



Speech by

Annastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Hansard Thursday, 12 July 2012

V8 SUPERCARS TOWNSVILLE 400

 **Ms PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Leader of the Opposition) (2.38 pm): Last weekend I attended the V8 Supercars Townsville 400, the biggest sporting event in North Queensland and a fantastic boost for regional Queensland. Whilst attending the event, I called on the Premier to commit to ongoing funding to continue the event past 2013. I believe we are still waiting to hear what the future is for the event in Townsville.

So far the Premier has done little for the regions except take away jobs and threaten more sackings in heavily regionalised bodies such as Queensland Rail. In fact, the only major capital works project unveiled so far by the LNP is a new Executive Building here in the centre of Brisbane for the Premier and his ministers. It was a choice between looking after themselves and looking after the regions. The LNP has so far shown it will put itself first. A choice between funding future Townsville 400s and building a new office block should be easy for the Premier.

I also had the opportunity on the weekend to catch up with the new Townsville mayor, Jenny Hill. I would like to place on the record my congratulations to Jenny Hill for taking on that very important role. I am quite sure she will do a very, very fine job.

On the weekend I had the opportunity to meet with members of Townsville's business community who all told me about the enormous benefits that the Townsville 400 brings to the community, and I had the benefit of seeing that firsthand. Businesses throughout the city were teeming with patrons throughout the weekend. 'No vacancy' signs signalled the full occupancy of many accommodation providers in the region, and people told me that they had taken the opportunity to enjoy an extended stay in the region with their families following the Townsville 400 race.

The Townsville 400 undoubtedly provides a huge boost to the North Queensland tourism industry and the wider regional economy. It delivers huge economic benefits because Australian motorsport fans just love V8 racing. I understand the next V8 race will shortly be held in Ipswich, and I am quite sure a few Ipswich members will be attending that event. The Townsville 400 was also televised around the world, and this provided a priceless opportunity to showcase North Queensland and its attractions.

Mr Johnson interjected.

Ms PALASZCZUK: Are you against North Queensland, member for Gregory! The North American Speed Channel, which screens in the USA, Canada and Mexico, has 78 million subscribers. This means that up to 78 million North Americans saw the beauty of the Townsville region during the telecast, and this has the capacity to further boost the tourism potential of the region.

There has been some concern about the future of the Townsville 400 after the LNP government said that funding for the Gold Coast 600 could not be guaranteed past 2013. I note that the tourism minister is in the chamber, so perhaps the tourism minister can shed some light on the future of this great sporting event on the Gold Coast.