

DOING WHAT MATTERS FOR QUEENSLAND

QUEENSLAND BUDGET 2024–25



BUDGET SPEECH

BUDGET PAPER NO. 1



2024–25 Queensland Budget Papers

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The budget papers are available online at budget.qld.gov.au

First Nations acknowledgement

Queensland Treasury acknowledges Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land. We recognise their connection to land, sea and community, and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

'Rich history, thriving future.'
artwork by David Williams of Gilimbaa.



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Budget Speech

Budget Paper No. 1

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APPROPRIATION BILL 2024–25

THE HONOURABLE CAMERON DICK MP

DEPUTY PREMIER, TREASURER

MINISTER FOR TRADE AND INVESTMENT

INTRODUCTION

This first Budget of the Miles Labor Government is focused on doing what matters for Queenslanders.

And what matters for Queenslanders the most, is cost-of-living relief.

Queenslanders deserve the right to make choices about their lives.

But in recent times, many have been robbed of those choices by the ever-present constraints of global and national cost-of-living pressures.

For many Queenslanders, the only choice has been which bill to pay next.

But our Government is relentlessly focused on doing what matters for Queenslanders.

So our Government has made the choice to reduce that cost-of-living pressure on Queensland families.

We have chosen to deliver nation-leading cost-of-living relief that will give all Queenslanders more choice.

In doing so, we have made the deliberate choice to put our Budget into deficit, to help Queensland households keep their budgets in balance.

Delivering a deficit, spending more than the government collects in revenue, is not, and should never be an easy choice.

But in a contest between the balance sheet and doing what matters for Queenslanders, the Miles Labor Government will always be on Queenslanders' side.

Weak governments leave people to fend for themselves.

Strong governments make the choice to intervene and invest.

Weak Governments may offer the promise of lower taxes and lower debt, but they do so by delivering less services and cutting frontline jobs.

Strong Governments recognise that people are always more important than numbers on a balance sheet.

Strong Governments recognise that putting fiscal figures over families can lead to communities being ripped apart, in a way that takes decades to repair.

The Miles Labor Government is a strong Labor Government.

And our strong Budget addresses the short-term pressures being faced by families across Queensland.

At the same time, this strong Budget also seizes the long-term opportunities that only our state has, to plan and build for Queensland's future prosperity.

COST OF LIVING

The total value of new and existing cost-of-living concessions available to Queenslanders rises by 31 per cent in this Budget, to a total of \$11.2 billion.

This cost-of-living relief starts with electricity rebates.

Together with the Albanese Labor Government, our Government will deliver electricity rebates of \$1,300 to every household in this state.

And for vulnerable Queenslanders, we will go further, delivering a total electricity rebate of \$1,672.

This means that some vulnerable Queensland households, those households struggling the most with cost-of-living pressures, will be able to avoid paying anything for electricity in the 2024–25 Budget year.

In total, our landmark power rebates will provide almost \$3 billion in cost-of-living relief to Queensland households and businesses.

One of the Premier's first acts upon being sworn in last December was to freeze the cost of vehicle registration.

Today, we go further.

For 12 months, we will cut the cost of registration for all light vehicles by 20 per cent.

The total cost of this cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders will be \$435 million.

That means a saving of \$126 for a 6-cylinder ute, \$85 for a 4-cylinder car, and \$69 for an electric vehicle.

For 6 months, we will cut the cost of all Translink public transport fares across Queensland to almost nothing.

We will cut all Translink public transport fares across Queensland to a flat 50 cents, no matter where you live or how far you travel.

The total investment in this cost-of-living relief for Queenslanders will be \$150 million.

And for the same period, we will halve the cost of travel on the Airtrain to and from Brisbane Airport, as we try to make the best of a dud deal that has duded Queenslanders for decades.

50 cent fares and half-price Airtrain travel will all take effect from 5 August this year, and our 20 per cent rego reduction will start to appear on renewal notices sent out from 5 August as well.

There is one important cost-of-living measure that does not appear in the Budget aggregates.

The people of Queensland will also pay no more when it comes to fees and charges.

