

## **Appropriation (Supplementary Appropriation for 2021-22) Bill 2022**

Mr Speaker

The Appropriation (Supplementary Appropriation for 2021-22) Bill 2022 seeks supplementary funding of \$441.7 million to meet costs associated with the management of COVID-19 and costs associated with the normal and continued operation of government activities.

### **COVID-19 Related Expenditure**

As we know, over the past two years, the Department of Health and its hard working staff have done an outstanding job keeping Tasmanians safe during these most challenging times and I thank them for their work.

To continue to support their work this Bill allocates \$125 million to the Department of Health for costs associated with the management of COVID-19.

In particular, this additional funding meets costs related to vaccinations, testing, hospital and ambulance resourcing, contact tracing, quarantine and the purchase of equipment including personal protective equipment.

The Bill also provides \$42.8 million to the Department of Communities Tasmania to support the extension of the Tasmanian Hotel Quarantine program, which was a key tool in ensuring the safety of Tasmanians as we managed the impact of COVID-19 in our State.

Mr Speaker

We recognise that while our economy is strong and that many businesses are doing well, further support was needed to assist some businesses as we transitioned to living with COVID-19.

Since the start of the pandemic Tasmanian businesses have received more than \$160 million in COVID-specific support.

This Bill allocates \$40 million for the Supercharged Micro and Small Business Border Closure Critical Support Grants program.

The Tasmanian Government worked closely with the Commonwealth Government to supercharge our Micro and Small Business Border Closure Critical Support Grants program to support Tasmanian businesses when they needed it most and to provide confidence during the uncertain times of the pandemic.

In addition, \$3 million is allocated to provide assistance to businesses impacted by the Southern Tasmania COVID-19 lockdown in October 2021.

We know the sudden lockdown in Southern Tasmania in October 2021 had a significant financial impact on businesses and, in particular, on those businesses with perishable goods such as food that had to be discarded.

The Government's action to provide this assistance helped to alleviate the financial impacts on these businesses and enabled them to continue to operate after the lockdown.

The Bill also provides \$2.5 million in additional funding for the Job Trainer Fund.

This additional funding enables the extension and expansion of the Job Trainer Fund, which provides funding for key VET courses for skills and training in areas that have been experiencing staff shortages during the pandemic, including aged care, IT and child care.

Through Finance-General, \$8.46 million is provided to meet costs charged by other jurisdictions to the State for Tasmanian residents who were required to hotel quarantine after returning from international travel.

Continuing our support for business, funding of \$2 million is also provided through Finance-General to meet payroll tax relief for businesses impacted by border closures in the tourism, hospitality and ancillary services.

Mr Speaker

The Bill also provides \$21.8 million to the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania for COVID-19 related expenditure. This expenditure includes:

- \$11 million for costs associated with the State's ongoing border controls;
- \$7 million for Parks and Wildlife Service Revenue Loss;
- \$3 million for the expansion of passenger processing infrastructure at Tasmania's airports; and
- \$829 000 for cost associated with the Tas Traveller Management System.

Mr Speaker

Continuing to provide our students with a safe learning environment has been a priority of the Government.

This Bill provides \$8 million to the Department of Education to implement a range of actions that respond to COVID-19, including improvements to ventilation, the provision of air purifiers, air conditioning repairs, and window audits and repairs.

### **Tasmanian Risk Management Fund**

Mr Speaker

In addition to the COVID-19 specific funding allocations, funding of \$105 million has been included in the Bill to increase cash balances within the Tasmanian Risk Management Fund to reflect an actuarial assessment of increasing liabilities relating to workers' compensation.

The health and wellbeing of every state employee is a priority of the Government and meeting costs associated with workers' compensation is part of that responsibility as an employer.

This funding injection will ensure the Tasmanian Risk Management Fund has a sufficient level of financial assets to meet historic liabilities in the workers' compensation category of the Fund.

As a self-insurance scheme, this is an appropriate and prudent financial approach for managing the Fund.

## **Other Operating Expenditure**

Mr Speaker,

The Supplementary Appropriation Bill also includes funding for the normal business of government.

