




Speech By
Deb Frecklington

MEMBER FOR NANANGO

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Queensland Economy

 **Mrs FRECKLINGTON** (Nanango—LNP) (Deputy Leader of the Opposition) (11.53 am): It is with great honour that I rise here today as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I congratulate the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Clayfield. I also take this opportunity to reflect on my reasons for putting my name forward for the shadow portfolio areas of infrastructure, state development, trade and investment.

In my role as the shadow minister for agriculture, fisheries and forestry I have been privileged to travel extensively across Queensland. Queenslanders are by nature positive and hardworking people, but their optimism is being dragged down by a Labor government with no vision for building Queensland. I was lucky to grow up at a time when Queensland had started its transition to becoming Australia's economic powerhouse. There was investment and there were opportunities, jobs and growth—not just in Brisbane but also in regional areas of Queensland such as Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton, Bundaberg and Maryborough. They were economic hubs. Queensland assumed the mantle as a low-tax state, and people were streaming across the border to set up home here in our great state. Fast-forward to today, and Queensland's population growth is lagging behind the national average and we are falling further and further behind states such as New South Wales and Victoria.

We have a government that was elected without a plan for transitioning Queensland's economy and building the infrastructure that our state needs. This is a government that is big on rhetoric, but it is yet to deliver for Queensland. The State Infrastructure Plan is a case in point. We waited for more than a year for this much talked about plan, only to learn on its release that the majority of the projects had already been outlined in the 2015-16 state budget. Worse than that, a lot of the projects had already been named in the budgets prior to that. In other words, there was absolutely nothing new.

The 2015-16 state budget brags of a Capital Works Program of about \$10 billion this year but fails to admit that infrastructure spending has been slashed. Regional centres Townsville, Mackay and Cairns have been particularly hard hit by these Palaszczuk government cuts. The Mid Year Fiscal and Economic Review confirmed a \$3.6 billion cut to capital purchases over the next four years. The LNP's flagship Royalties for Regions program has been replaced by a shorter, smaller and narrower program. All this government can do when asked about infrastructure failings is say, 'Ask Canberra.'

The people of Queensland deserve a better plan for building our state than cuts and hoping for handouts. They deserve a government that understands Queensland—all of Queensland, not just the south-east—and really understands the needs of rural and regional Queensland and what needs to be done to fulfil our great potential. They deserve a government that recognises the contribution businesses in the regions make to driving Queensland's economy, creating thousands of jobs and

generating the income that pumps through those communities. As a passionate advocate for the regions, I look forward to working with the opposition leader to ensure a greater recognition for Queensland's regions to get the regional economy buzzing again.

Queenslanders deserve a government that understands just how vital trade is to our state's economy, in creating jobs and supporting Queensland businesses to innovate and succeed on the world stage. As shadow trade and investment minister, I will work to showcase Queensland's world-class resources, agriculture, tourism and education and training industries. I will work to develop plans and policies to ensure we restore Queensland's reputation as an attractive investment destination and a place for getting things done.

I know that there is a lot of hard work ahead in my new role, but I am excited about the opportunity to work with all of my colleagues as a part of this enthusiastic, energetic and experienced LNP team to hold this Labor government to account and to outline positive plans to get Queensland moving so that we can once again become the economic powerhouse of Australia.