For the 2024–25 financial year, the indexation for fees and charges in Queensland will be zero.

That means zero increase on the Emergency Management Levy introduced by the Newman Government, that appears on Council rates bills across Queensland.

And that means zero State Government impact on Council rates bills.

If Council rates bills rise, that is entirely a matter for those Councils.

INFLATION

As we deliver these cost-of-living relief measures, we are mindful that we do so in a way that reduces inflationary pressures.

Within the Brisbane Consumer Price Index basket used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, roughly one-third is comprised of the Transport and Housing groups, the latter of which includes energy costs.

Queensland Treasury estimates the combined effect of cost-of-living measures from the Miles and Albanese Labor Governments will reduce Brisbane's headline CPI growth in 2024–25 by around one and a quarter percentage points.

That is forecast to reduce Brisbane CPI growth for the year to just 2 per cent.

HOUSING

The strong response of Queenslanders, and our Labor Government to COVID-19, meant we emerged from the pandemic in better shape than almost anywhere in the world.

But there was one unforeseeable impact of that time that continues to affect tens of thousands of Queenslanders every day.

After international migration ground to a halt when international borders were closed, it has now roared back to life, at a pace that defies economists and statisticians.

As Secretary of the Federal Treasury, Dr Stephen Kennedy, observed last week, this stunning surge in temporary migration took Federal Treasury forecasters by surprise.

For Queensland, the increase in population in 2022–23 was 60 per cent higher than forecast.

This year, population growth is rising so fast that upward revisions are being revised again, almost as soon as they are published.

Those numbers represent tens of thousands more people who need somewhere to call home.

That is why the first Budget of the Miles Labor Government includes a record investment of \$2.8 billion, to get more Queenslanders into their own home.

The Budget will provide more support for renters and those unable to find a home.

And as part of the Miles Government's *Homes for Queenslanders* initiative, this Budget provides for an additional 600 modular homes.

Homes for Queenslanders is our vision for delivering one million new homes by 2046.

It is a real plan backed by real investment, a total of \$3.1 billion over 5 years.

This includes the delivery of 53,500 social homes by 2046.

Homes for Queenslanders includes a downpayment of \$1.3 billion to contribute to the ramp up to more than 2,000 social homes on average, every year, from 2028, to reach this target.

For Queenslanders looking to buy their first home, we have lifted the threshold for a full stamp duty concession with immediate effect.

The threshold is now \$700,000, tapering to a new cap of \$800,000.

While that threshold is still below the median house price in Brisbane, it provides more generous relief than the equivalent threshold in Sydney or Melbourne.

This is a thoughtful plan, a detailed plan, and a prudent plan to help young Queenslanders in particular, find a home that they can call their own.

And it is a plan that will not sacrifice the revenue that pays the wages of Queensland teachers, nurses and police officers.

From 1 July, we will bring our foreign owner transfer duty surcharge into line with Victoria and New South Wales.

And we will raise our foreign owner land tax surcharge from 2 per cent to 3 per cent, still more generous than New South Wales and Victoria.

This plan will provide \$360 million in cost-of-living relief to Queenslanders, while helping 40,000 Queensland families into their first home over the next 4 years.

A fully-costed, revenue neutral plan to help first home buyers, without pushing up prices, is a policy that Queenslanders would only see from a strong Labor Government.

This Budget also includes a temporary 20 per cent increase in funding for Specialist Homelessness Services, an investment of almost \$390 million.

This will allow for the expansion of the Immediate Housing Response, to individuals and couples, and more temporary supported accommodation.

HEALTH

Queenslanders know that they can always trust Labor Governments to do what matters when it comes to their health care.

Through this Budget, the Miles Labor Government will continue to invest in the health of all Queenslanders.

A strong health system supports a healthy population.

And a healthy population means higher labour productivity and stronger economic growth.

Even in a time of rising cost-of-living pressures, the cost of providing health care continues to rise faster than other expenses.

So this Budget will once again deliver a record investment in health.

Our hospital Capacity Expansion Program now totals \$11 billion over 6 years.

