




Speech By
Julieanne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 15 March 2016

MOTION: CARMICHAEL MINE

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (6.16 pm): I rise to speak in support of the motion. This project is critical to the future of my electorate, both economically and environmentally. That is why I am so proud to be a member of the Labor Palaszczuk government that approaches issues by listening to all of the points of view, considering all of the information and making a balanced decision.

Mining and the service industry associated with mining supports direct employment of 8,000 full-time workers in Mackay and the Mackay region and a further 44,400 full-time workers indirectly associated with the resource industry. Many families in my region are associated with the mining industry. My son, Ian, drives a road header in one of our local underground mines.

The resource industry represents 36 per cent of the region's gross regional product. In fact, last October the QRC Chief Executive, Michael Roche, described my region of greater Mackay as the world's leading province for the production and export of high-quality coking coal so essential for the world's steel production. The resource sector also supports many businesses and charities and contributes to the liveability of the region. Australian coal is in demand because it is low in ash and in sulphur. It is a clean-burning coal that is better than that produced by many of the other coal-producing countries.

It is no secret that my electorate has been hard hit by the current slump in commodity prices as have many of the regional centres in Queensland. As a service centre for the Bowen Basin, our region's economy has flourished on the back of the resources boom. Mackay's Paget engineering precinct boasts one of the highest concentration of patents per capita. It is, indeed, the Silicon Valley of the mining industry. At the same time we also have a thriving tourism industry creating jobs and development on the back of our natural environment and the iconic Great Barrier Reef.

Under the Labor Palaszczuk government we are growing the economy, supporting our regional communities and protecting our environment. The people of Queensland responded to our election commitments on the reef, Adani and this Carmichael project. We are meeting these commitments. We have prevented the dumping of capital dredge spoil on the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area. We have prevented the dumping of dredge material on the nationally significant Caley Valley wetlands. This decision was welcomed by the community of Mackay. There will be no taxpayer funding for capital dredge and the disposal of dredge spoil. We have legislation that prevents the at-sea disposal of capital dredge material from ports in the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage area and stops the development of ports in the World Heritage area. We have restored objection rights, and at the same time we are also listening to the people of North Queensland who are calling for jobs and economic development.

The Minister for State Development has been to Abbot Point and has met the stakeholders, including the Juru people, who want jobs and a bright future for their young people. He has been to Mackay and has seen what \$2 million plus in Building Our Regions funding means for Mackay. I know

that, like me and the rest of the cabinet, he wants to see regional Queensland and communities strong and sustainable. That is why I am entirely confident that he will be progressing this properly and with due care and careful consideration to ensure that it is done properly.

The Labor Palaszczuk government is following a thorough, methodical process, consulting with all stakeholders. This approach has proven to be effective. We can have industry and a sustainable environment, safeguarding our endangered flora and fauna. This is in contrast to the federal member for Dawson, who never lets the facts get in the way of a photo op or a Facebook rant. So far Mr Christensen has opposed legitimate third-party objection rights and blamed the state government for delays in this process. It is pretty rich when his own Canberra colleague the Minister for the Environment, Greg Hunt—

(Time expired)