

Appropriation Bill (No. 1) 2011-2012

Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (12:46): The contribution from the member for Hughes was not dissimilar to contributions often made by the Leader of the Opposition—full of rhetoric, full of one-liners, no substance, no policy and, probably one of its biggest failings, no economic plan for the future. It comes back to the fact that we are debating the Labor budget here today because we have an economic plan for the future. We have an economic plan that will see 500,000 jobs created. That is right. I did not hear about jobs in the contribution from the member for Hughes and we have not heard much about jobs from the members of the opposition in this debate. But we will talk about jobs. We want to talk about jobs because we believe that is the right thing to do. In fact the budget that the Treasurer put forward is all about creating jobs and giving Australians a good, prosperous economic future. It is about bringing the budget back into surplus and ensuring that we have a sustainable footing for the future.

We have heard a lot from the opposition about set-top boxes. That was something that they supported. In fact, Senator Nick Minchin and the member for Mayo, Jamie Briggs, are on the record as supporting it, making sure that we do not have people left in the dark. But it is not uncommon for the Leader of the Opposition to support things and then think: 'Gee, I'm actually supporting something that the government is. I can't do that. I've got to be negative. I've got to disagree.' The Leader of the Opposition is all opposition and no leader. He could not lead anything if his life depended on it. What we have had from the opposition is rhetoric but no plan. We saw that clearly in the budget reply, when the Leader of the Opposition got up and did some one-liners and then, when he got to the point where we thought—we were ready for it—he was going to outline his economic plan, he said, 'Oh, look, I'm not going to outline an economic plan tonight. I'll do that closer to the election.' Clearly the Leader of the Opposition is exactly as he was described—that is, bored by economics.

Today I am going to talk about the significant investment in my electorate since this government was elected. People in my electorate, which is in the outer suburbs of Adelaide, were neglected significantly by the previous coalition government when it came to infrastructure. It took the election of this Labor government for them to start really investing in infrastructure and building. A lot of people talk about congestion. It has been this government that has actually started to address the issue of congestion in the outer suburbs of Adelaide. I'll start by saying that I am very pleased that the Victor Harbour Road, Main South Road intersection is now complete. This is something I committed to in the 2007 election; the opposition did not. The two intersections are now complete. Along with safety improvements, traffic congestion has been significantly reduced and this has ensured that there is good flow up to the beautiful area of McLaren Vale on long weekends. Rather than having to sit for a long time there is now a lot less congestion and better infrastructure has been delivered for the local area.

Another commitment that was made after the election is the Noarlunga rail extension to Seaford. This is something that, perhaps, the opposition calls waste. It is not waste to the local residents who desperately need this rail extension. I am very pleased that significant

work has began on that rail extension. Work will begin shortly on the bridge that will span across the Onkaparinga to allow the rail extension to get to Seaford. This bridge is going to be slightly longer than the Sydney Harbour Bridge. It is certainly something that people in the southern suburbs have a lot of pride over. More than pride, it will ensure that Seaford gets the rail extension that it so desperately needs. We have seen the southern suburbs of Adelaide grow significantly. After being promised for many years by many governments that they would get this rail extension, it was this government that delivered the \$291 million to fund it. It is this government that has awarded the major contract and is getting on with the job of building this. It will make a significant impact. It is expected to attract approximately 6,000 trips per weekday and around 1.7 million trips per year. This, once again, is an area where it took the election of this government to actually address the issues of public transport and congestion. This is the type of stuff that the Liberal Party is calling waste. Far from it, this is the type of investment that has been sorely needed for a long time.

I would like to talk about another investment that includes the McLaren Vale overpass, and which will improve safety for residents in the southern part of Adelaide. It is an \$18 million upgrade jointly funded by the states and territories. The federal government is putting in \$14 million. This intersection is an important road linking Adelaide to the tourist and commercial area of the Fleurieu Peninsula. Over 18,000 vehicles use the Victor Harbour main south road to McLaren Vale. The junction's current poor safety record is the reasoning behind the upgrade, and sadly there have been over 12 casualty crashes at the junction since 2005. Currently the state department of infrastructure is in its consultation phase. This project is on track to further improve safety and ease congestion in one of Australia's premium wine regions. It has been this government that has begun the investment in rail and road, and certainly my local electorate is benefitting from it.