That program will deliver around 2,200 additional overnight beds at facilities across the Queensland health system, including:

- The new Bundaberg Hospital
- The new Coomera Hospital
- The new Toowoomba Hospital
- The new Queensland Cancer Centre
- The Cairns Hospital expansion
- The Hervey Bay Hospital expansion
- The Ipswich Hospital expansion
- The Logan Hospital expansion
- The Mackay Hospital expansion
- The Princess Alexandra Hospital expansion
- The QEII Hospital expansion

- The Redcliffe Hospital expansion
- The Robina Hospital expansion
- The Prince Charles Hospital expansion
- And the Townsville University Hospital expansion.

Through the \$943 million Building Rural and Remote Health Program, we are building a new hospital in Moranbah, and health care centre in locations as diverse as Tara, Camooweal, Doomadgee and Childers.

This Budget also allocates \$200 million to redevelop the Cooktown Multi-Purpose Health Service facility, expanding inpatient beds, and adding an operating theatre.

Within our hospitals, and from our Capital Expansion Program, \$1 billion will be allocated to optimise patient flow within hospitals, to reduce wait times and improve healthcare delivery.

The 10.6 per cent increase in operating funding for Queensland Health in this Budget is well above the historical average of 6.9 per cent.

This Budget will also support culturally appropriate models of care through the Torres and Cape Health Care Commissioning Fund, known as TORCH.

This Budget will deliver free meningococcal B vaccines for eligible infants, children and adolescents.

Speaker, for all those members who say they support this budget, they should be proud of the health budget, and the important social reforms that it is progressing.

This budget will support the *Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032*, delivering 34 new initiatives to address existing health inequities and provide enhanced gender and trauma informed care.

That includes \$21 million to enhance the workforce for termination of pregnancy.

This funding shows that, for our Government, decriminalising the termination of pregnancy is more than a legal reform.

For it to be a real social reform, that delivers for all Queensland women, then it needs funding, and that's exactly what this budget delivers.

And this Budget will provide \$18 million over 4 years to support the operational delivery of the Voluntary Assisted Dying scheme, including support for the Queensland Voluntary Assisted Dying Scheme Support and Pharmacy Service.

We will also provide ongoing support for our nation-leading pill testing and ketamine trials.

These are all Labor budget initiatives, and initiatives that, by definition, Members will support when they cast their vote in favour of the appropriation.

HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGY

Our Government continues to invest in our health workforce, to deliver the care our community needs.

The new *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032* is backed by a \$1.7 billion investment.

It will deliver more than 700 extra doctors, more than 2,600 nurses and midwives, and more than 1,000 allied health staff.

This is a huge investment in our staff and the Queenslanders they help every day.

The funding will also ensure minimum midwife to post-natal patient ratios, providing patients and families with individually-tailored, culturally-appropriate maternity care.

We are also expanding and boosting our schemes to attract the health workforce needed across Queensland.

Interstate and international doctors who make the decision to take up a job in regional and remote Queensland continue to be eligible for payments up to \$70,000.

In addition, in a landmark investment, our Government will offer \$40,000 to attract and retain GP trainees across Queensland.

These investments will help attract, retain, and support a homegrown health workforce that will deliver world-class healthcare across Queensland.

QUEENSLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE

For Queenslanders unfortunate enough to experience a health emergency, their first connection is often with the dedicated paramedics of the Queensland Ambulance Service.

In the last 6 years, ambulance demand from priority code one and code two patients has risen over 22 per cent.

In the next 6 years, that demand is forecast to rise a further 19 per cent.

This first Budget of the Miles Labor Government will provide investment for an additional 268 full-time equivalent personnel in the Queensland Ambulance Service, to sustainably meet growth in demand.

We will also invest \$30 million in the QAS capital program, which includes replacing ageing ambulances and delivering additional new vehicles.

Across vast expanses of our state, the best method of delivering emergency care is often not by road, but by air.

