



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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**PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS**

**Mackay Electorate, Infrastructure**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.34 pm): With the Commonwealth Games only 13 days away it would appear that all roads lead to the Gold Coast, but not quite all. The Palaszczuk government is constructing and improving vital infrastructure in my electorate and surrounding regions. These road networks were ignored by the former Newman government. My region is the heartland of mining services and the agricultural industry. I am pleased that it is a Labor state government that is coming to the rescue of the small community of Walkerston. The Peak Downs Highway passes through its main street with freight and machinery destined for the Bowen Basin and beyond.

The Palaszczuk government, jointly with the federal government, has committed to the construction of the \$150 million Walkerston bypass to continue on from the Mackay Ring Road stage 1. Detailed planning is underway and TMR has started negotiations with landholders who will be affected by the bypass road. Every 24 hours the new road will take out of Walkerston, on average, 4.5 million litres of fuel, including avgas, petrol, diesel, explosives, chemicals and large quantities of LPG and waste oil. Daily, on average, there are 228 B-doubles, 217 semitrailers and 691 body trucks, plus over 30 coaches. That is a lot of traffic for a very small town. The bypass will not only make the community of Walkerston safer, it will also increase economic activity and create 200 jobs during its construction. That is 200 families in jobs.

Having an efficient supply chain from pick to port, from port to mill and from farm to port is of vital economic importance to the Mackay region and hinterland. That is why the Palaszczuk government has committed to millions of dollars of road and bridge upgrades in my region. Many of these construction projects should have started under the former Newman government. I am pleased to report to the House the completion of four wooden bridge replacement projects on the Peak Downs Highway between Eton and Nebo. The Fiery, Boundary, Lonely and Cut Creek bridges are open and fully operational. These bridges will improve connectivity and safety, in particular in bad weather. The project supported 114 jobs in the region during construction. I congratulate Pat Aprile and his team from TMR for their high quality of work and their professionalism in managing this large project. It is the Palaszczuk government that is providing roads in the region.