




Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**

**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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**MOTION: ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (6.18 pm): It gives me great pleasure to stand tonight to contribute to the debate—

**Honourable members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** The member for Mackay does not have as loud a voice as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**An opposition member** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** No, she does not so we will need to be quiet please. I ask the member for Mackay to start again.

**Mrs GILBERT:** It gives me great pleasure to stand tonight to contribute to the debate on road infrastructure funding. Regardless of the spin, the smokescreens and everything else that has been put forward by those opposite, the facts are very clear. Yesterday's budget shows that the Palaszczuk government is delivering a record spend on road and transport infrastructure for a second year in a row. The Queensland Transport and Roads Investment Program, QTRIP, for 2017-18 to 2020-21 outlines close to \$21 billion of infrastructure investment over four years. This investment will also support nearly 17,000 direct jobs over the lifetime of this four-year program.

In the 2017 financial year alone, \$4.32 billion will be invested to continue the great work across our state and ensure that we have the infrastructure to address the needs of our growing state. That is already delivering results right across the state. In my wider region of Mackay-Whitsunday, our record investment has seen \$210 million allocated towards road infrastructure in 2017-18. Over the four-year life of QTRIP, \$1.31 billion worth of works are planned for the Mackay-Whitsunday region. That investment means that an average of 148 direct jobs will be supported in the Mackay-Whitsunday district throughout the life of QTRIP. That is great for my region. The budget clearly shows the commitment of the Palaszczuk government to delivering key infrastructure and creating jobs for the people of Queensland.

What will this mean for my region? In 2017-18, my region will receive \$36.4 million to align the Peak Downs Highway at Eton Range. That is part of a total \$189.2 million, supporting 295 great jobs for locals. There is also \$13.1 million to replace the existing Sandy Gully bridge at the Bruce Highway and \$6.8 million to replace the two bridges at Vines Creek, which is part of a total cost of \$28 million, supporting 42 jobs. Of course, one of the most significant projects in the history of my region is the Mackay Ring Road. This year there is \$70 million in continued funding for the ring-road, which will have a total cost of \$497 million. The Mackay Ring Road will also deliver a section of the Walkerston Bypass, a road neglected by those opposite for many years, and \$150 million has been allocated for the construction of the remainder of that vital piece of infrastructure. Apart from the obvious infrastructure benefits of the ring-road that the project will deliver, it will also support around 600 jobs. It is a tremendous economic and employment boost for my region. The key benefits from stage 1 of the project will reduce congestion on the network as traffic is transferred to the ring-road. It will reduce traffic

demands on Nebo Road. It will reduce travelling time, avoiding 10 signalised intersections from Stockroute Road to Bald Hills. There will be 80- to 100-kilometre-per-hour speed limits compared to the 60 kilometre-per-hour speed limits on the urban roads. The project will improve flood problems associated with the Pioneer River and Fursden Creek.

When those opposite were in government, they had a plan for the Vines Creek bridges. Instead of rebuilding them, those two-lane bridges were each reduced to one lane. The speed on the bridges was reduced from 60 kilometres per hour to 40 kilometres per hour. The mass weight of heavy vehicles was also reduced. A crane business on the north side had to relocate because the cranes could not travel across the bridges. Sugar trucks hauling sugar from our local mills had to cut their loads by one-third to cross the bridges. Fuel carriers for local cars, industries and the Bowen Basin coalfields were all expected to use those substandard bridges. It is only the Labor government—

*(Time expired)*