To ensure all Queenslanders get the care they need, when they need it, the 2024–25 Budget is continuing to invest in vital aeromedical ambulance services, including:

- LifeFlight Australia, from its bases in Bundaberg, the Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba, Mount Isa and Brisbane;

- The Capricorn Helicopter Rescue Service and Central Queensland Rescue Service, which operate from bases in Rockhampton and Mackay; and
- The Royal Flying Doctor Service, which provides inter-hospital transfer services across Queensland.

FIRST NATIONS

In 2023, this Parliament voted to establish the *Path to Treaty Act*, to prepare a framework for treaty negotiations with First Nations Queenslanders.

In keeping with that decision, \$40 million has been allocated over 4 years for the First Nations Treaty Institute.

The Miles Labor Government is also providing \$56 million over 4 years for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, which commences on 1 July 2024.

The Budget also provides extra funding of \$18 million over 4 years to help community members tell their stories to the Inquiry, through access to extra specialist research and archival officers, and additional resources for Community and Personal Histories.

These are Budget measures I am sure this House will support now, and across the Forward Estimates.

COMMUNITY SAFETY

Queenslanders deserve to feel safe in their home, and safe on the streets of our state.

That's why our Government invests in frontline police and crime prevention.

We do so, not because we want to win seats in parliament, quote, "off the back of crime," but because Queenslanders deserve to be safe, and to feel safe.

That's why our *Community Safety Plan for Queensland*, announced by the Premier earlier this year, provides an extra \$1.3 billion over 5 years for community safety measures across 5 key pillars:

- Supporting victims;
- Delivering for our frontline;
- Detaining offenders;
- Intervening when people offend; and
- Preventing crime before it occurs.

To help build safer communities, we are placing an increased focus on preventing domestic, family, and sexual violence.

We are placing an extra focus on the safety of women and girls and on dealing with young offenders.

The *Community Safety Plan for Queensland* builds on successful measures that have already helped to deliver a reduction in overall offences in the first quarter of 2024.

Our Government is determined to put more police officers on the frontline.

Like every employer, we have encountered extraordinary challenges in recruitment.

A low unemployment rate means a stronger economy, but it also means very high competition to attract employees.

Our Government will ensure that Queenslanders have the frontline police they deserve.

That's why our Government has offered recruitment incentives of up to \$40,000 for new police officers.

Our interventions have helped to turn the corner in police recruitment.

I am advised by Queensland Police Service that the academy is full, with the largest number of recruits on record.

I am also advised that as those recruits graduate, by the end of this month, we will have achieved a net annual increase in the total number of police.

And that growth will continue as more recruits roll through, a significant achievement when unemployment is so low.

This Budget supports the recruitment of 900 additional police personnel, along with \$48 million to upgrade police stations in Bundaberg and Hervey Bay.

This Budget provides additional equipment to increase community safety, including 3,000 wands for knife detection to support Jack's Law, and 1,000 additional tasers.

To support more police boots on the ground, this Budget provides more police eyes in the sky.

To follow on from the resounding success of our Townsville-based police helicopter, Polair helicopter bases will be established in Far North Queensland, and on the Sunshine Coast and Wide Bay.

And this Budget will deliver a 20 per cent permanent uplift in funding for domestic, family and sexual violence service providers across the state.

Our Government is also investing \$52 million to provide more resources and support for victims of crime, including:

- \$16 million to expand the Victims of Crime Community Response Program;
- \$16 million to increase the capacity of Victims Assist Queensland to process financial assistance applications; and
- \$3 million to enhance the Victim Liaison Service to better connect victims and their families with prosecutors, while cases proceed through court.

Locking up more offenders means more detention capacity is required.

This Budget includes \$628 million over 5 years for the new youth detention centre at the Woodford Correctional Precinct, and continues delivery of the \$885 million Lockyer Valley Correctional Centre.

BIG BUILD

This Budget addresses the challenges Queensland families are facing today, but it also plans and delivers for our state's future prosperity.

The record extraordinary population growth experienced by our state in the last 3 years – growth that was not predicted by anyone – means we must step up our investment.

This first Budget of the Miles Labor Government makes a deliberate choice to continue with the ambition of our Big Build, because it is our ambition for Queensland.

States like New South Wales and Victoria are putting major infrastructure projects on hold, because they lack Queensland's balance sheet strength.

