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SUBJECT: Education

MEMBER: Mr PEGG

### Education

 **Mr PEGG** (Stretton—ALP) (12.12 pm): It is my great pleasure to congratulate the Minister for Education, Tourism and Major Events on her Advancing Education suite of initiatives. Advancing Education lays out a new and groundbreaking strategic direction for the planning and delivery of education services in Queensland. As well as promoting the uptake of Asian languages in schools, the Minister for Education has also ensured there is a clear focus in schools for the critically important areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics through the announcement of a range of STEM scholarships for teachers, including a bursary of up to \$25,000 for 18 final year pre service teachers. This comes on the back of an education spend of \$12.4 billion in 2015-16, the largest amount ever committed in Queensland, and a huge 7.2 per cent increase on the anaemic education budget forced on the people of Queensland by the LNP in 2014-15.

Truly, the future for students and teachers in Queensland is bright. But let us contrast the successes in education which have occurred under our government with that of the LNP, a government that was considered by many to be the worst government in the history of Queensland. In previous speeches in this House I have accurately demonstrated the unmitigated failures of the LNP in its last term of government, as well as the contribution from the member for Clayfield when he was Treasurer. I have been consistent in highlighting his hopeless economic management and reckless approach to selling state assets well before the member for Clayfield ambushed the member for Southern Downs for the leadership. What a result! The architect of austerity, a man who enjoyed cutting the guts out of the state budget and contributing to the sacking of 14,000 public servants, is now the Leader of the Opposition. Congratulations, guys, you have done a great job there! What a sad state of affairs for Queensland and the LNP.

But today I am not going to focus on the Leader of the Opposition because I have already spent a lot of time in this parliament forensically uncovering his numerous economic and fiscal failures. Instead, I want to talk about the LNP's appalling disregard for education, one of the bedrocks of a civil society. In 2012 LNP members happily went along with the ruthless austerity cuts eagerly sought by the member for Clayfield.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER** (Ms Farmer): Order! The member is not taking anyone's interjections so please allow him to deliver his speech.

**Mr PEGG:** In 2012 LNP members happily went along with the ruthless austerity cuts eagerly sought by the member for Clayfield.

**Mr WATTS:** I rise to a point of order. If the member wants to attack we should be allowed to interject.

**Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is no point of order.

**Mr PEGG:** As I was saying, as well as slashing over \$23 million from the Department of Education, Training and Employment, the LNP proceeded to implement a range of draconian savings measures, including reducing expenditure on parent awareness strategies, reducing research into the best way to achieve educational outcomes for students and reducing funding for the professional development of teachers. A great start for the LNP there, but the cuts did not stop. Under the LNP they never do. They also announced they would be cutting funding to the highly popular Fanfare program from 2013, a biennial music festival for Queensland state school bands and orchestras. Given that there was a total government spend of \$48.5 billion in that year, guess how much this cut contributed to the budget bottom line? A paltry \$88,000, or .0002 per cent of the total budget. That is right, just 0.0002 per cent of the total budget. I have to question what on earth compelled those opposite to propose a savings measure that hurts students badly but effectively did nothing for the overall budget position. The answer is that the LNP could not help themselves. They love to cut the guts out of education funding, even

when students were hurt along the way. Of course, the irony is that there has not been a lot of fanfare for the LNP in recent times despite the propensity for those opposite to blow their own trumpets. I can only imagine what kind of budget would be delivered today if the LNP still occupied the government benches.

I have conclusively demonstrated that the LNP care far more about slashing the budget than education outcomes for Queenslanders, which is really not much of a surprise. However, despite this appalling approach to education from the LNP I make this offer to those opposite, and in particular the member for Coomera: in the spirit of bipartisanship I am prepared to sit down with you, go through the mistakes and failures you made in education and explain just how our approach to education is benefiting all Queenslanders now and into the future. As I was saying, I congratulate the Minister for Education on her Advancing Education suite of initiatives. Advancing Education lays out a new and groundbreaking strategic direction for the planning and delivery of education services in Queensland.