



Speech By  
**Scott Stewart**

**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 4 June 2015

**MOTION: ABBOTT GOVERNMENT, INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING**



**Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (12.54 pm): I move the following amendment—

That the amendment be amended by deleting the words ‘and calls on’ in the amendment and inserting before the remaining words in the amendment the following words—

‘Notes the position put by both sides of politics including recently from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, that the Abbott government should allow Queensland access to the \$5 billion Commonwealth Infrastructure fund without the requirement to sell assets—with Queensland’s fair share on a population basis being \$1 billion;

Calls on the Abbott government to make available infrastructure funding to Queensland without the requirement to sell assets.

And calls on the Abbott government to release information and criteria that would allow’

**Mr STEVENS:** I rise to a point of order. Mr Speaker, the amendment to the amendment is clearly the same issue that you and the Clerk of the Parliament are currently debating in relation to the claims in the motion about the comments of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. It is a false amendment and should not be allowed.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Thank you, member for Mermaid Beach. One moment and I will consider the matter with the Clerk. Honourable members, considering the time, I propose that the House will resume at 2.30 pm and I will come back with a ruling on this matter.



**Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (2.34 pm), continuing: Mr Speaker, I thank you for the time that you took to amend the amendment. It sounded like *Who’s on first, What’s on second and I Don’t Know’s on third.*

I rise to speak on the motion before the House as amended and supported by the Palaszczuk government. A decentralised state like Queensland needs infrastructure. The recently released infrastructure audit produced by Infrastructure Australia demonstrates the challenges faced by Queensland and other states over the next 15 years when it comes to delivering infrastructure that will help grow the economy.

Queensland’s population is expected to grow by almost two million people, or 44 per cent, to 6.45 million people in 2031. Regional Queensland will continue to grow as well. More than three million people will live outside South-East Queensland by 2031. In 2011 the direct economic contribution made by Queensland’s infrastructure was \$19 billion, which represents 19 per cent of the national figure. We all know that the regions and cities like Townsville help drive economic activity, and that is why it is important that governments have a statewide plan for infrastructure.

The LNP did not have any infrastructure plan. 2011 was the last year that Queensland had a state infrastructure plan. For a state this size, whose infrastructure needs are great that is a tragedy, but it is not uncommon for conservative governments not to have a real plan for infrastructure. We

hear a lot about how the federal government wants to develop Northern Australia, but they have not put any real cash on the table; only scarce detail about concessional loan schemes. We all want to see growth and development in the north, but without real support instead of talk from the Commonwealth it will not happen.

Sadly, the recent federal budget did not include any major funds for major infrastructure in Queensland. It is a bit like the Brisbane Line is being reintroduced yet again. The Commonwealth is now trying to hold Queensland to ransom by demanding that we sell assets in order to access the Commonwealth's \$5 billion Commonwealth Infrastructure Fund. Queenslanders have already made their views on asset sales known. They have spoken loudly at two elections in a row and said that they do not support asset sales. This position could not be simpler or clearer. Even the state LNP seems to have finally woken up and realised that Queenslanders do not want their assets sold. Why is the Commonwealth holding out and trying to force asset sales on Queensland? Queensland needs its fair share of Commonwealth infrastructure funding to build the roads, rail and other projects that we need to drive economic activity and jobs growth.

I am proud to be part of a government that will deliver on infrastructure for this state. We have promised \$100 million for the stadium in Townsville. That is a project that the Commonwealth can get behind and show us their support. When this government was in opposition it had a very clear vision, and before the election was announced we stated that we would fund the stadium to the tune of \$100 million over four years. The reason for this was simple: we could see that this stadium project would create jobs; encourage development and investment opportunities; restore confidence back into the city; and more importantly, it would kick-start the economy in a city that is dying. We made the announcement before the former LNP government could commit to this. How were they going to do that? It was simple: the port of Townsville—up for sale; the rail line—up for sale; Ergon—up for sale. How are we going to deliver? We are going to deliver without selling assets.

Now we are working to develop a new infrastructure plan for the state. The state infrastructure plan will provide a coordinated and integrated approach to infrastructure planning, prioritisation, funding and delivery. Queensland's statewide infrastructure priorities will provide a pipeline of projects and programs in the short and medium-to-long term that industry can plan around. The Palaszczuk government is continuing to take up the fight to the Commonwealth so that we can get our fair share, and I call on those opposite to do the same.