




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2017

MOTION

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Infrastructure

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (5.31 pm): It is interesting that those opposite want to come in here and lecture us about infrastructure. They must have a pretty short memory. Let me remind them of what infrastructure the LNP government delivered for us in North Queensland. Let me just check.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr STEWART: There we have it! What did the LNP deliver for us in North Queensland? Absolutely nothing! They made a lot of promises, had a lot of pie-in-the-sky ideas, but the only way they could come up with funding them was through asset sales. What were they going to sell in Townsville? They were going to sell the Port of Townsville, the best commercial port in Australia.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Members, if it continues this way I might invite the member to start his speech again.

Mr STEWART: Those promises were made through asset sells. They were going to sell the Port of Townsville. It has been awarded the best commercial port in Australia two years in a row. They were going to sell Ergon, the backbone of North Queensland. What else were they going to sell? They were going to sell the rail line from Mount Isa to Townsville. They were going to sell these assets to fund their big infrastructure spend. If they think they have a leg to stand on about infrastructure I would encourage them to look out the window. In three years the only major project that they could come up with was 1 William Street—the billion dollar office block with no business case in the middle of the Brisbane CBD. There is no respect for the regions.

On the other hand, the Palaszczuk government is actually delivering projects in North Queensland, with more than \$2.4 billion in infrastructure allocated in North Queensland in the 2016-17 state budget. We have boots on the ground that are getting on with the job. We are delivering projects across the broad spectrum of roads, water, innovation, tourism and, of course, the jewel in the crown, the new stadium. You name it, we are delivering it.

We responded to difficult economic conditions in regional Queensland by fast-tracking projects in regions such as Cairns, Townsville and Wide Bay through the \$440 million Accelerated Works Program. Through the Priority Economic Works and Productivity Program we are delivering on our promises to upgrade Riverway Drive connecting the Upper Ross with employment, education and service hubs across Townsville. That is all we ever heard from the member for Thuringowa. With the \$180 million Significant Regional Infrastructure Projects Program Townsville is the big winner. There is \$6.5 million to upgrade the Townsville Hospital paediatric ward. It was great to have the minister come up to announce that. There is \$8.5 million to build the Palm Island primary healthcare centre; over \$8 million for social housing in Condon and Kirwan; over \$1.4 million for upgrades to the Kirwan State High School; and who could ever forget Wilsonton State School. Who delivered that? Labor!

Most recently we have begun rolling out our new Works for Queensland program. This \$200 million program is supporting thousands of jobs across regional councils. Regional councils love us for it. Almost \$120 million of this money is out the door and in the hands of councils with work started, making a direct difference to those communities today. In Townsville, council has reported that 47 of its 51 Works for Queensland projects have already commenced. Townsville mayor Jenny Hill wrote thanking the Palaszczuk government for investing \$21.8 million in funding for the Works for Queensland program in a region that has been doing it tough.

We have also joined with the federal government and Townsville City Council to deliver Australia's first City Deal. We will focus on improving the lives of Townsville residents through job creation, economic growth, investment in local infrastructure, a revitalisation of urban centres and a more vibrant and livable city. Projects like the Townsville Airport Apron Safety Plan are delivering jobs and new economic development opportunities for all of North Queensland. We are committed to working with local council to deliver the new \$28 million bus hub and promenade in the CBD. Queenslanders know that we need infrastructure; they know it is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that will deliver it.