




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Resources Industry, Jobs

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.47 pm): I rise to speak about more opportunities for employment in Central Queensland. The Central Queensland region is the centre of Queensland's coalmining industry. The Queensland Palaszczuk government understands the value of the mining sector to the Queensland economy and the livelihoods of families associated with mining. Since first being elected, the Palaszczuk government has approved over \$20 billion in mining projects not only in relation to coal but also in relation to minerals such as bauxite, nickel, zinc, cobalt and gas.

My government supports the resources sector and the resources companies have confidence in Queensland. That over \$20 billion investment in projects is supporting over 8,000 jobs. In the gas sector alone, there is the Surat Gas Project, worth \$10 billion, with 1,000 jobs; the Charlie Fields gas project, worth \$1.7 billion, with 16,000 jobs; the Northern Gas Pipeline, worth \$800 million, with 431 jobs; the Goog-a-binge gas project, worth \$500 million, with 350 jobs; the Arcadia field gas project, worth \$400 million; the Atlas gas field project, worth \$140 million; the Roma East gas expansion, worth \$750 billion, with 400 jobs; and the Daandine-Tipton gas expansion, worth \$800 million.

As a government, we understand the value of jobs in the mining sector. That is why we have committed \$3.6 million to design and construct the state-of-the-art Mackay mining centre of excellence to boost jobs. We want to drive research and innovation in the mining sector. The centre will provide safe and accelerated training for those who want a career in the mining sector. The resource industry pays more than \$1 billion in wages and employs more than 8,600 full-time employees in the wider Mackay region. The Palaszczuk government is getting on with the job of cleaning up the unemployment mess that was left by the LNP in its short time in government.

Recently I had the great pleasure of standing with Todd Harrington from Whitehaven Coal, a company that is currently mining in New South Wales. We announced to the Central Queensland community a \$1 billion metallurgical coal mining project in Central Queensland's Bowen Basin coming a step closer to starting construction after being declared a coordinated project by Queensland's independent Coordinator-General.

The proposed Winchester South facility is 20 kilometres south of Townsville. It will create an estimated 950 jobs. Mr Harrington is intending to employ locals from our regional towns. This is great and exciting news for places like Moranbah, Dysart and Coppabella. It will provide more opportunities for mining service centres like Mackay, Rockhampton and Townsville. The project's construction will support 500 jobs over two years, with 450 full-time jobs to be sustained once the mine is operational. This has the potential to be a huge win for our economy and will create security for so many locals and their families.

Since January 2015 the Palaszczuk government has created almost 185,000 jobs in Queensland. In January 2015 the unemployment rate in the Mackay region was hovering around nine per cent. Now it is around 3.7 per cent. Central Queensland's resource sector is strong and it is

here to stay. This announcement shows that investors have confidence in our region. The direct jobs that will be created by the Winchester South project are significant and will have a positive effect on industry supply chains that will deliver a vital economic boost to our regional communities. It is the Palaszczuk government that legislated against 100 per cent fly-in fly-out for our workforce, giving our regional families the opportunity to have a choice about where they want to live and work.