




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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ADJOURNMENT

Federal Budget

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (7.15 pm): Like the member for Jordan, I too eagerly anticipated the federal budget last Tuesday. Unfortunately I did not have the popcorn or beverage accompanying me. It was touted as the infrastructure spend for Australians. Boy, I was looking forward to that, considering it was Townsville where the first city deal was signed which aligned the federal, state and local governments to the one strategic direction.

It has been the Palaszczuk government that has been doing the heavy lifting when it comes to infrastructure investment in Townsville. There is \$225 million for Townsville's water solution; \$140 million for the Townsville stadium due to open for the 2020 NRL season—go the Cowboys!—and \$75 million for the Port of Townsville to widen the channel to allow larger ships into the port. Despite the urgency of widening the channel to allow those larger ships into the port, the federal government still continues to refuse to co-contribute to this essential project.

When Scott Morrison in his budget speech stands up and says he will stop the boats, that is exactly what he has done in Townsville. Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats on 800,000 people who rely on the Port of Townsville to supply their goods? Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats on more than 8,000 jobs that are linked to the Port of Townsville? Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats on canefarmers from being able to get their sugar to market from the Port of Townsville? Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats on graziers who export their livestock overseas from the Port of Townsville? Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats and prevent the cruise ships filled with tourists from coming to Townsville and spending their money in our local, small mum-and-dad businesses? Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats on the largest commercial port in Northern Australia that contributes more than \$480 million annually into the economy? Why is it that the LNP Turnbull government wants to stop the boats and drive up the cost of living for hardworking mums and dads?

I said on the day after the federal budget that Malcolm Turnbull's budget was a disgrace for North Queenslanders and that is exactly what it is. It is time for those opposite to decide whether they support North Queenslanders or whether they stand by Malcolm Turnbull and stop the boats from entering the Port of Townsville and strangle the economic growth in regional Queensland.