




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL:
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (7.48 pm): On behalf of the Mackay community, I would like to send our sincere condolences to the family and friends of Daniel Springer, who tragically died as a result of a workplace accident at the Goonyella Riverside mine. Our thoughts and prayers are especially with his wife, Carmela, and his infant son, Wolf.

The Agriculture and Environment Committee examined the budget estimates for 2017-18 and wrote report No. 38. The committee's areas of responsibility are Agriculture and Fisheries; Rural Economic Development; Environment and Heritage Protection; and National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef. The committee recommended that the bill—

Mr Butcher: It's a great committee.

Mrs GILBERT: It is a great committee. The committee recommended that the Appropriation Bill 2017 for the committee's area of responsibility be agreed to by the Legislative Assembly without amendment.

My electorate of Mackay is surrounded by agriculture and fishing, both recreational and professional. The agricultural sector knows that it needs to diversify and take opportunities to modernise to be competitive in world markets. The food producers of Queensland are looking at ways to value-add to their cropping land and produce high-quality and high-yielding produce while protecting their valuable land. The sugar industry leaders know that, to sell sugar on the world market, buyers will be searching for products that are grown using environmentally and socially sustainable practices. Producers in all agricultural areas are keen to expand their markets. Strategies to achieve this include: increased information flow on export market requirements, additional investment in research to support new market access and more efficient and profitable supply chain systems.

The DAF has commenced market access research to provide complete datasets for the development of new or improved market access protocols for apple, avocado, strawberry, citrus, mango, table grapes and many vegetable products. The DAF is also working to make sure that our research meets all international standards for market access by participating in technical working groups.

The DAF budget supports the agricultural industry to keep moving forward as world leaders of best practice and innovation on the land: by implementing the *Agriculture and Food Research, Development and Extension: 10-Year Roadmap* and action plan, which aligns with the Advance Queensland agenda and drives innovation in Queensland's agricultural industries; by implementing the technology commercialisation fund, which is aimed at attracting private sector capital into agriculture and food research and development undertaken by government and government research partners and increasing the commercial success of the department's and its research partners' intellectual property; and by continuing to support agricultural industries in reef catchments to improve Great Barrier Reef

water quality outcomes by ensuring coordinated on-ground support services, including extension capacity building and collaboration, and specialised extension services such as economic analysis support the industry-led best practice programs.

Our agriculture and fishing industries must be vigilant to guard against attack by introduced diseases and pests. The industries will be supported by implementing the Queensland biosecurity capability program, including releasing the five-year biosecurity strategy and action plan that embeds shared decision-making and outlines roles and responsibilities of all key stakeholders within the biosecurity system.

I am pleased that the minister was able to report that our net-free zones are doing well. Our local fishermen are saying that there are more fish and larger fish in those areas and that the dolphins have started to come back. We also have a lot more bird life. This has been a great achievement. I would like to thank the minister for his great work in achieving this for our local area.