



Speech By  
**Aaron Harper**


**MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA**

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Record of Proceedings, 2 May 2018

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **Port of Townsville**

 **Mr HARPER** (Thuringowa—ALP) (7.27 pm): With just a week to go before the federal budget is handed down, I want to ensure that North Queensland's voice is heard loudly in regard to the federal funding required for our port expansion in Townsville. We know that the expansion cannot go ahead unless the federal government matches the \$75 million that our proud state government has put up for the dredging and widening of the Port of Townsville.

Our Townsville port is North Queensland's major port. We are home to the largest port in northern Australia. Our proud Labor government knows the importance of the \$14 billion the port adds to the state's economy and its importance to Townsville's history in that Townsville was built on the back of the port in 1863. There is a \$1.64 billion port expansion plan to grow and develop our port, and our proud Townsville community holds dear the fact that we held the port in government hands when the LNP and Newman had plans to sell off the lot.

Why then is the federal government not matching our state funding to grow and develop our port? It is because the state LNP and Malcolm Turnbull have gone cold on Townsville. One has to ask the question: is it because we have a Labor elected federal member? We hope not. Townsville has no time for silly political games. It is time for the state LNP and Malcolm Turnbull to stump up, get behind us and back Townsville. I do not want to see another Townsville stadium debacle where the Prime Minister came in at the eleventh hour and 59th minute, dragged kicking and screaming to co-fund the North Queensland Stadium.

On water security we have done it again, with \$225 million in funding for the 36-kilometre pipeline to make sure that Townsville has water security for its future development. We also know that this trunk infrastructure is going to attract major industry. As for the federal government, cue the crickets. As for the state LNP, cue the crickets. I can walk around Riverway or down The Strand with a picture of Senator Ian Macdonald and ask: who is this man and what has he done for Townsville? What about the lone LNP member for North Queensland, the member for Burdekin, Dale Last? We have not heard a sound, not a peep—silence.

They are supposed to stand up and back us on the Townsville City Deal; we have heard nothing. Bill Shorten is listening. He has committed \$100 million to stage 2 of the water pipeline; there has been nothing from the federal government. I received \$36 million as part of our election commitments to start stage 5 of the Townsville Ring Road; there has been nothing from the federal government. That is a major infrastructure project to deliver real jobs in North Queensland, in our city of Townsville. I say to the federal members: do something. I say to the state LNP members: find some intestinal fortitude to pick up the phone and tell the federal government that they need to back us on the Townsville City Deal and get funding for key infrastructure and jobs in Townsville.