



Speech By  
**Glenn Butcher**


**MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE**

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**MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Central Queensland, Infrastructure**

 **Mr BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (12.40 pm): I rise to speak about how the Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering infrastructure in Central Queensland because we know it means jobs for regions. That is why in this year's budget we have committed more than \$1.25 billion of infrastructure investment in Central Queensland alone, supporting more than 4,000 jobs, particularly in my area.

As Assistant Minister for Transport and Infrastructure I see the effect of this vital funding to communities in Central Queensland. The impact of this government's funding is being felt right across the region. Particularly Mackay—I note the member for Mackay is present in the chamber—is benefiting from a number of important projects in the area. Replacement of the fire station in Mackay, at a cost of \$7.5 million, will support 20 jobs in that local area. A Mackay adult step-up step-down facility worth \$4 million will support 10 jobs, thanks to the Minister for Health. We also understand the importance of investing in tourism, with Mackay receiving a brand-new visitor information centre going forward.

This government is also investing in education, particularly in the Mackay and Mirani areas—Mackay State High School, Finch Hatton State School, Pioneer State High School and Dysart State School, just to name a few. All of these schools will receive upgrades to classrooms, air conditioning, pools and important refurbishments. This vital infrastructure will make our schools better environments for the children of Mackay to learn and will continue to support jobs in the local community.

In my own electorate of Gladstone this government has delivered a number of upgrades to our highways. We secured funding of \$40 million for the Department of Transport and Main Roads to replace five timber bridges—on the Dawson Highway at Catfish Creek, Nine Mile Creek, Sheep Station Creek, Maxwellton Creek and Doubtful Creek. This vital infrastructure upgrade is just the thing agricultural businesses in the area need to get their product to the Gladstone port.

The upgrade of a number of schools in my electorate has been included in the Accelerated Works Program. These include Clinton, Kin Kora and Tannum Sands. I have been to all of those schools and I can say that they are extremely grateful for these wonderful infrastructure upgrades. This government has also committed \$40 million to the revitalisation of the riverfront in Rockhampton and the Yeppoon foreshore. I note the presence in the chamber of the member for Keppel.

Just last week the Deputy Premier and I announced the fantastic Works for Queensland program, valued at \$200 million, which will deliver much needed funding to local councils to kick-start job-creating programs in their communities. It was great to be in Bundaberg with the member for Bundaberg and the Mayor, Jack Dempsey, who said that the Bundaberg Municipal Band was playing because the money that was announced is absolutely fantastic.

Local councils in regional Queensland have made it clear that this program is a perfect opportunity for them to upgrade facilities, fix roads and at the same time employ local workers. The member for Nanango says that the state government is doing nothing for regional Queensland, but I

suggest that she asks her local mayors in regional Queensland what they think. I have talked to every single one of them out in the regions and I can say that they are most impressed with the Palaszczuk government delivering this funding to regional Queensland local governments so they can get on with the much needed work that is being delivered in local communities right now. This program has been rolled out within four weeks. Money is going straight to councils for them to get into the work and advance the programs they cannot deliver out of their local budgets.

In Mackay, \$11.49 million has been allocated to the Mackay Regional Council to deliver 36 projects, supporting 176 jobs in Mackay. Gladstone Regional Council has had \$6 million awarded to it. I know that the Mayor of Gladstone, a good mate of mine, Mr Burnett, is more than happy. Some \$3½ million goes into a new facility in Lions Park to provide for people with disabilities. Other approved projects include at Tom Jeffrey park at Agnes Water. The member for Burnett will be most impressed about that. There will be a new car park at Agnes Water beach, which we in our area all use, to make that a better place.

The Works for Queensland program is delivering for regional Queensland. As I said, the mayors and the people of these communities are more than impressed with what the Palaszczuk government is doing. The Deputy Premier of Queensland is getting this money out to these councils. The program is not part funded; it is fully funded. The councils are spending the money as we speak and creating jobs in regional Queensland right now.