




Speech By  
**Jennifer Howard**

**MEMBER FOR IPSWICH**

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**BUILDING QUEENSLAND BILL**

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (8.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the Building Queensland Bill 2015. We all know the importance of infrastructure building to the state of Queensland. Building infrastructure gets our state moving, keeps our state moving and provides much needed jobs for workers throughout Queensland. Every year major projects such as the Commonwealth Games venue construction provide valuable jobs and training opportunities and provide facilities for use in our communities.

In the Ipswich region we have seen significant growth over the past few years. In the March 2015 quarter residential development approvals were at an all-time high of over 14,700, which is 500 more than the same time in 2014. I welcome this increased development in the city of Ipswich.

As I said before, increased development and infrastructure building brings jobs, training and skilling opportunities to our communities. As well, major projects bring resources we can all enjoy into the future. For these reasons I commend the government for honouring its election commitment to establish Building Queensland, an independent statutory body to oversee all major projects in this state. Just as you cannot lead without a vision, you cannot build infrastructure without a plan. This bill shows that the Palaszczuk government has a vision and a plan for ensuring grade A infrastructure is built in Queensland long into the future.

Let us look at the track record of the previous LNP government. In its first year in power it reduced infrastructure spending by more than \$1.2 billion. In its second year it reduced spending by a further \$1.4 billion. That is a total reduction of \$2.6 billion taken from the Queensland economy, \$2.6 billion ripped from projects that keep our state moving, \$2.6 billion ripped from projects which provide jobs and skills for our young people. Think of the jobs, the training and the opportunities which were lost by the lack of vision from the previous government. In contrast, the establishment of Building Queensland will assist this government and its agencies by providing independent expert advice on infrastructure proposals and projects. The advice will come from experts within the important fields of infrastructure, major projects, finance, public private partnership building, urban planning and design, engineering and construction, economics, transport and logistics. It will not be a simple tick-and-flick exercise. For the first time Queensland will have an independent, unbiased and robust way to review and approve significant building projects.

The Palaszczuk government recognises that governments do not have all the answers when it comes to infrastructure, so Building Queensland will assist the private sector and the government to solve the infrastructure problems of the future. Yesterday the minister released the Draft State Infrastructure Plan for consultation. This plan sets a clear vision for future infrastructure planning. It will help this government to identify key priorities and opportunities for infrastructure and ensure that every five years we review where we are up to and what priorities need adjusting.

As the member for Ipswich, one of the fastest growing urban communities in Queensland, I commend this government for taking such a positive and innovative stand on infrastructure development in our state. If the fundamental driver for infrastructure building is population growth, then we would expect that demand for future infrastructure is likely to be greater in areas where growth is expected to be highest, like in Ipswich. Building Queensland will provide transparency and bring integrity back to infrastructure building. It will enable government agencies, local government authorities and major project developers a clear and open path to government. It will regularly publish its deliberations and decisions on its website.

All Queenslanders from the cape to Currumbin deserve to see infrastructure projects that not only are appropriately prioritised, transparent and cost-effective but more importantly deliver benefits to their local community. I am proud to support this bill.