



Wellington's Way June 2011

Keeping the electorate of Nicklin up to date on local and State issues.

*The 2011
Queensland
Budget
What is in
it for us ?*

**Where in the world is
Peter Wellington?**

Find me on
Telephone: 07 5441 6933
E-Mail:
nicklin@parliament.qld.gov.au
My Home Page:
www.peterwellingtonmp.com
Twitter:
[@pwellingtonmp](https://twitter.com/pwellingtonmp)

The 2011 budget was expected to be a tough budget and with the floods and cyclone earlier this year I was of the belief that the focus had to be on rebuilding the areas that were suffering the most.

The \$10,000 grant for new homes contracted between 1 August this year and 31 January next year, was great news. I believe that this grant, when used in conjunction with the zero stamp duty for first home buyers under \$500,000, will certainly kick-start home building in the Nicklin electorate.

The abolition of the Queensland ambulance cover levy is appreciated and will be well received.

Although the Sunshine Coast escaped the devastation that other parts of Queensland recently experienced, in our electorate many roads were affected by the continuing wet weather. In particular, the Obi Obi Road was cut as a result of a significant landslip. I understand it is anticipated that workers at the site will complete the repairs in the near future.

This financial year part of the Nambour-Mapleton Road between Willandra Place and Mapleton is set to be upgraded at a cost of \$6.1 million. It was also great to see much needed funding also going to neighbouring roads just outside the electorate. It was not that long ago that this was a part of my electorate, I still feel for this area.

There are other projects that are in need of further funding include the completion of the upgrade of the Nambour-Mapleton Road with an overtaking lane on the approach to Mapleton. The construction of traffic lights at the intersection of Nambour Connection Road and Blackall Street at the entrance to the town of Woombye is also needed. The State Coroner is currently investigating the circumstances surrounding a fatal accident at this location in 2009 and has not yet published his findings. Once the Coroner has released his findings, I look forward to again raising this matter with the Minister for Main Roads. I made sure that the Treasurer was aware of these projects

There was a significant allocation of further money for the Northern Pipeline Interconnector stage 2 project and I noted how the cost of that pipeline has blown out. My views about the pipeline are on the record. The reality is that the pipeline is continuing to be constructed and it is continuing to cost a lot of money.

*Check my web
site for my full
Budget
Reply Speech*

www.peterwellingtonmp.com

The budget covered the continuation of the upgrade of the Nambour Hospital, where \$11.6 million was allocated towards the new cardiac and vascular surgery procedural suites, a dedicated endoscopy procedural unit and a new outpatients neurosurgery service. While on the topic of the hospital, I again turned to the need for additional carparking options for hospital workers and visitors. I also raised this matter in a separate question without notice to the Minister for Health.

I reiterated my serious concerns about the location of the proposed new Sunshine Coast regional hospital on flood-prone land at Kawana. In this budget there is a further \$46.3 million allocated towards the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and the Sunshine Coast Academic and Research Centre. We need this hospital, we need it now, but we also need to get it right. There won't be a second chance.

It was great to see Nambour TAFE continue to receive financial support and funding in this budget, with a further \$8.7 million to continue the re-development of the Nambour campus. The TAFE was one of the first projects I worked on when elected to Parliament. There was a push for many services to be relocated to Mooloolaba and I was able to convince the then Minister to not only retain the services but to build on the Nambour facility.

In relation to the National Highway between Cooroy and Curra, I am pleased that the senior Main Roads staff listened to the Cudgerie community and to my requests to move the proposed Cudgerie Intersection further north, away from the current intersection. I understand that we are currently waiting on the federal minister to approve the proposed change of location.

There was an budget addition of \$10.5 million to fund more Queensland parks and wildlife rangers. This is great news, especially considering the Mapleton Forest is to be designated a national park later this year. I look forward to additional park rangers being assigned to the Sunshine Coast area to assist in managing this additional area. While on the topic of national parks, I was pleased to see an allocation of another \$196,000 to replace two bridges at the Kondalilla Falls National Park in our region.

Recently I spoke in this parliament calling for the monitoring and tracking of the movements of convicted serious sex offenders. The allocation of \$9.6 million over three years and \$4.1 million per annum from 2014 to 2015 to introduce GPS technology to monitor and track the movements of serious sex offenders on continuing supervision orders is great news. With the possibility of a change of Government within the next 12 months, I called on the opposition, as the alternative government to honour this important funding commitment, if elected to Government next year.

The money the Minister for Transport will be spending on the upgrade to the Nambour Railway Station later this year and the benefits the public lift beside the subway entrance will provide to the elderly and disabled is certainly welcomed. The railway line subway provides an important thoroughfare for the public who need to cross from one side of Nambour to the other.

*Changes to the
workings of
Parliament*

New Committee System

During recent sittings of Parliament, agreement was reached to radically change how Parliament operates. The new Committee System will see all proposed new changes to our laws go to an all-party committee before Parliament can vote on the new laws.

It makes no difference whether the proposed new law is introduced by an ALP, NLP or an Independent member. These new all-party committees will be able to hold public hearings, question public servants, and make recommendations for changes to the proposed law if they feel this is appropriate.

It is disappointing that the Government and Opposition refused to support the Independent Members' proposal to allow the committees to initiate investigations into important government issues. I believe that if these committees were able to independently initiate such investigations, it would enable them to look into cases like the Patel case, and prevent such injustices from getting out of hand.

