



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

BILLS

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2017-2018

Second Reading

SPEECH

Wednesday, 24 May 2017

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

Date Wednesday, 24 May 2017
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Questioner
Speaker O'Brien, Ted, MP

Source House
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Responder
Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (11:02): The Australian people like what they see in this year's budget. Whether it is lowering the deficit to \$29.4 billion next year and returning it to a surplus of \$7.4 billion in 2021 or restraining growth in real payments to 1.9 per cent, Australians know this budget is fiscally responsible. Whether it is guaranteeing Medicare, fully funding the NDIS or introducing Gonski 2.0, Australians know that this budget guarantees essential services. Whether it is easing the strain of the costs of child care, power prices or housing affordability, Australians know this budget also tackles cost of living pressures.

But the most important question is: what is in this budget for the people of the Sunshine Coast? Let us start with infrastructure. Thanks to team Queensland, my LNP colleagues from Queensland—in both the Senate and House of Representatives—we have \$530 million allocated to the Bruce Highway for six lanes between Brisbane and the Sunshine Coast, supplemented by \$120 million for the Deception Bay interchange. These big investments on the Bruce Highway build on the \$929 million spend between Caloundra and the Sunshine Motorway—the sod being turned only last week—and \$187 million on the Bruce Highway around the Maroochydore interchange. Infrastructure and the Sunshine Coast are big winners in this year's budget.

But it is not just infrastructure, this year's budget gives peace of mind to residents about Medicare. On the Sunshine Coast last year, 1.7 million GP visits bulk-billed, which represents over 85 per cent of consultations. An additional \$578 million will go to 70 locals schools in the region over the next 10 years. Over 3,500 veterans will have better access to mental health care, and nearly 6,500 DVA clients will benefit from faster service delivery. Through full funding of the NDIS, 4,790 people who are NDIS eligible will know they will be looked after upon full rollout. There will be 4,130 children who will benefit from a boost of \$5.2 million for local child care, and 54,000 people on the Sunshine Coast will benefit from a one-off energy assistance payment, paid before the end of this financial year. There will be 1,580 people who will see their pensioner concession cards reinstated, and 37,311 local businesses who will not only see tax cuts but enjoy an extension of the \$20,000 instant asset write-off. Never in our history has the Sunshine Coast been the recipient of so much Commonwealth government funding. This is a brilliant budget for Australia and for Queensland, and an absolute cracker for the Sunshine Coast.