




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Rockhampton, Community Cabinet

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.30 pm): The Palaszczuk government is committed to governing for all Queenslanders, and the Premier bringing her cabinet to Rockhampton to hold a cabinet meeting in January is yet another demonstration of the government's commitment to listen and deliver for communities across the state. The cabinet meeting and opportunities for the local community to meet with ministers reinforced the importance of our region to the state's economic performance.

While Premier Palaszczuk and all of her ministers were in Rockhampton and on the Capricorn Coast I arranged to have some fruit platters delivered to each member to showcase some of our best and freshest local produce. The Premier and ministers enjoyed local mangoes, lychees, bananas, passionfruit, marmalade and water. Many thanks to Capricorn Fruit Supplies for their help arranging the awesome platters!

On Sunday afternoon I took the environment minister to the Koorana Crocodile Farm to announce new crocodile management areas for the Fitzroy; Mount Archer to announce a \$450,000 investment to connect the walking trails on the mountain; and a meeting with Jo, Flavia and Rolf from Plastic Bag Free Livingstone about the Palaszczuk government's plans to introduce a plastic bag ban in Queensland.

On Monday morning the education minister and I officially opened \$2.8 million worth of lovely and much needed new classrooms at Emu Park State School. Following the opening of the new classrooms I attended a Skilling Queenslanders for Work graduation ceremony for 25 trainees who successfully completed a Certificate I in Conservation and Land Management. On Monday afternoon I had the great pleasure of introducing Minister Fentiman to Patrice Brown and Virginia Nelson, our two amazing homegrown Telstra Business Women's Awards winners. I also took the health minister to the North Rockhampton Nursing Home following my calls for the Palaszczuk government to invest in much needed air conditioning and maintenance upgrades to the centre. That evening the Premier and her ministers held a community reception at the Archer Park Rail Museum with over 100 local community organisations, businesspeople and community leaders.

On Tuesday morning at the Rockhampton Hockey Association the Treasurer announced an increase to the Get Started vouchers program which was followed by the announcement of the Palaszczuk government's \$200 million expansion of the Capricornia Correctional Centre. This expansion will deliver over 100 jobs to the Central Queensland region during construction and more than 70 ongoing jobs after it is commissioned, not to mention the indirect jobs it will generate in the region to keep the prison running, including food and other service providers. During their visit the Premier, Deputy Premier and Treasurer also met with Rockhampton Regional Council and Livingstone Shire Council about growing jobs and our local economy.

Tuesday afternoon involved an afternoon tea with local RSLs, ladies' auxiliaries and service organisations prior to the Premier's town hall meeting. The Rockhampton Leagues Club was packed out with hundreds of local people for the town hall meeting, where the Premier spoke about growing jobs in our region and took questions from local people.

The following morning the Premier, Deputy Premier and I inspected the cyclone recovery works on the Scenic Highway at Statue Bay in Yeppoon into which the Palaszczuk government is investing millions of dollars to improve the road's resilience to natural disasters in the future. On Wednesday the Capricornia Chamber of Commerce kindly hosted a lunch at the Keppel Bay Sailing Club where the Premier spoke about the Palaszczuk government's jobs agenda for Keppel. Over 120 local businesspeople attended the sellout lunch with the Premier. The Premier and I then met with Debbie and Christine of Icesup, a local ice support network group, about how we can combat ice in our community, followed by a tour of Wilsons Farm Fresh Fruit and Vegetables at Nankin. Daryl Wilson's family business was devastated after Cyclone Marcia in 2015. It was wonderful to see the Wilson family farm and to hear about their success in growing hydroponic lettuce, which is supplied to Coles and Woolworths in Central and North Queensland.

On Wednesday evening hundreds of local people joined me at the Lakes Creek Hotel to rally against the federal government's compulsory acquisition of land at Marlborough. It was an honour and a privilege to also have the Premier, Treasurer, Minister Byrne and the member for Mirani standing side by side with workers, graziers, unions and local people who were concerned about the federal LNP's compulsory acquisition plans. That evening we sent the LNP Turnbull government a strong message that the Central Queensland community does not support the compulsory acquisition of land at Marlborough. Thank you to Pip Rea, Danni McKenzie and all of the Marlborough crew who travelled to be at the rally, Matt Journeaux from the Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union, the AMWU and the ETU for their support. Delivering for all Queenslanders in consultation with all Queenslanders is the hallmark of the Palaszczuk government.

Premier, on behalf of the Central Queensland community I thank you and your cabinet for governing from Rockhampton and the Capricorn Coast. It was an honour and a privilege to have you in our beautiful region talking about growing jobs, our local economy and encouraging investment and innovation.