



Speech by


# Stephen Bennett

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

Hansard Tuesday, 19 June 2012

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## PORT OF BUNDABERG

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (9.24 pm): I rise to share with the House the opportunities for the Burnett electorate with the future expansion of the port of Bundaberg. I thank the member for Bundaberg, Jack Dempsey, for his continued support and advocacy for this great asset in the Bundaberg area.

The port of Bundaberg, located at the head of the Burnett River, plays an important role in the prosperity of the Wide Bay region and has done so for over 50 years. It is essential in linking the regionally significant sugar industry to export and domestic markets. The port of Bundaberg is positioned to play an even greater role with the potential expansion in export and import trades and the further expansion of the marine industry and world-class marina, tourist and residential developments.

The port is strategically located with potentially significant export mineral and timber resources within its immediate hinterland. Its close proximity to significant LNG and coal expansion projects in South-East Queensland also make it a good proposition for the import of bulk goods such as LNG pipelines, large machine components and fuel, which could be stored at the port's currently mothballed bulk fuel storage facility.

Being south of the cyclone belt and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park, with safe and easy access to Australia's shipping channels, as well as the availability of large areas of land and quay lines for port facilities, the port of Bundaberg offers a great opportunity to expand and increase the prosperity of the Wide Bay region and Queensland as a whole. The port of Bundaberg is also ideally positioned to become a major hub for the marine industry. The port of Gladstone's proximity to the Gladstone port, the availability of large areas of land with easy access to deepwater berths and port channel infrastructure at very competitive prices make it highly attractive to boat-building and maintenance industries. The Bundaberg region has traditionally provided a strong manufacturing and trade based labour force, and the development of the marine industry in Bundaberg would be a good fit. The development of the marine industry could also facilitate the development of a naval presence in Bundaberg.

The port of Bundaberg has been the most popular first port of call for international yachts for almost a decade. It offers safe and easy access by sea to first-class marina and boat harbour facilities, beautiful river and ocean outlooks and a pristine marine environment on the doorstep of the Great Barrier Reef and Fraser Island. These are some of the reasons the port of Bundaberg's plans for a future marina and commercial, tourist and residential development are likely to attract significant investment and employment opportunities to the region. In 2009 the port of Bundaberg became part of the Gladstone Ports Corporation Ltd, and it is looking to maximise its operations as a port.

The people of the Burnett and Bundaberg are looking forward to the continued expansion and expanded opportunities with the new board of the Gladstone Ports Corporation Ltd and its chair. I reiterate to the board that the Bundaberg port is now open and ready for business. We have the room, we have the location and we are the first deepwater port north of Brisbane.