



Speech by

**Hon. Jeff Seeney**


**MEMBER FOR CALLIDE**

Hansard Thursday, 1 November 2012

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Royalties for the Regions

 **Hon. JW SEENEY** (Callide—LNP) (Deputy Premier and Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning) (10.04 am): Next week our government will announce the first successful applicants for funding under our new Royalties for the Regions program. I can inform members that local governments in our resource regions have wholeheartedly embraced this initiative of the Newman government. Thirteen of the 14 councils eligible to apply for funding did so in this pilot round. The one council that did not apply—Mackay—made its support for the program clear by taking a regional view and supporting applications from its neighbours, the Isaac Regional Council and the Whitsunday Regional Council.

We asked councils to prioritise projects in their regions, as this first pilot round of funding is limited to \$60 million. We asked councils for clear priorities and rigour in their selection of projects—to focus on critical or urgent needs in their communities that were 'shovel ready'. We anticipated that the program would be oversubscribed. Unsurprisingly, demand for funding far outstripped what we could make available given the terrible position Labor left the state's finances in.

Over the last few weeks we have assessed expressions of interest for funding for 71 projects seeking a total of almost \$260 million. Those projects address a broad range of regional community, road and flood mitigation projects—from levees and flood gauges to upgrades for water and waste treatment facilities. What is particularly pleasing about the applications is that the councils have leveraged contributions from industry to support many of their applications. Of the nearly \$260 million sought, expressions of interest have identified contributions of \$53.3 million from industry and \$51 million from local government. The application documentation also indicates that councils have been working closely with their communities, resource companies and peak bodies to prioritise projects that closely match their community's needs.

Royalties for the Regions is delivering another one of our election promises. It is about reinvesting a share of royalties gained from the resource extraction industries across the state back into the communities that host those resource projects. As we promised during the election campaign and as we outlined in the budget documents in September, the funding for this four-year program will be ramped up in coming years. We know that many regional communities have been short-changed throughout the years of South-East Queensland centric Labor administrations. Our Royalties for the Regions program will seek to redress this wrong and rebalance expenditures so that Queenslanders in regional resource communities get a fair share of the wealth that their region generates.