I have been elected to the Parliamentary Crime and Misconduct Committee and also to the Ethics Committee and I am looking forward to the first meetings of these Committees.

Youth at Risk

Last week I met with Minister Karen Struthers MP Minister for Communities and representatives from the offices of the Minister for Police, and Minister for Education to discuss what could be done to address the issue of "at risk" youth in Nambour.

Over recent months I have had a number of people contact me in relation to concerns about a group of young people who were frequenting the town square in Nambour. There had also been concerns raised that NAMTEC was no longer providing a sufficient services to address the needs of young people who had dropped out of school and had not entered the workforce. The meeting was coordinated by Minister Karen Struthers and I was very pleased with the level of support from all Departments.

As a result of the meeting we will see a continuation of the police presence around our shopping area. The Minister's Department is investigating what programs can be funded to engage with these young people.

As a former Board member of NAMTEC, I know how successful some programs can be in helping young people who fall between the cracks. I am keen to see the reestablishment of these type of programs in Nambour.

*Working
together
to tackle
youth
issues*

*Parliamentary
Happenings*

&

*Hospital
Parking*

During the last sitting I also had the opportunity to put a direct question to the Minister for Health. Yes, the topic was Hospital Parking.

I reminded the Minister that the Nambour General Hospital continues to be very busy and asked if his department had made any progress in relation to purchasing the land adjoining the hospital.

In his response the Minister admitted that there was a real challenge around the car parking availability associated with the Nambour Hospital. He also referred to discussions that were had when I arranged for some Glenbrook Drive residents to meet with him and senior Departmental staff, and repeated that he had given an undertaking that this issue would be very carefully examined and that the local district CEO will work very closely with the local community, myself and the local council to identify the best option for a long-term solution for the car-parking challenge.

Last week I was again forced to contact the Minister's office in an effort to bring forward a resolution to the parking needs for Nambour Hospital. I let the Minister know that I believe the Government can solve the parking problem **now**, by purchasing adjoining land from a willing seller at a fair market price. I also let him know that our community was outraged by the continual refusal of the Government to fast track the provision of adequate parking for the hospital.

As a result of this, the Minister's office advised me that there were certain procedures that needed to be followed. And, that due diligence investigations were vital prior to the Government acquiring any land or property. I was also advised that the consultants were undertaking this work on behalf of Queensland Health and expect it to be completed during July.

The questions I asked on Notice last sitting.

A request for Deputy Premier Paul Lucas MP to investigate the proposal to upgrade Nambour Court House so that a Magistrate would sit permanently in Nambour and stop the referral of Magistrates Court matters to the Maroochydore Magistrates Court.

A request for the Education Minister to find out why staff on the Sunshine Coast who have either applied to take early retirement, various types of leave or to transfer want to do so.

I asked if Minister Dick would support the provision of a full-time family therapist to the Nambour and Burnside State Primary Schools in Nambour, similar to that provided by the State Government to support the Harris Fields State School at Woodridge

In my final question for the sitting I asked Minister Dick if he would allow State Schools to have a second Principal for a Day promotion this year, so members of State Parliament are able to see first hand what occurs in our State Schools.

*Waiting
30 days for
answers
to
Questions
Asked
On Notice*

*Due to the budget
debate speaking
opportunities
were limited
this sitting.*

*I did however
have the
opportunity to
speak on an
issue that was of
concern to one of my
constituents.*

Next Sitting

*2nd, 3rd & 4th
August*

Solar Hot Water Rebate Scheme

I spoke on behalf of a Constituent who had received a letter from the Premier which congratulated her for participating in the Queensland Government's Solar Hot Water Rebate Scheme and installing a solar water heater. The letter went on to recommend that she talk to her friends and neighbours about her new solar water heater and encourage them to do the "bright" thing and help them to make the positive switch to solar today. Which is probably fair enough but what she took objection to was the enclosed sign, which she was asked to display to promote the fact that she was doing the "bright" thing.

My constituent is more than happy and keen to be involved in the solar program, but she saw red like a bull sees a red rag when she received this poster in the mail.

She was of the view that she was perhaps being used for part of a promotion for the government. And she really had a perception that she was going to be used by being invited to put this placard—this promotional item—on a wall on her house. She really did not want that to happen.

So I let the Government know what she thought of this request.

Coming up for debate

When we return to the house, debate will continue on the budget. There are a number of Bills listed on the Notice Paper and they can be viewed at the Parliament House Web site www.parliament.qld.gov.au which has recently been updated and looks great.

The Neighbourhood Disputes Resolution Bill is next on the list, this is the Bill that covers the disputes involving trees and boundary fences and one that many are wanting to see finalised.

Also on the list is the Aboriginal Land and Torres Strait Islander Land and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2010, which is looking at amendments to a number of Acts and is to improve the current legislation for the self-development and cultural integrity of the Aboriginal people and the Torres Strait Islanders of Queensland.

The next Private Members Bill listed for debate is the Opposition's CRIMINAL PROCEEDS CONFISCATION (SERIOUS AND ORGANISED CRIME UNEXPLAINED WEALTH) AMENDMENT BILL

The aim of this bill is to destroy the financial incentive to commit and engage in organised crime.

I would be interested in hearing your thought on these and any of the other Bills listed for debate in the near future. Please give me a call if you would like a hard copy of any of the Bills.

Peter