




Speech By
Stephen Bennett

MEMBER FOR BURNETT

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PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Bundaberg-Burnett Region

 **Mr BENNETT** (Burnett—LNP) (2.48 pm): I have always believed that the Bundaberg Coral Coast and the wider Burnett region is the jewel in the crown of our great state. From our ideal position as the gateway to the southern Great Barrier Reef, our unique and world-class turtle encounters, award-winning rum, beautiful beaches, unrivalled climate and impressive Hinkler Hall of Aviation—a terrific tribute to Bert Hinkler—nothing beats the Bundaberg-Burnett region.

I am delighted that my region now has the recognition to prove it. Six of Bundaberg's iconic tourism hotspots have been voted among the state's top 100 bucket list experiences by Experience Oz's annual Queensland Bucket List, including our southern Great Barrier Reef sitting at the No. 1 spot. It is no secret that I am proud of the region and what it has to offer. I hold a particularly soft spot for the iconic Lady Elliot Island and Lady Musgrave Island and the one-of-a-kind ecotourism experiences they provide.

Lady Elliot and Lady Musgrave islands offer tourists the opportunity to swim with majestic manta rays, turtles and over 1,200 other species of marine life. Over the years I have made a habit of taking international guests and media over to the islands so they can experience our little slice of paradise and spread the word. We again congratulate the team at Lady Elliot Island for their recent success at the Australian Tourism Awards.

No one who visits our famous Mon Repos turtle rookery will forget the magic of the nesting sea turtles, the hatchlings or the important marine conservation message they will take away. This latest recognition from Experience Oz can only help us build on the more than 70,000 people we welcome to the region every year, providing an economic boost that the community deserves. I cannot mention the Bundaberg region's impressive track record for delivering world-class experiences without acknowledging those who work tirelessly behind the scenes.

Our region is fortunate to have a number of highly capable, influential people working within our peak tourism bodies to cement our position as a desirable destination. I congratulate Katherine Reid, general manager of Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism, and her dedicated team who continue to ensure our region thrives. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend Duncan Littler, senior brand manager of Bundaberg Rum and chair of Bundaberg North Burnett Tourism. Under Duncan's guidance, the Bundaberg brand has been splashed around the world, helping to attract international and national visitors to the region.

A visit to the region would not be complete without experiencing historic Childers and Mammino Gourmet Ice Cream. Further north, Baffle Creek, Agnes Water, 1770 and surrounds add another dimension to what is great in tourism in the region. My message today to all considering their next holiday destination is that there is good reason that visitors continue to flock to our region. Make sure you put the Bundaberg Coral Coast and greater Burnett region on your bucket list. You will not be disappointed.