Those southern decisions to delay and cut may help their balance sheets today, but they will cause more expensive problems in the future.

With extraordinary and unforeseeable population growth, our Government will forge ahead with our Big Build, because ensuring the provision of essential infrastructure is what matters to Queenslanders.

In the 4 years to 2027–28, our Big Build will deliver \$107 billion of investment in building projects across the length and breadth of our great state.

These are projects that will define Queensland's future.

They will support our economic and energy transformation, while improving the access to essential services and utilities right across the state.

This investment will drive generational change, creating more jobs, better communities and stronger regions.

Over the 13 years to 2027–28, our Government will have supported over \$226 billion in infrastructure works.

In 2024–25, the government will invest a record \$27 billion in building Queensland, directly supporting around 72,000 jobs.

This is the largest annual investment in capital works in Queensland's history.

A record \$19 billion, or almost 70 per cent of this capital program, will be invested outside of the Greater Brisbane region, supporting around 50,000 jobs.

Almost \$10 billion in transport infrastructure will be delivered in 2024–25, including:

- \$786 million towards the Queensland Train Manufacturing Program in Maryborough;
- \$650 million towards the construction of Stage 1 of the Coomera Connector;
- \$514 million to continue construction work on Cross River Rail;
- \$500 million towards the Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail project; and
- \$308 million to continue Stage 3 of the Gold Coast Light Rail, a project our Government will not walk away from.

And as is always the case in Labor Budgets delivered by our Labor Government, there is substantial ongoing investment to fund major upgrades to the Bruce Highway, and the M1.

CLEAN ENERGY

When it comes to renewable energy, Queensland has a global head start.

We have the sun, we have the wind, and we have the space to build industrial-scale generation.

And most importantly of all, Queensland has the topography and rainfall to support deep storage pumped hydro.

Very significantly, we have a target of 75 per cent emissions reduction by 2035, a target that has bipartisan political support at a state level.

But in order to ensure we capitalise on our natural advantages, we must press ahead to cement our place on the global stage for renewable energy and the industries it will support.

To continue the delivery of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, the 2024–25 Queensland Budget includes a landmark capital investment of \$26 billion over 4 years.

And our state’s energy transformation will continue to be driven by our other great advantage, Queensland’s publicly-owned energy companies.

In 2024–25, significant clean energy investments include:

- \$712 million for CopperString 2032, connecting Mount Isa and the North West to the national electricity grid;
- \$801 million by Stanwell, for the Wambo and Tarong West Wind Farms;
- \$500 million for CS Energy’s Lotus Creek Wind Farm;
- \$275 million for CleanCo’s Swanbank Battery;
- \$936 million to progress the Borumba Pumped Hydro Energy Storage scheme; and
- \$38.5 million for early works at the Pioneer Burdekin Pumped Hydro Energy Storage scheme, with a \$1 billion equity commitment across the forward estimates.

That investment in the Pioneer-Burdekin Pumped Hydro Storage scheme is fully detailed in the budget papers, fully funded – and fully supported.

PORTS AND WATER

If Queensland is to take full advantage of the opportunities our renewable energy revolution presents, we must have the capacity to send more high-end, future-economy manufactured goods to the world.

Major seaport projects in the Big Build that will be progressed in 2024–25 include:

- \$251 million to complete the Port of Townsville Channel Capacity Upgrade;
- \$360 million for the ongoing expansion of the Cairns Marine Precinct;
- \$116 million for the Northern Land Expansion at the Port of Gladstone; and
- initial works for North Queensland Bulk Ports to progress the Bowen Wharf replacement project.

Major water investments in 2024–25 include:

- \$311 million for the Fitzroy to Gladstone Water Pipeline;
- \$26 million for the Mount Crosby Flood Resilience Program;
- \$56 million towards the Toowoomba to Warwick Water Pipeline; and
- \$303 million towards improvement programs at dams including Paradise, Burdekin Falls, Somerset and Wivenhoe.

PUTTING QUEENSLAND KIDS FIRST

Investing in the development and education of Queensland children is a direct investment in Queensland's future prosperity.