Funding of \$7.6 million is allocated to the Department of Police, Fire and Emergency Management, including:

- \$6.5 million for costs associated with the Police Enterprise Bargaining Agreement; and
- \$1.1 million to continue funding for the Child Sexual Abuse Joint Review Team.

Further, the Bill allocates \$24 million to the Department of Justice, including:

- \$12 million for the Redress Scheme and compensation payments to victims of institutional childhood sexual abuse;
- \$8 million for the Tasmanian Prison Service Demand Pressures;
- \$2.5 million for the Primary Producer Safety Rebate Scheme for farmers to implement safety measures that help reduce work-related injuries and deaths in farming; and
- \$1.2 million for the implementation of the Wellbeing Support Program for the Tasmanian Prison Service.

An allocation of \$2.3 million is also provided to the Environment Protection Authority as part of its structural and organisational separation from the former Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment.

This funding will provide the EPA with more resources and enable increased environmental regulation and assessment activities to be undertaken by the Authority.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet is allocated an additional \$1.75 million in the Bill, including:

- \$500 000 to provide community assistance for the tragic Hillcrest Primary School incident;
- \$500 000 for the Pathway to Truth-telling and Treaty Report; and
- \$750 000 for the Premier's Fund for Children and Young People for recreational and social infrastructure programs across Tasmania.

Other operating expenditure reflected in the Bill includes funding of:

- \$380 000 for the 2022 Women's National Basketball League games;
- \$250 000 to Tasmanian Basketball Pty Ltd trading as the Jack Jumpers for the refurbishment of the Kingborough basketball stadium;

- \$4.61 million for the State Government's payment to non-government sector in accordance with the National School Reform Agreement;
- \$4 million to meet costs of Cricket Australia for hosting the fifth Ashes Test at Bellerive Oval;
- \$562 000 for the Port Safety Legislative Review; and
- \$2.3 million for financial assistance to GFG Alliance for the purchase of Liberty Bell Bay (TEMCO);

## **Capital Services**

Mr Speaker

The Bill also provides Capital Services funding of \$35.7 million, which includes \$26.1 million in funding brought forward for projects previously allocated funding in 2022-23.

This is a clear demonstration the Government is getting on with its ambitious infrastructure investment program.

The MyState Bank Arena and Glenorchy Indoor Multi-sports Facility Projects are allocated \$21.6 million in the Bill to ensure the precinct is a world-class entertainment and multi-sport facility for all Tasmanians.

The Department of Education is allocated \$3.15 million for additional Capital Services, including:

- \$1.5 million for additional expenditure to accelerate the New K – 12 Penguin District School project;

- \$850,000 to accelerate the works at the Southern Support School;
- \$500 000 for the Hobart City Partner Schools (Ogilvie and New Town High); and
- \$300 000 for the Bothwell District School – Agricultural in Schools project.

The Department of Health is allocated \$3.9 million for capital expenditure to replace the Department's existing Human Resources Information System with a fully integrated HRIS.

The Department of Natural Resources and Environment Tasmania is allocated funding of \$3.25 million for parks infrastructure, including:

- \$1.2 million for the Community Recovery Fund Project for the restoration and reinstatement of Parks assets and infrastructure damaged or destroyed as a result of fires in 2018;
- \$1 million for the improved State-wide Visitor Infrastructure Project which provides a significant investment in our iconic national parks; and
- \$1.05 million for the strengthening and refurbishment of the Kanunnah Bridge.

The Department of State Growth is allocated \$3.46 million for roads, including

- \$2.15 million for the Roads Program to accelerate existing road projects; and

- \$1.3 million for State Road Upgrades in the Northern region for the Midland Highway preconstruction activities.

And the Department of Justice is allocated capital services funding of \$322 000 for expenditure on the Northern Correctional Facility Project.

## **Conclusion**

Mr Speaker

The Government's priority has always been the health and wellbeing of the Tasmanian community as we managed the impact of COVID-19 on the Tasmanian community and as we transition to living with COVID.

This Bill provides the resources required by agencies to manage the impact of the pandemic on the Tasmanian community, while also providing the funds needed to continue those services and projects that build on our strong position and secure Tasmania's future.

I commend the Bill to the House.