



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

12th APRIL 2017

SUPPLY BILL 2017

Second Reading

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from 29 March 2017.)

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (16:51): Thank you, the Independent Madam Deputy Speaker. I rise to speak to the Supply Bill 2017 and note that I think it is the 12th time I have made a contribution to supply. If we do not pass the Supply Bill, it will not allow the continued payment of public servants and public services until the Appropriation Bill (budget bill) is passed by parliament later this year, so we obviously need to pass the Supply Bill because it finances the pay of public servants and ourselves as representatives of the state.

I want to note that the appropriation for the Supply Bill this year is \$5.907 billion, but in 2016 the Supply Bill sought an amount of \$3.444 billion, while in 2015 the appropriation for supply was \$3.291 billion. In 2014, the appropriation was \$3.941 billion, so it is to be noted that there was a drop between 2014 and 2015, a slight increase in 2016, but then a significant jump from the \$3.444 billion in 2016 to this year when \$5.907 billion is being sought. This is a significant jump, especially when you compare it with what has happened in the previous three years, so it will be interesting to hear, in any government contribution, how they explain this massive jump in what is required for the Supply Bill.

We have seen over time budgets being listed as jobs budgets. We have heard about the 100,000 jobs the Premier is seeking for this state. I think they may have been lucky to get in the very low 2,000s or 3,000s. As the member for Schubert identified in his contribution, South Australia's unemployment rate remains the highest in the nation and shows that the state budgets that this government has presided over have failed and failed miserably. Not only are we not giving our people jobs in this state but these people are leaving by the thousands to go either interstate or overseas to find work.

In last year's budget, I note that there was predicted jobs growth in South Australia of only 0.75 per cent, and reaffirmed in the Mid-Year Budget Review, which is less than half the national jobs growth rate of 1.8 per cent in the federal budget. In the Mid-Year Budget Review, GST revenue for this year will be \$512 million more than in 2015-16 and in the 2017-18 financial year GST revenue is estimated to increase by another \$410 million. So, the full GST revenue for next year will be \$922 million more than was collected in 2015-16. That is nearly a billion dollars of extra revenue that this state was not expecting to get in the current financial year moving forward into 2017-18.

That brings to mind a bit of history. Since I have been in this place, there have been many times when hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars of GST revenue that has not been budgeted for has come into the state government coffers, yet it has been washed away, frittered away, and what do we have to show for it? That is a very good question.

Another part of the Mid-Year Budget Review shows that total returns from the privatisation of the Motor Accident Commission is now estimated to be at about \$2.5 billion. Of this amount, \$1.16 billion assisted the net operating balance of the budgets in the years 2014-15, 2015-16 and

2016-17. The MAC dividend in 2016-17 of \$298 million compares with the estimated net operating surplus of \$300 million.

I want to make some comments about the ongoing privatisations that have happened over time. We saw that the former treasurer and member for Port Adelaide tried to sell a building in Adelaide, but the state did not even own the land underneath, so that was quite a failure to say the least. We have seen issues over Gillman where a very dodgy deal was drawn up. It was supposed to be an oil and gas hub for this state, yet we have seen all that drift away because there was no due process taken into account to make sure that there was an open and transparent arrangement in the case of Gillman.

We do need an oil and gas hub in this state to service our Cooper Basin and I have spoken about it many times. I worked up there over 30 years ago. There may be a few kilometres of unsealed road, but between Brisbane and the Queensland border, only 24 kilometres from Innamincka, there is a bitumen road. The last time I drove it there was probably 30 or 40 kilometres that was dirt, but I think it has been bitumised since.

You have to ask the question: why does our state not take the lead? If the government wants to do something for the oil and gas industry in this state, they need to make sure that they fund the full upgrade of the Strzelecki Track. If they are serious about getting more gas supplies, increasing gas exploration and making sure those dividends come back to South Australia so that the service companies that operate the wells—not just the operators like Santos and others, but the service companies—will keep their trucks and their supplies coming up from Adelaide and not out of Brisbane so that we can have those jobs in South Australia.

We could get that just over 400 kilometres of road to the Cooper Basin bitumised so that we can get that freight up there without destroying trucks and destroying vehicles. As we have seen elsewhere across the state, people are making a business decision and saying, 'Why would I destroy my freight and my vehicles and come up from Adelaide when I could do it on a far better road out of Brisbane?' That is vital, especially when we are seeing so many problems with electricity supply in this state and we need to open up more gas in the Cooper to make that happen. I want to talk about a few local issues that need to be raised.

In regard to health, we see that it will look like about \$2.3 billion being spent on the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. We heard today that there is a plan for clinicians to be trained on how they are going to do the move to the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. I will be very surprised if it comes at the forecast time of the upcoming winter because I cannot think of a worse time to try to move hospital patients from one part of North Terrace right up to the corner of West Terrace where the new Royal Adelaide Hospital is. I cannot think of a worse time not just for the risk of illness but for the likely unsettled weather we will have at the time. I would be surprised if it happened before spring, quite frankly.

We have seen tens of thousands of problems with the new Royal Adelaide Hospital having to be rectified before a deal was cut so that the government could finally have access to the building. It is going through pre-handover stages at the moment, but it will be interesting to see how it operates after all this time and all these budget blowouts. Sadly, for many decades to come we will see the cost of that deal—\$1 million a day just to operate it before you put the staff in the new Royal Adelaide Hospital.

On a local issue—and I do not directly represent Strathalbyn; I represent over 100 addresses around Strathalbyn and I used to represent Strathalbyn when I first came into this place—I want to talk about what has happened with Kalimna, a nursing home for locals that has been shut down. I believe that it has been shut down by a short-sighted government that could have had a proper engineering look at the building to get it compliant.