There has been a lot of discussion in this place about the NBN. The previous speaker talked about what we could do for small business. Then in the same breath he suggested we should scrap the NBN. I can tell the member for Hughes that, if he goes out and actually listens to what small business needs in my electorate, he will see they are telling me they want to be connected to the world, they want to have the opportunity to compete in global markets through the NBN. They are telling me that the biggest impediment to expanding their business is not having access to broadband. We often hear the opposition say they are the party of small business. If they were the party of small business they would listen to small business and hear that in fact the NBN has the potential to revolutionise. Instead we hear the leader of the opposition completely ridiculing the NBN. He is clearly not listening to small business—they want this, and they want this now. I am very pleased that Willunga is a first-release site in my electorate. We have seen over 95 per cent of people sign up to be connected to fibre and to have test services that will start within months. There is a lot of excitement from local residents, but in particular from businesses. The Southern Economic Development Board has said that broadband is the number one impediment to small business expanding so this is exciting.

But this excitement, this expansion, this economic development will not happen if the Liberal Party gets its way and builds its fibre-to-the-node plan, which has been discredited by experts

around the globe. What the opposition fails to understand is that the problems with broadband in my electorate, as in many other electorates around the country, is that there is not enough copper in the ground. That is why so many residents cannot even get ADSL2. They are on pair gains or have a whole range of problems because of insufficient copper and not enough services. So to do fibre to the node, which is the opposition's new plan, will add to their 21 failed broadband plans. It will not get broadband to the people that need it, people in Hallett Cove—

Mr Tudge: That is why we have a specific policy for those areas.

Ms RISHWORTH: The member for Aston interjects, but what he does not understand is that significant suburbs with thousands and thousands of people do not have enough copper so, if you are going to dig it up, why wouldn't you put fibre down?

Mr Tudge interjecting—

Ms RISHWORTH: Why would you just put copper? Why would you put in an old technology—dig it up and spend the money. If you talk about waste, why would you dig up the ground and lay another bit of copper that it is yesterday's technology. Why wouldn't you put fibre in the ground? That is the ill-thought-out Leader of the Opposition's plan on fibre.

To be quite frank, the Leader of the Opposition has not had much input into this plan because he is not interested. He did not even turn up at his broadband policy launch at the last election. I have a little advice for the opposition: saying that you are going to cut our National Broadband Network is not a vote winner in outer metropolitan areas. I do not want to give them too many tips for the next election campaign, but scrapping the National Broadband Network probably is not the right policy to have. Once again, it is about building that critical infrastructure, whether it is roads, whether it is rail or whether it is broadband. This is what this government sat down to do.

I have to talk about another project in my local electorate that is incredibly important. Obviously being a member from Adelaide and from the state of South Australia, I consider water a particularly important issue. I recognise that it has been this government that has had to take up, once again, after neglect from the previous government, the issue of water and the management of the Murray.

For a while there I thought this might be a bipartisan issue. Certainly when the Leader of the Opposition came to Adelaide during the election campaign he inferred it was going to be a bipartisan issue. He was going to sign up to the Murray-Darling plan. Of course, after the election he made it clear that he had no such intention to do anything like that. In fact, in his response to the Queensland floods, he indicated that he would scrap the buyback of water, that he did not think buying back water was important. Now that was of great concern for people of Adelaide. Not only is restoring the Murray critically important, but once again the Leader of the Opposition had gone back on his election commitment.

This Labor government is getting on with the job and, in terms of infrastructure, I am very pleased that this federal government has invested into two projects—Waterproofing the

South, Stage 1, and Waterproofing the South, Stage 2. In Waterproofing the South, Stage 2, the federal government has committed \$14 million to develop stormwater harvesting in the Onkaparinga Council area. There will be a number of sites which will harvest stormwater and stop it from going out into the sea, which does affect the seagrasses, harvest it and then use it for watering parks and gardens. So is a very exciting project. There is a contribution from the council, \$7 million, and \$7 million from the state government. This is an example of how state government, federal government and local council can work together constructively. It might not be known to the Leader of the Opposition that one can work constructively and not just be negative about everything. Good outcomes can be reached for the Australian people. In this case good outcomes on water conservation were achieved for the people of Kingston, so this is a particularly important project.

There has been a significant increase in investment in local infrastructure in my electorate. One in particular is the Woodcroft Library and Neighbourhood Centre—whose opening I was very pleased to be able to attend—which was funded by the council with a contribution by the federal government under the Green Precincts Fund. This is an incredibly exciting centre which has solar electricity and hot water systems, a rainwater harvesting system, smart building controls and artificial lighting and air conditioning that are set according to outside conditions in order to reduce energy. It is a wonderful, energy efficient building. It is an opportunity not just for the building to be energy and water efficient, but for local residents to go down and look at some of the things that have been done and to take some ideas away. It is trying to extend that information. This is, once again, investment in local areas that have not been invested in before. I am pleased that this budget builds on that investment, ensures that there is investment in the areas that are important—training, hospitals, healthcare, roads and rail—and continues to build our nation and to build, support and create jobs, just as we did during the global financial crisis. I commend the budget and continue to support the important initiatives in my local electorate.