



Speech By


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MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Achievements

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (12.20 pm): What a difference 19 months makes in this great state of Queensland. It has been 19 months since the Palaszczuk Labor government was elected. While members are talking about rail, I want to talk about the \$4.4 billion contract that was let overseas by the members opposite. Shame! That \$4.4 billion contract was let overseas to Bombardier. If we look at the *Courier-Mail* today, we see some of the problems coming from those trains, the contracts which—I will say it again—the Newman government let go overseas. That drove the wonderful, brilliant city of Maryborough to its knees. For those opposite who did not quite hear it, a \$4.4 billion contract went offshore by those opposite.

I refer to jobs now and jobs for the future. I refer to the infrastructure and the jobs that are being created from the tip of Cape York down through the regional areas. The Skilling Queenslanders for Work program comes to mind very quickly. It was a great program under the Bligh Labor government and it was viciously cut. The LNP took to it with a chainsaw. A few weeks ago, I met with some of the young people and older people who came through the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program. It was great to see them getting upskilled and ready for the jobs that are coming through.

I look at my own area and the jobs that are being created. I notice today in the *Fraser Coast Chronicle* that 570 houses were built from July to September. That is a record number and shows the confidence that people have in this Palaszczuk Labor government throughout Queensland. Areas on the Fraser Coast that have been dormant for three or four years have come back to life because of the policies of this government in regional Queensland. As I said, the Skilling Queenslanders for Work program is a great policy that is training people and getting them back into work.

I am very passionate about the Back to Work scheme. It is a regional employment package delivered by the Palaszczuk Labor government with funding of \$100 million. It is giving businesses the confidence to employ people. I have been talking to business operators in my electorate and also around Queensland as I have been travelling. They are right behind this scheme. The scheme offers business operators \$10,000 to employ a person who has been unemployed for under 12 months and \$15,000 to employ a person who has been employed for more than 12 months. I have seen in my own electorate and also in neighbouring electorates in the Wide Bay area where businesspeople have been taking up this initiative. It reflects the confidence that this government is instilling in regional Queensland.

Those opposite talk about the great three years of the Newman era. In that time, all I saw in my area were cuts, cuts, cuts. You know when a government is going well when you get pulled up by a truck driver who complains to you about the roadworks in your electorate. He said, 'Saunders, can you cut it out? It's putting extra time on my trip. Give us a break.' As a government, you know you are doing

well when you are putting in infrastructure. In the three years of the former government, in my electorate I never saw one bit of roadwork construction going on. You know the government is going well when subcontractors pull you up to tell you that they are getting contracts and that they are very happy with the way that this government is going. Compared to the three years of the previous government, this government is a breath of fresh air.

Ms Jones interjected.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the Minister for Education. Another prime example of the jobs created and the infrastructure that has occurred is the record school maintenance in the Maryborough electorate over the past three school holidays. That maintenance creates jobs. For three years, all that mob over there talked about was austerity, austerity, austerity. All they did was cut. They cut jobs everywhere. I can say that, in regional Queensland, the feeling for the Palaszczuk Labor government is fantastic. This government is delivering jobs now and jobs for the future. I am so proud to be part of this government.