Clinically-informed research makes it clear that investing in the first 7 years of a child's life is the greatest opportunity open to us to contribute to their future wellbeing and success.

In order to give Queensland kids that opportunity, the Miles Labor Government is investing more than \$500 million in our *Putting Queensland Kids First* strategy.

This program will stretch across education, health and communities to support Queensland children from birth onwards.

Putting Queensland Kids First encompasses everything from health development checks to extended free kindy for four-year-olds, particularly in discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander communities, as well as supporting behavioural specialists and health practitioners in state schools.

It is the most comprehensive package of measures to help children that Queensland has ever seen.

And it is a signature policy of the Miles Labor Government.

CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

As a further cost of living measure to allow more Queensland children to enjoy a healthy lifestyle, this Budget will lift the investment in our successful *FairPlay* vouchers to \$40 million in 2024–25.

This additional investment will increase the total number of vouchers from 50,000 to 200,000, and increase the value of each voucher to \$200 to address rising costs.

50,000 *FairPlay* vouchers will continue to be reserved for vulnerable households in the greatest need of support.

To ensure that Queensland children are able to get everything they can out of each day at school, this budget allocates \$15 million for subsidised school breakfasts and lunches.

\$15 million is a small price to pay to ensure Queensland children are ready to learn each day.

Decades from now, there will be a direct benefit to the health of our economy if we focus on the health and nutrition of school kids today.

With a record investment of nearly \$21 billion in education, this Budget will improve the lives of young Queenslanders and set them up for the future.

Our investment of almost \$1.3 billion in school infrastructure in 2024–25 includes:

- \$342 million for new facilities at schools experiencing the fastest enrolment growth;

- \$273 million to upgrade facilities at existing schools;
- \$167 million for the Building Future Schools program to deliver world-class learning environments for students;
- \$144 million as part of the strategic land acquisition fund, to acquire land for new and expanded schools; and
- \$117 million to continue the rollout of our successful School Halls Program.

This Budget will deliver the schools, teachers and student supports, that matter to Queenslanders.

Importantly, this Budget allocates \$1 billion over 5 years to deliver more teachers and teacher aides to help every student realise their potential, including priority cohorts such as students with a disability.

To help recruit teachers to remote and regional Queensland where housing pressures can be greater than they are in the South East, we are investing \$45 million over 3 years to subsidise teacher accommodation.

TRAINING

Just as education can set a child up for life, training can set a young Queenslander up for their career.

In the biggest skills and training reform in almost a decade, the Miles Labor Government will fund one million training places for Queenslanders.

As our economy transitions and evolves, the ability to upskill and retrain, to take advantage of emerging opportunities, has never been more important.

The *Good Jobs, Great Training: Queensland Skills Strategy 2024–2028* will invest an additional \$203 million over 2 years, to address skills needs and workforce priorities across every region of Queensland.

Working with the Albanese Labor Government, we will continue to offer Free TAFE for around 200 courses, a program that has already enrolled almost 82,000 Queenslanders.

Our 50 per cent payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees will be extended for a further 12 months to 30 June 2025.

And first year apprentices this year in the housing industry will have access to a \$1,000 rebate on their work tools, through our \$4 million Free Tools for First Years program.

2032 OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

The forward estimates contained within this budget bring Queensland to just over 4 years from the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Together with the Federal Government, we are providing for a total capital expenditure of \$7.1 billion for the Brisbane Games, to be delivered by the Games Venue and Legacy Delivery Authority.

In keeping with our Government's response to the Sport Venue Review, the venues infrastructure program includes the upgrading of the Queensland State Athletics Centre, the refurbishment of the Gabba and Suncorp Stadium, and the construction of the Brisbane Arena.

Through this Budget, over \$560 million is allocated to works that are now in procurement, including \$42 million for the Brisbane Aquatic Centre, and \$142 million for the Sunshine Coast Indoor Sports Centre.

ECONOMIC AND FISCAL UPDATE

In the face of persistent inflation and an uncertain global outlook, the fundamental strengths of the Queensland economy endure.

