




Speech By
Brittany Lauga

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

Record of Proceedings, 8 August 2017

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:
INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (4.03 pm): It was very clear at the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee estimates hearing that the LNP's Royalties for the Regions program was a complete and utter failure. On every measure the LNP's Royalties for the Regions program pales in comparison with the Palaszczuk government's strong Building our Regions program, which is delivering jobs and improving the lives of regional Queenslanders. Our program is ensuring that the royalties which are generated in Central Queensland are being reinvested into critical infrastructure and job-generating projects in our great region.

At the estimates committee hearing the LNP conveniently forgot about the Auditor-General's scathing report into their Royalties for the Regions program. The Auditor-General's report found that the LNP's Royalties for the Regions program did not represent value for money. The Auditor-General said that the LNP's program did not always sufficiently assess the eligibility and merits of all applications, nor did it consistently assess the costs and benefits of the projects. The Auditor-General found that the member for Callide, the former minister for state development, funded council projects that did not align with his own program's guidelines. The Auditor-General found that council projects which met the guidelines missed out on critical funding. Projects which were not even assessed by the department were funded. Value for money was not considered. Councils including the Rockhampton Regional Council, which submitted applications for good, value for money, meritorious projects, wasted their time submitting applications which were entirely ignored. The Auditor-General said that many councils unnecessarily invested their time, resources and money to demonstrate the value of their applications against criteria that were apparently irrelevant—irrelevant according to the LNP, but actually compliant with the criteria of their very own program.

Last time the LNP was in power in addition to sacking 14,000 public servants their Royalties for the Regions program was an absolute failure. Regional Queensland was absolutely ignored. Central Queensland was absolutely ignored. The LNP's Royalties for the Regions program splashed cash in LNP electorates. They splashed cash in South-East Queensland despite it being a regional Queensland program.

Honourable members interjected.

Mrs LAUGA: They splashed cash and wasted money—how many projects were funded in Rockhampton Regional Council? Zero! How many projects were funded in the electorate of the member for Callide? Three—three airports in fact. The LNP splashed cash and wasted money on projects which were not even considered good value for taxpayers' money. They splashed cash on projects for which an application was not even submitted—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Elmes): Order! Those on my left and my right, we will hear the member for Keppel.

Mrs LAUGA: The LNP splashed cash on projects for which an application was not even submitted. How many airports in the electorate of the member for Callide were upgraded? Not one, not two, but three airports in the electorate of Callide were funded by the program. How many projects were funded in Rockhampton Regional Council? Absolutely none! The LNP completely ignored Rockhampton and if they have the chance, they will do it again.

The Palaszczuk government is investing in our regions. Our \$375 million Building our Regions program is delivering critical infrastructure in regional Queensland. Almost 1,300 jobs will be generated with 93 projects across the state in the first two rounds. The Palaszczuk government has committed \$375 million in program funding for Building our Regions. The LNP's Royalties for the Regions program was \$174 million. To date, we have leveraged investments of \$350 million compared to the LNP's \$171 million. Our total capital expenditure is \$580 million compared to the LNP's \$346 million. For every dollar we have invested with our Building our Regions program we have leveraged \$1.56. For every dollar the LNP spent, they got 99 cents back. That is 1,762 jobs versus the LNP's 1,054 and 174 projects versus the LNP's 79.

The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting local jobs and delivering the critical infrastructure that improves liveability for our communities in Keppel and across Central Queensland. These include sewerage and wastewater, economic development, tourism and recreation facilities, and upgrades to transport infrastructure.