are in decline. That is why Queensland's public hospital waiting times are blowing out and ambulance ramping is increasing. That is why crime is on the rise and our prisons are at breaking point. Labor's idea of delivering infrastructure is delivering a great big bureaucracy in Brisbane.

In government the LNP got on with the job of investing in Queensland infrastructure. It did not matter whether we worked with a federal Labor or Liberal government. What was important was delivering projects for Queensland. As part of an \$8½ billion, 10-year action plan, we funded upgrades to the Bruce Highway, including when the then federal Labor minister for infrastructure Anthony Albanese came to us with an offer of a fifty-fifty split on Cooroy to Curra stage A and we took it. We funded and started the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing. We put \$600 million into the Warrego Highway upgrade. We funded the long-awaited Moreton Bay Rail Link, constructed the Gold Coast Light

Rail, completed the rail extension to Springfield, finished the Northern Busway extension, fast-tracked construction of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and delivered 11 new schools, and we will do it again as announced by the Leader of the Opposition in her budget reply speech today.

Turning to planning, we have all heard what the Property Council has said. Not only are Labor's crippling taxes and economic failures ruining the value of existing family homes; they are also stopping the building of new ones. The value of residential building work has dropped every single quarter since September 2016. Labor has lost nearly half a billion dollars worth of residential building work.

I want to conclude by talking about manufacturing because, while those opposite will pay to bring a Scottish brewery to compete against our local breweries here in this state, we are going to back Queensland manufacturers. We will back Queensland manufacturers and market them not only in Queensland but across this nation and indeed across this world. We do not want Scottish breweries here in Queensland. We want our breweries operating in Scotland. We will ensure through our \$20 million fund that we will back heavy engineering and manufacturing in this state. We will use that money to help those firms develop new markets, as I said, in Australia and overseas. This is a budget of higher taxes, more debt, fewer jobs and less infrastructure and there is only one party to blame for it, and that is the Labor Party.