Queensland's economic growth is forecast to strengthen from 2.3 per cent in 2022–23 to 3 per cent in both 2023–24 and 2024–25.

This growth will be driven by a rebound in exports as capacity constraints unwind and increased public final demand, reflecting our Government's deliberate decision to continue to fund public infrastructure investment.

Once again, this Budget is about choices.

And the Miles Labor Government is choosing to stay the course, and to invest in Queensland's future growth and prosperity.

With inflation forecast to finally start easing, growth in consumption is expected to recover to around pre-pandemic averages in 2026–27.

Queensland's economy is projected to continue to grow solidly at 2½ per cent in 2025–26, sustained by continuing growth in domestic activity as household consumption regains its strength.

For the first time in Queensland's history, Gross State Product has exceeded half a trillion dollars.

That means the Queensland economy is larger than that of Finland, of Portugal or of New Zealand.

As Australia's growth state, Queensland has been the engine, driving employment growth across Australia.

As at April 2024, Queensland had recorded the largest employment growth of any state or territory since March 2020, a total of 366,900 people.

That employment growth is equivalent to the entire population of the Sunshine Coast.

With inflation moderating, real wage growth is expected to continue across the forward estimates, further helping Queensland families deal with cost-of-living pressures.

Queensland's place as the growth state of the Commonwealth has placed greater pressure on housing here than it has in any other jurisdiction.

That is the finding of Professor Hal Pawson from the University of New South Wales in his analysis done for the Queensland Council of Social Services.

Thankfully, the easing in the Commonwealth's migration program is expected to take some pressure off housing supply in coming years.

FISCAL

After forecasting a deficit of almost \$2.2 billion for the current 2023–24 financial year, the Miles Labor Government now expects to return an operating surplus of \$564 million.

This surplus has been achieved through careful management of improved revenue, including royalties and taxes.

This estimated actual surplus represents Queensland's third operating surplus in succession, but it is forecast to be the last in the current sequence.

For 2024–25, a deficit of \$2.6 billion is forecast, a deficit that ensures we can help more Queensland families keep their budgets in balance.

If a deficit is the price to be paid to provide nation-leading cost-of-living relief, then that is a price we are willing to pay.

In 2024–25, growth in taxation revenue will be offset by an expected decline in royalties, and by expense measures including our record cost-of-living relief measures, and increased investments in housing, health and community safety.

The deficit is forecast to fall to \$515 million in 2025–26.

A targeted \$3 billion savings plan, over 4 years, to 2027–28, will be applied, to ensure returns to surplus from 2026–27.

Despite these 2 forecasts deficits, Queensland remains well positioned compared to our peers, as the projected net debt to revenue metric for 2023–24 has fallen materially over recent budgets.

Queensland's 2024–25 estimated net debt to revenue ratio of 31 per cent compares very favourably to our peers, given that the same ratio is 88 per cent for New South Wales and 163 per cent for Victoria.

Queensland's credit ratings are all stable, with S&P Global and Fitch at AA+, and Moody's at Aa1.

That stable outlook is the recognition by ratings agencies that Queensland, under the Miles Labor Government, will continue to be able to service its borrowings.

In the fiscal Olympics, as the 2032 host, Queensland holds a higher credit rating than this year's host, France.

CONCLUSION

Speaker, this first Budget of the Miles Labor Government sets out our fully costed, fully detailed, and fully accountable plan for the next 4 years.

It delivers what Queenslanders deserve.

And Queenslanders deserve nothing less than unprecedented action on cost-of-living.

This Budget answers the questions about how our Government would proceed over the next 4 years.

As comprehensive as this Budget is, it is not the final word on what happens next to Queensland.

So let me end where I began.

With the choice facing Queenslanders.

It is no secret that on 26 October, Queenslanders face a choice.

Queenslanders will be asked to make a choice about their future, not to express an opinion about the past.

This Budget makes clear the values and the plans that the Miles Labor Government will be putting forward, when Queenslanders are asked to make that choice.

Queenslanders deserve nothing less from anyone who seeks to lead our great state.

\$1,000

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