I have some problems (and I mentioned this at the public meeting at Strathalbyn when well over 200, and probably close to 300, people were attendance in the hall) about the fact that these compliance measures came in. I talked about the CFS—and I am not talking about the local CFS, the local volunteers, but the statewide bureaucracy, and I want to note my position as a CFS volunteer at Coomandook—and their fire safety regime that was brought in to Kalimna. This was stated as a factor in why it was closing down.

What I have learnt is the simple fact that all the rooms had direct access outside and that people could be taken out very quickly in case of an emergency, such as a fire. Beyond that, I think it would have been cheaper in the long run because this is going to turn out to be a very expensive exercise over time. The government could have had a really good look at the engineering and the nursing home could have been brought up to spec. I still wonder why so many hurdles were put in place when this place has been operating for so long, keeping people in their local community.

People had to be moved out to places as far afield as Gumeracha—a long way from what they called home. I think it is just disgraceful. I know from personal experience with my father that, even though people might be a bit reluctant going into these places, once they are there for a while they call them home, so what has happened there is disgraceful.

I look at the road network around the place. It was interesting to ask some questions the other day of the transport minister in regard to some roads that were damaged in flooding and storms about seven months ago at Langhorne Creek. They had not been patched up at all and, coming into vintage only a few weeks ago, a few good Langhorne Creek residents got hold of me to go up and have a look. I said, 'Yes, this is no good.'

Thankfully, the Alexandrina council had taken some emergency measures to fill in some potholes to get those roads at least passable. From what I understand, most of them were finally dealt with once I asked the minister in this place what was going on with the emergency repairs so that the vital vintage of that excellent Langhorne Creek wine could take place safely.

Areas of the Mallee that have not been in my electorate for the last three years because of redistribution are coming back into Hammond next year at the election. When I look at the Karoonda Highway and the Mallee Highway through Lameroo and Pinnaroo, both those roads urgently need overtaking lanes, especially the Mallee Highway out through Pinnaroo which, quite frankly, has more bends in it than any other road I have seen in the world.

It is a really interesting piece of road engineering. I note and commend the trial of road trains coming out of Pinnaroo into Tailem Bend. I think that is a good move. However, it also exacerbates the issue that people will be behind a longer vehicle with not many options to overtake. I urge the government to look to at least some overtaking lanes on both the Mallee Highway and the Karoonda-Loxton road.

An issue I need to raise in regard to health in my area is the Murray Bridge Hospital emergency department, which urgently needs up to \$3½ million spent on revamping it. It has been something like 30 or 40 years since any real work was done in that field. We have positive population growth, and not just in Murray Bridge. The surrounding area has a regional centre that services people from all the way down to Keith, all the way down to Pinnaroo, right up into the Hills and also down towards Meningie. It is a hub where a lot is happening.

The Gifford Hill proposal for the racing club is slowly taking shape. The Shahin Group, the Peregrine group, is building the grandstand section for the new motorsport park at Tailem Bend. If that goes to plan, there will be many events, and there will be a need for emergency care, whether for people competing in events or people going there as spectators. We certainly need some work done on the emergency department to get it up to speed for challenges that will come in the future.

In regard to other issues of education, Murray Bridge High School is vitally in need of new buildings, as growth at Murray Bridge is phenomenal. They are doing some great work—I had the minister out there to have a look at what is going on at Murray Bridge—but it certainly needs a new build program, especially if year 7 comes into that school.

As to water issues, I look at what the government has done about the River Murray. We hear long and loud at times how the Premier and his government believe that they have saved the River Murray. Well, they were not thinking about saving the River Murray or my electorate, or the member for Chaffey's electorate, or the other electorates that touch on the River Murray, when they knocked back \$25 million of diversification funding that would have done so much for both the Riverland and the Lower Murray and put more confidence back into the community.

But why would the Premier and Treasurer do that? Why would they? Well, that is a very good question to ask. It is because they are conservative electorates and that is exactly where they do not go. I have always said that it is an absolute disgrace that the money was not brought into our communities for local projects—some for industry, some for tourism ventures and some for making town interests better and more appealing—so that people could see the good things that happen in not just my area but up through the Riverland as well. It galls me every time I hear, 'The government have done so much for the River Murray,' yet those very communities that are reliant on the River Murray and its surrounds just get left out in the cold.

Part of the issue of getting left out in the cold is what happens with the new NRM water levy, which is part of the levy regime that is paying a fair whack of the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resource's staff wages. Sporting clubs write to me because they have to pay a \$200 water levy because they have a water licence to water their oval. That is a lot of money for a small cricket club, and I have multiple cases like that. We also have issues we need to sort out about giving people tenure in shacks.

We have seen legislation introduced in this place that has not been well organised, such as legislation on planning and child protection, and which has had to be amended multiple times. The child protection bill was rushed into this place and all of a sudden went out again because it was not organised. There was a big fanfare when it came in, but it had to be amended before we started the debate. But the biggest issue hitting this state is electricity prices, the reason that so many companies are failing or choosing to invest elsewhere. It is a disgrace.

Because of this government's ideological zeal to get into green power, I see companies facing price rises of 142 per cent in their power bills directly linked to the Hazelwood closure. They have stated that to me. This government is quite happy to take, as they are today, 600 megawatts of coal-fired power in from Victoria, but they are too one-eyed to see the simple fact that we need reliable power supplies in this state so that we can bring this state back to the prosperous place it once was.