



Speech By  
**Brittany Lauga**


**MEMBER FOR KEPPEL**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 May 2018

**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Distribution of GST**

 **Mrs LAUGA** (Keppel—ALP) (2.31 pm): I will always fight for Keppel because I am passionate about growing jobs in our local economy. I am proud that the Palaszczuk government has delivered the strongest jobs growth in the country over the past year and we want that to continue. However, while that success is under attack by the LNP's proposed changes to the GST, the Queensland LNP and the member for Capricornia, Michelle Landry, have said absolutely nothing on the issue. Right now, GST is distributed to ensure all Australians have access to high-quality services regardless of where they live. Under the changes, regional Queenslanders will be at a disadvantage. We will not stand for it.

A \$1.5 billion cut every year to Queensland will have devastating—devastating—impacts on regional Queensland. It would be like losing 5,000 teachers, 5,000 nurses, 3,000 police officers and 1,135 firefighters across the state. That would be an enormous loss by anyone's standards. It is about the same amount of damage inflicted on Queensland by Campbell Newman's government. I will let Malcolm Turnbull know this for free: if he wants to have a shot in the next federal election, he wants to stay as far away from Campbell Newman as possible. Regional Queensland's health services and schools would be the hardest hit if Malcolm Turnbull's and Michelle Landry's proposed changes to the GST distribution go ahead. Our regional and rural communities deserve access to high-quality healthcare services and a good education. That is exactly what the Palaszczuk government is fighting for.

Central Queenslanders must tell Malcolm Turnbull and Michelle Landry that their GST reform plan is completely unacceptable. It is clear that if it is allowed to happen Central Queensland will pay the heaviest price. The proposed reforms utterly fail to appropriately recognise just how vast and decentralised Queensland is, our large Indigenous population, the high costs of service delivery and the frequency of natural disasters. Indeed, Queensland is the only state in Australia where more than 50 per cent of the population lives outside the capital.

The proposed changes will have an unacceptable and unreasonable impact on services such as schools and hospitals right across the state, including in my electorate of Keppel. Does the so-called party of the bush not realise that to provide public hospital services to acute patients in very remote parts of Queensland costs around 40 per cent more than to provide it in Brisbane or that building hospitals in rural and remote areas, such as Cape York and the Torres Strait, can cost double that of building similar infrastructure in metropolitan areas?

We know that Senator Pauline Hanson supports the \$1.5 billion cut to Queensland. One would think that every senator of this state would stand up for Queensland no matter what, but no. It is unbelievable that One Nation would have the gall to come to Queensland for the Productivity Commission hearing and say that \$1.5 billion should be taken from Queenslanders every year. That is money that we could spend on roads, hospitals and schools. Simply taking billions of dollars from Queensland and giving it to other states is not tax reform; quite simply, it is ripping off Queenslanders.

The Queensland LNP is missing in action on this critical issue. Queensland is facing a cut of \$1.5 billion and there is nothing but silence from those opposite and nothing but silence from our federal member for Capricornia, Michelle Landry. Where does Michelle Landry stand on this? Will she stand up to stop Malcolm Turnbull's cuts to the Queensland economy?

With the LNP's silence on this issue, the member for Nanango has demonstrated that she cannot be trusted to stand up for Queensland, instead choosing to toe the party line to protect her mates in Canberra. The LNP could not even be bothered putting in a submission or appearing at the Productivity Commission hearing. We may disagree with Western Australia's stance, but at least its Liberal opposition put in a submission advocating against the Turnbull government. In fact, the opposition in Western Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory all appeared or put in submissions to the Productivity Commission inquiry. It is clear that under the member for Nanango it is the same old LNP. She sold out Queenslanders when she voted to sack 14,000 workers and she is selling out Queenslanders now on Turnbull's \$1.5 billion GST cut.

We need Central Queenslanders to tell the LNP that they are sick of being ripped off by Canberra. They are sick of being ripped off by Malcolm Turnbull and Michelle Landry.