




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Budget

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships and Minister for Sport) (2.16 pm): Yesterday I was very pleased to deliver the Palaszczuk government's second budget. I refer to the positive feedback from stakeholders and industry groups. We know that this budget is well received by stakeholders right across the community. Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland has applauded budget measures to increased Advance Queensland funding, describing it as a win for small business and start-ups. The CCIQ is clearly supportive of the boost to investment in Advance Queensland from \$180 million to \$405 million. I quote from their release which states—

The additional \$225 million allocated in the budget is a significant and positive step towards transitioning Queensland's economy post the resources boom. The government's commitment to ensuring innovation remains a key priority for Queensland and will see us keep pace with our competitors and boost productivity.

The resources sector has also backed in the budget. The Queensland Resources Council has welcomed our recommitment to a review of financial assurance. They also welcome the additional resources for the Land Court in this budget and our commitment to maintain the dialogue with QRC on some modest reform proposals. I quote further from the Queensland Resources Council release—

The Treasurer is to be congratulated for agreeing to partner with the QRC on our Jails to Jobs proposal. The budget provides \$1.3 million for a pilot program to transition 30 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander offenders from prison into employment in the resources sector. This program will be a feature of the renewed Memorandum of Understanding between the QRC and the Queensland government.

Mark Henley from the Queensland Council of Social Service says there are some good things in the state budget. He says the decision about transport concessions for jobseekers and asylum seekers is good news. He went on to indicate that there is funding for financial counsellors, encouraging financial resilience. Rail advocacy group Rail Back on Track was very pleased with the Fairer Fares policy. Rail Back on Track states—

They've done it! Cheaper fares across all zones. Significant savings for shorter trips; children five to 14 years travel free weekends; concession fares for unemployed; extended morning off-peak time.

We see this as a massive improvement to the current fare structure, with room for further improvement once the next generation ticketing system is implemented.

They go on to talk about the European train control system—

'It is very welcome to note the investment in an automatic train protection ATPETCSL2 signalling system for suburban rail in the 2016-17 Queensland state budget. We have long advocated for this. It is an essential upgrade, will allow a higher frequency of trains during the peak and will link with Cross River Rail.

The RACQ said—

Good to see overall roads investment increase to \$20 billion over four years—regions and South-East Queensland to benefit.

AgForce has welcomed drought support measures and mobile phone black spots funding in addition to new stamp duty exemption for intergenerational transfers of farm businesses. It went on to say—

More than 84 per cent of Queensland is still in the grip of drought, so it's important that governments at all levels continue to support farming families doing it tough.

The Rural Debt and Drought Taskforce, which included an AgForce representative, highlighted the financial and emotional challenges confronting farming families, so it is good to see some budget measures that go towards addressing those challenges. There are plenty more endorsements which time will not permit me to get to but to which I draw the opposition's attention. Those opposite have never been in touch with the community, so it is no surprise that they are not happy with the budget.