

**ATT: CHIEF-OF-STAFF/NEWS EDITOR**

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**BUDGET WITH HEART DELIVERS FOR ALL QUEENSLANDERS**

By all major economic indicators the Beattie Government had produced the best ever Labor State Budget in Queensland, the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, Mr Terry Mackenroth, said today.

Mr Mackenroth said the financial result coupled with record expenditure for infrastructure and services had eclipsed all previous levels and would provide major benefits to all Queenslanders throughout the entire State.

“I am extremely proud of this Budget,” Mr Mackenroth said.

“We have fully funded each and every one of our election commitments as well as providing an extra injection of funds for services and infrastructure.

“It has heart and will deliver real improvements to people’s quality of life but is also one of the most economically sound ever produced in Queensland.”

Mr Mackenroth said since he became Treasurer in 2001 he made it a personal goal to achieve a real increase in the level of services provided to Queenslanders.

“In four Budgets I have now pumped an extra \$3.6 Billion into the key service areas of education, health, public order and safety, and community services,” he said.

“In this time, I have increased recurrent funding for education by more than 26 percent, health by more than 27 percent, disability services by 66 percent, and public order and safety by 39 percent.

“This exceeds aggregate growth in population and prices for that period by 22.5 percent – showing we have made a real increase in services.

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“In this Budget, I have maintained a major focus on service delivery with record recurrent spending in Departments such as Health (\$5.1 Billion), Education (\$4.8 Billion), Police (\$1.1 Billion), Disability Services (\$454 Million) and the new Department of Child Safety (\$269 Million).”

Mr Mackenroth said the Health Budget would increase by \$500 Million or another 10.8 percent over last year’s Budget.

“After the State election we immediately began to implement our elective surgery commitment and Queenslanders today are benefiting from the extra \$20 Million injected this financial year with a further program of \$90 Million over the next three years,” he said.

“Other health highlights over the next four years in this Budget include additional funding of \$20 Million for cardiac services, \$44 Million for cancer care, \$13.2 Million for oral health care and \$37.8 Million to relieve pressure on public hospital emergency departments.

“In addition, more than \$1 Billion has been allocated over the next three years for the Health capital works program for additions, upgrades and redevelopments within our hospital system.”

Mr Mackenroth said disability services had received another major boost in this Budget with an extra \$220 Million over the next four years.

He said this was on top of the \$200 Million four year package delivered in last year’s State Budget.

“The money will help people with a disability and those that care for them,” Mr Mackenroth said.

“It will be targeted at service providers, respite services and alternative services to help people with high support needs.”

Mr Mackenroth said the Education budget would begin delivering on the Beattie Government’s election commitment to invest additional funds in building, upgrading and maintaining school facilities.

“In 2004-05 this includes \$145.8 Million for schools growth, including the first stage of a new state primary school and nine major new stages at developing state schools,” he said.

“In addition, there is \$118.3 Million to renew and upgrade state school buildings, \$26.4 Million to maintain school facilities and \$17.5 Million to aircondition state school classrooms.”

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Mr Mackenroth said the Budget also contained a major injection of funds to enhance our child protection system with approximately \$214 Million in additional funding per annum by 2006-07.

“This funding will provide for a range of initiatives including more than 500 additional staff for the Department of Child Safety,” Mr Mackenroth said.

“With more than a billion dollar Budget in 2004-05, the Queensland Police Service will also continue to protect our children and enhance the safety of the Queensland community through quality policing services.”

Mr Mackenroth said the 2004-05 State Budget provided real assistance to those that needed it most and supported an economy that was growing, diversifying and performing strongly.

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