




Speech By
Cynthia Lui

MEMBER FOR COOK

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mossman Sugar Mill

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (2.30 pm): I rise to share some great news about the Palaszczyk government's support package of \$25 million to Far Northern Milling Pty Ltd. This package will assist in the establishment of an innovative biorefinery that will underpin a sustainable future for the Mossman Sugar Mill. It is with great pleasure that I stand here to share this wonderful story from my electorate. I personally thank the Premier and Minister Cameron Dick for their valued support in achieving this wonderful outcome. I am extremely proud to represent a government that showed great compassion in not only saving an industry but also taking the initiative and believing in its future potential to produce bioproducts and contribute to the state economy through the diversification of the agricultural sector.

I am particularly passionate about this issue because I know how challenging it is for locals to secure long-term employment. In 2018 it was brought to my attention that the Mossman Sugar Mill was at risk of closing its doors for good. The Mossman Sugar Mill is one of the main industries in the Douglas Shire and it supports local jobs, businesses and services in the region. The industry is at the core of Mossman and surrounding communities. It is an industry that has supported local economic growth and development through many generations. From talking to locals, I realised that this was more than just an industry; it was an intricate thread keeping the community fabric together.

The Cook electorate is a vast electorate. Everywhere I travel, locals in communities tell me they want jobs. In any one of my communities in the Cook electorate, to support local jobs the challenge is the obvious lack of industries in the region. The opportunity to help save as opposed to help build an industry was my No. 1 priority.

The uncertainty surrounding the future of the Mossman Sugar Mill had a huge effect on community confidence and everywhere in the Douglas Shire that I went locals wanted reassurance. It was inspiring to see a strong collaborative effort between all relevant parties from the community and local and state governments who all had one goal in mind: to achieve a positive outcome. I acknowledge the following people and stakeholders: Douglas Shire Mayor Julia Leu, who initially brought the issue to my attention and who has lobbied the state government; the Chair of the Tableland Canegrowers Association, Maryann Salvetti, for her efforts through this process—I saw her go from strength to strength; and the Canegrowers Association for not giving up on an industry worth saving.

While I have been securing funding for a long-term future for Mossman, we have seen Warren Entsch walk away from his commitment to the people of Mossman. After he so diligently stood in front of the cameras beating his chest to announce the federal government commitment of \$20 million, Warren Entsch is now missing in action. The member for Leichhardt said that his commitment was conditional on state funding, but when I delivered the funding we committed he has changed the goalposts and is missing in action.

It is quite disappointing that the member for Leichhardt is suddenly silent on the issue and is not saying a word about the \$20 million he was so eager to announce. I challenge Warren Entsch and his mates in Canberra to take responsibility and commit the \$20 million they promised to the Mossman Sugar Mill. Unlike the federal government, the Palaszczuk government kept its promise to the Mossman community because we are about getting the job done. I am no longer interested in words from the LNP government or Warren Entsch. I do not believe their words. I just want to see them deliver on the support they promised.