




Speech By
Julieanne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2016

ADJOURNMENT

Mackay Electorate

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (5.16 pm): As a former teacher I would like to wish all the teacher aides happy Teacher Aides Day tomorrow. Without them schools would be much worse off. I would also like to pay my condolences to the family and friends of miner Ian Hansen, who lost his life at the Newlands coalmine earlier this week. His death has saddened our community. Many of us from Central Queensland have family and friends in the mining industry, and it sends a reminder to us all that workplace health and safety regulations must be held up on all worksites. What we need to do is bring our loved ones home safe and sound after every shift.

I would like to congratulate the Premier and the Minister for Tourism for their recent Connecting to Asia forum in Cairns. My electorate of Mackay and surrounding regions have great potential to develop a thriving tourism industry based on the natural beauty of our surroundings. Mackay is surrounded by many pristine beaches, Mackay Marina, the Eungella Rainforest, the Pioneer Valley in the member for Mirani's electorate, Cape Hillsborough, the net-free zone where you can dip in a line and catch a fish and we have lots of farmstay experiences. These are just a few of our local experiences. The greater Mackay region has a lot to offer to our tourists, both local and international. When the tourist industry talks about hero experiences, in our region you can ride on the flying fox at Finch Hatton, scuba dive with a platypus and pat kangaroos at Cape Hillsborough on the beach after catching a fish and taking a hike through the beautiful bushland. We have first-class restaurants, cafes and accommodation and conference facilities. We have it all!

Next week the member for Mirani and I will be holding a tourism forum to share with tourist industry operators and emerging operators opportunities that can be tapped into with the emergence of the Asian tourism industry in Queensland. I want my region to tap into the potential of the additional 30,000 jobs and the \$6.8 billion of visitor expenditure expected by 2025. Asian travellers are changing their travel preferences from large organised tours to more independent small groups of friends and family. The new type of Asian travellers are pursuing unique and exotic destinations. They are experienced travellers and are seeking high-quality experiences with a cultural component. Independent traveller numbers have already risen by one million in the past decade. The member for Mirani and I want to see our electorates take advantage of tourism industry opportunities.

(Time expired)