




Speech By
Julieanne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 17 July 2015

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (11.05 pm): I have great pleasure today in rising to speak on the Palaszczuk Labor government's first budget. I would like to congratulate the Treasurer on a first-class budget; a budget for all Queenslanders; a budget for jobs and economic development. As a born and bred Mackay local, it has been difficult to watch my beautiful once-thriving hometown struggle under the weight of the LNP's ignorance and neglect over the last three years. But today, thanks to the Palaszczuk government's budget, confidence in our community can be restored.

Mackay's industrial sector has the opportunity to expand and diversify. Vital services that support the wellbeing of people who live in our community will be sustainably improved. Together these initiatives form a strong foundation on which to build a great city—the kind of future Mackay people deserve. Thanks to the foresight and innovation of the Queensland government, Mackay can look forward to this new vision of the future with a sense of genuine optimism.

As a port city, Mackay is the gateway to domestic and international markets. Many do not know this, but the port of Mackay does not rely on coal as a commodity. In fact, no coal passes through the port of Mackay at all. Our port's trade comprises sugar, sugar products, grain, meat products, ethanol, metal and bulk cargo. Our imports include bulk fertiliser, concrete, fuel, iron concentrates, machinery and general cargo.

The Palaszczuk government has committed \$2 million in the 2016 budget to begin the \$10.5 million project to expand the port of Mackay's break bulk cargo facilities, and they have also funded the planning and the building of the Vines Creek bridge. This provides a critical lifeline for Mackay's struggling economy. For the last three years we have seen nothing done about the Vines Creek bridge. The member for Whitsunday claimed that bridge planning was 70 per cent finished. I invite him to bring his plans along to parliament next time, because I would like to see them. When speaking to Main Roads they did not have any plans. I would love to have his plans; I can pass them on for him. Over the last three years the member for Whitsunday also failed to seal nine kilometres of road to Seaforth. That is a shame.

These improvements that the Palaszczuk government has brought to Mackay open up an opportunity for existing businesses to improve productivity through the higher mass levels of heavy vehicles travelling to and from the port and improved supply chains of efficiencies, improving the flow from Paget Industrial Estate servicing the Bowen Basin coalmines. This project will also attract new investment to Mackay. Put simply, the Palaszczuk government's investment in these priority projects means jobs, jobs, jobs for Mackay.

A government member: Love jobs!

Mrs GILBERT: Love jobs, yes. There is \$6.7 million towards the Mackay substation rebuild, and an additional \$662,000 for the Mackay Gas Turbine rehabilitation will ensure we have power to support our region's homes, businesses and industries. These projects will also generate much needed jobs for Mackay locals.

\$40 million over four years to Grow and Promote Events for Queensland will benefit the Mackay-Whitsunday tourism industry. Tourism operators in the Whitsunday and also in Mackay have told me how excited they are that they now have a government that is taking tourism seriously. For three years they had their budget severely cut.

The member for Whitsunday is so keen on supporting the Whitsundays that, as was reported recently in the Mackay *Daily Mercury*, he has asked to have his electorate office shifted from Proserpine in the Whitsundays to Mackay. I have here an article from the Mackay *Daily Mercury* of 24 June. The article states—

However, Neil Laurie, Clerk of the Parliament, confirmed it was Mr Costigan who had made the request for a relocation from Proserpine.

The member for Whitsunday, by taking his office out of Proserpine, which he said had a high unemployment rate, will be taking jobs out of the Whitsundays. He might need to think about it. He has some friends here. The article continues—

Former local LNP chairman and long-time Whitsunday resident Tony Large, has his doubts.

"It's an injustice," he said. "If the office ends up in Mackay then you've got a three-hour drive to the Burdekin office, which is the next one—it doesn't make sense."

I table the article.

Tabled paper: Article from the *Daily Mercury* online, dated 24 June 2015, titled 'Costigan wants to move electorate office to Mackay' [\[835\]](#).

Our young people will benefit from the government's investment in education. Local schools are set to receive 10 full-time-equivalent teachers. Schools will engage curriculum coordination teachers and will have more teacher release time and more specialist teachers in secondary schools. This injection into our schools will help our schools by letting teachers teach. Pioneer State High School and Mackay State High School have also been allocated full-time-equivalent guidance officers. Labor also recognises that educational opportunities need to start in the early years of children's lives. That is why there is \$164,000 to complete refurbishment at the Birralelee Child Care Centre. These initiatives have potential to change lives. By giving young people the best possible chance to learn in a supportive environment, we are not only improving the lives and chances of individuals; we are improving the future of their community.

The Palaszczuk government supports young people. I am sure the parents of the junior Rugby League in Proserpine will be surprised to hear tonight that the member for Whitsunday claimed that he took the State of Origin team to Proserpine—after all the work they did to get the team there!

The Palaszczuk government's budget stands out as exceptionally positive in many important ways for our community, but I am sure I speak for all of my community in applauding particularly loudly the \$756,000 investment in Mackay domestic violence services. In our community, we take care of our most vulnerable members. In our community, we will work to ensure that everyone feels safe and secure in their own homes. In our community, we will make sure that everyone knows they have a right to live free of violence and fear. In our community, no-one gets left behind. I acknowledge with particular appreciation the commitment the government has made in this budget to address the issue of domestic violence.

The Palaszczuk government has delivered a budget that will help Mackay to go from strength to strength. On behalf of the Mackay community I thank the Premier, the Treasurer and all of the ministers for supporting my region to recover, reinvigorate and reach its full potential. I have always been proud of my home town and I am prouder still to be working with a government that has a strong vision for the future of our region.