



Speech by

Barbara Stone

MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD

Hansard Friday, 19 June 2009

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL;
INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT (ASSET RESTRUCTURING AND
DISPOSAL) BILL; FUEL SUBSIDY REPEAL AND REVENUE AND
OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

Ms STONE (Springwood—ALP) (9.46 pm): I rise to speak to the bills before the House. Investing in core community services is particularly important in tough economic times. The threat of unemployment places financial and emotional strain on families and we need to ensure that funding for community services is a priority. The 2009-10 state budget provides significant funding for community services as part of the Bligh government's determination to fund core services and to help people through these challenging economic times. I am very pleased that a number of organisations in Springwood will be receiving this funding. In fact, around \$9.9 million has been allocated to them.

I also certainly welcome the \$93.5 million that has been allocated to upgrade the Pacific Motorway between Springwood south and Daisy Hill. There is no doubt that the priority section for this upgrade is the Winnetts Road off ramp and overpass at the intersection of Loganlea Road and Winnetts Road. I have previously raised in this House the urgency of this work. It is needed now. I will say it once again. We have to get on with that work. I want to see machinery out on that road as soon as possible and the job started. The member for Waterford is agreeing with me every bit of the way. Certainly, we have both been lobbying very hard to get this job started, because it is such a priority for both of our electorates.

But that is just one section of the upgrade that has received allocations in this budget. I am also pleased to say that there is \$2.95 million in state and federal funding for planning and land acquisition for the Pacific Motorway between Daisy Hill and Loganholme. The state government is not looking at just that section; it is certainly getting on with planning for future. The government is looking at the whole Pacific Motorway between Springwood south and Loganholme and is planning for bus lanes as well as upgrading the traffic lanes. While we are doing that, it is also important to remember that we should be keeping up the maintenance on the M1. I am pleased to see in the budget that in the Springwood area there will be \$1.3 million for that purpose.

I said earlier that the budget is investing in core services and health has certainly not been left out. There is \$20 million for the expansion of the Logan Hospital emergency department, including 18 adult treatment bays and a dedicated paediatric waiting area and treatment bays. There is also an allocation of \$7.9 million over three years to train and recruit 30 nurse practitioners to alleviate bottlenecks in our hospitals' busiest emergency departments. I know that Logan Hospital would certainly fall within that criteria. So certainly I am pleased to see that allocation. Then there is the \$2 million allocation to complete construction of the dedicated elective surgery centre at Logan Hospital. There is also the commitment for 3,500 new doctors, nurses and health professionals over the next three years. So health certainly has not been left out.

Once again, this government is investing in core services. Let us look at education. The Queensland government will partner with the Australian government to deliver \$1.168 billion in infrastructure across this

state. What a great partnership that is. There is quite a number of projects happening in all schools in my electorate. In fact, there is over \$20 million worth of projects happening in schools in the Springwood electorate. That is because we have a federal government willing to work with the state government to deliver these projects. I am particularly pleased to inform the House about the \$1.167 million for the Rochedale-Springwood corridor trade training centre at Rochedale State High School.

Mr Reeves: Hear, hear!

Ms STONE: The member for Mansfield and I certainly have a lot of students attending that school from our electorates. That is a joint project with Springwood State High School. That is going to be a great facility and resource for both of those schools. Not only will these projects bring great facilities for the schools but it is very important to point out that those sorts of projects are supporting local jobs. That is the key to this budget: it is about supporting jobs, it is about core services and it is about getting us through the tough times.

When there are tough times at home, most families sit down and look at their budget and decide whether they really need the second car. They look at other assets that they have bought in other phases of their lives or at times of their lives when things were different, and they weigh up whether that asset is doing what they want it to do now. They weigh up whether it is worth keeping or whether it is better to sell at this time as this may serve them better. They see this as getting ready for their future. Sometimes they need to look for a financial boost by borrowing. That is what responsible people do and that is what responsible governments do. They assess the situation of the day. They assess challenges of the day and what needs to be done to set up for the future. This budget certainly is doing that while ensuring that our core services are being met.

I listened to speakers on the other side of the House talking about grocery prices and the fuel subsidy. I know the consumer group Choice certainly does not agree with the opposition. In fact, I heard an interview recently with Christopher Zinn from the consumer group Choice. He stated—

There's no evidence at the moment that your groceries are actually cheaper than any other State or Territory in Australia. So if the subsidy hasn't resulted in cheaper groceries, then why should the removal of the subsidy result in higher priced groceries?

I could not agree more. He is certainly on the mark there. There is no excuse for putting up grocery prices for that reason.

I was happy to listen to what the opposition leader had to offer as an alternative to the Queensland people. I was waiting to hear what differences those opposite would have in their budget and what other ideas and policies they would come up with. I am still willing to listen because to date there has not been one solution given by the opposition, not one alternative idea. As always, while the opposition whinges and whines and whinges and whines, we will keep working—we will keep building the infrastructure project and we will keep investing in the core services to keep Queensland the great state that it is. I support this whole package because it is the right package for our state.