



Speech By  
**Hon. Curtis Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Queensland Economy**

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (9.54 am): Queensland housing investor finance commitments remain at a near record high, according to new data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. For the three months to August 2015, investor finance commitments for the purchase of existing dwellings totalled \$4.6 billion. Investor finance commitments for the construction of new dwellings totalled \$675 million in the August quarter of 2015, roughly double the same period last year. The property sector is a real bright spot in the Queensland economy, and it is making a very positive contribution to jobs and growth.

Construction commitments in Queensland have generally improved since early 2014 following a period of weakness from mid-2008. Last week the latest quarterly ANZ-Property Council survey showed that confidence in Queensland's property sector has risen two points. With Brisbane's rental yields more attractive than those in Sydney and Melbourne, particularly for units, Queensland's property market may become more attractive for future investors. Low interest rates are expected to continue to support investor activity in Queensland's housing market.

Data out this week also shows that our liquefied natural gas exporters have shipped more than \$1.4 billion worth of LNG in the first eight months of operations this year—so much so that LNG exports contributed to a 15.7 per cent increase in the nominal value of Queensland's overseas merchandise exports in the August quarter compared with the same period last year.

The LNG sector is a brand-new export industry that was conceived and developed under a Labor government. LNG exports are expected to surpass \$13 billion by 2016-17 to become Queensland's second largest resource export after coal. Exports should ramp up further over the next year as all six LNG plants from three projects become fully operational.

The LNG industry is not our only bright spot, with other sectors of the economy also driving Queensland's export growth. Beef exports increased by 33.4 per cent in the 12 months to the August quarter. There was also a 9.7 per cent increase in coal exports. Queensland's crop exports also grew by \$315 million, with grain sorghum exports over 900 per cent higher than the previous year being a particularly good result.

Amidst a transition in the resources sector from a capital investment and construction phase to a production phase, we need to ensure that we continue to further diversify our economy in order to grow. With rising merchandise exports and a rebounding tourism sector, Queensland has all the right ingredients for growth. There has never been a better time to holiday or do business in Queensland, and we should be very confident about our long-term economic prospects.

I saw firsthand last week at the DestinationQ forum in Townsville that there is a positive mood when it comes to our future tourism opportunities, which are certainly helped by recent movements in the Australian dollar. We are open for business, and we are also open for the holidays.