




Speech By
Hon. Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Queensland Economy

 **Hon. TJ NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade) (9.42 am): Growing the Queensland economy and supporting businesses so they can create jobs has been a key focus of this LNP government. We have focused on developing the four pillars of our economy: agriculture, tourism, construction and resources. We have also cut red and green tape to make it easier for businesses to invest and grow in our great state. But we do know that we need to do more and this government has a strong plan to securely fund the future and develop job-creating infrastructure. Our Strong Choices plan will allow us to pay down debt by \$25 billion and put \$8.6 billion into building the infrastructure our growing state is going to need. We are also putting \$3.4 billion into a cost-of-living relief fund.

Treasury modelling shows that the measures we are proposing could support up to 33,600 new jobs over the period from 2015-16 through to 2027-28. According to Treasury modelling, our \$8.6 billion series of infrastructure investment funds would generate up to 25,000 full-time jobs. Importantly, our proposed cost-of-living relief fund would support a further 8,600 jobs. The modelling by the independent officers of Queensland Treasury and Trade finds that implementing our Strong Choices plan would lead to an additional \$8.1 billion in gross state product in the period to 2027-28. In other words, additional expenditure as a result of our plan would be equivalent to a once-off 0.4 percentage point contribution to economic growth.

Our Strong Choices plan delivers for Queenslanders wherever they live. So I was absolutely astounded to hear on the radio this morning that, given the opportunity, the crossbenchers in this parliament, led by the member for Mount Isa, intend to vote against the plan. Apparently they are going to vote against \$1.5 billion for rural and regional roads, \$1 billion for future schools, \$700 million for rural and regional economic development, \$300 million for community hospitals and \$500 million for dealing with natural disasters. That is what the Independents in this place want to deny people in rural and regional Queensland. How will the member for Mount Isa explain to the family of two adults and two children in his electorate that he wants to cost them \$860 by voting against electricity price relief? How will these members defend a position that will constrain economic development and keep jobs away from their electorates? And when it comes to paying down the \$80 billion debt that we have, what is their plan? What do they say they are going to do? Let me tell members. The member for Mount Isa enlightened us on ABC Radio this morning that, just like the Labor party, they have no plan.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: Just like the member for Mulgrave, the shadow Treasurer, who says he has no plan—except perhaps his secret plan to increase taxes—the member for Mount Isa’s plan, as he told ABC 612 Brisbane this morning, is ‘the bottom line will sort itself out’.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr NICHOLLS: As Steve Austin said, 'Well, that's not much of a plan.' I pity the household finances of the member for Mount Isa because the only way he personally gets an outcome out of this is because the bottom line will sort itself out. The future of Queensland, the future of rural and regional Queensland, the future of the students who will need the new schools we will be building, the future of those people who are ageing and will need the hospitals that we are providing, the future of businesses throughout the state who will need the infrastructure that we will be providing is too important to be left to a cacophony of no plans from the Labor Party and someone who thinks that the bottom line will sort itself out.

The only government that has a strong plan to pay down debt, invest in infrastructure and provide cost-of-living relief is this government—a strong united government with a strong plan for a bright future.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr Knuth interjected.

Madam SPEAKER: Order, members! I warn the member for Dalrymple under standing order 253A. I have the call.