




Speech By
Hon. Curtis Pitt

MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Council on Federal Financial Relations

 **Hon. CW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Treasurer and Minister for Trade and Investment) (9.47 am): Tomorrow I will attend the Council on Federal Financial Relations meeting in Canberra with the federal Treasurer and treasurers from states and territories around Australia. This meeting provides all treasurers with the perfect opportunity to work together and collaborate on innovative policy and service delivery solutions to improve the lives of everyday hardworking Australians. Following the Western Australia election, I had the honour of officially expelling Ben Wyatt from the 'Labor shadow treasurers' association of Australia', and I look forward to welcoming him to his first meeting. He is the first Indigenous Treasurer in Australia.

Since our election in January 2015 we have driven policy reforms to ensure the Queensland economy successfully transitions to a post mining boom economy. We are working closely with the business community to stimulate investment and growth and to generate jobs right across our state. Our economic plan is working to deliver those outcomes but we know challenges remain. Front and centre for us is job creation, with a special focus on tackling youth unemployment and unemployment generally in regional Queensland. We have rolled out a suite of initiatives including Back to Work, the Youth Boost, and the Jobs and Regional Growth Fund.

We know that more work is needed and that is why we want the Turnbull government to work with us on real incentives to step up and take a role in stimulating economic growth and employment. We know that facilitating infrastructure is essential to support long-term employment opportunities. That is why we need the Commonwealth to move forward on the Northern Australia Infrastructure Facility, NAIF.

NAIF aims to tap the potential for developing the north of our state as well as the rest of Northern Australia in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Everyone wants to see NAIF start moving and see dollars flowing out the door so we can have expanded industries, new exports and new jobs. We also expect the federal government and our Queensland based federal MPs to back Queensland in and ensure we get our fair share of funding. It is these sorts of issues that we need to be discussing in Canberra tomorrow.

We welcome a conversation on housing affordability where all potential measures must be considered. This includes tax treatment—negative gearing and the capital gains tax discount. The Palaszczuk government has been honouring its commitments to restore front-line services to ensure they are delivered across our vast state. The quality and sustainability of these services is determined partly by the adequacy and reliability of federal funding and the ability of our state and others to allocate federal funds where they are most needed and most effective. Future planning and delivery could be improved through the provision of certainty around future funding arrangements, including the renewal of several national partnership agreements expiring in 2017 and 2018. These are issues we need to address and I look forward to the usual vigorous discussion in Canberra tomorrow.

I look forward to more than talk though—we really do need real decisions and real results for Queenslanders. The Palaszczuk government will continue to focus on job creation, continue to work with business and continue to grow our economy, but we need a federal government that is committed to coming to the table and supporting economic and employment growth in Queensland.

Another key issue for Queensland and the states is the need for the federal government to review the restrictions it places on superyachts entering Australian waters. This is a sector with a lot of potential for Queensland tourism and jobs, but federal restrictions and cost impositions are holding it back. The superyacht industry has a significant presence in North Queensland, supporting thousands of jobs in the Cairns and Whitsunday regions. These federal chartering restrictions are impeding growth in the industry, sending the economic and employment benefits to other countries in the Asia-Pacific region instead of to Queenslanders. We look forward to this meeting being not a talkfest but something where we get real outcomes.