




Speech By
Hon. Mark Furner

MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE

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ADJOURNMENT

Regional Queensland, Support

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries) (7.16 pm): Last week I had the pleasure of visiting South-West Queensland. Like west of Townsville they are in drought. It was an opportunity to see firsthand how, despite the terrible drought, local communities are striving to innovate and create jobs. Flying into Thargomindah, it was wonderful to see the town's new airport terminal building that was built with help from the Palaszczuk government's Building our Regions program. The Building our Regions program has also delivered fantastic infrastructure projects in Quilpie like the Bulloo Park redevelopment and stage 2 of the Eromanga Natural History Museum.

Another way this government is helping communities in our regions is through the Regional Economic Development grant scheme. To date 15 businesses have been awarded grants of up to \$250,000 to help fund their expansion and create jobs in their region. We are creating over 600 new jobs for regional Queensland. Thirteen of those jobs will be created in the Balonne shire. The Brodie family will be building a new feedlot and spelling yard on their sheep property near St George. All councils expressed an interest in the RED program and are considering applying for round 2 of the scheme which closes this Friday. Councils wished to pass on their thanks to Mr Hinchliffe, but also the Palaszczuk government, for the Works for Queensland grants funding program.

The Palaszczuk government has also committed \$19.74 million towards the construction of cluster fences across the state, including in the Quilpie shire.

Ms Grace: It revolutionised the wool industry.

Mr FURNER: Absolutely. I take that interjection. Mayor Stuart McKenzie complimented the fencing program giving local sheep producers security and confidence that they can go about producing some of the finest meat and wool in the country. I visited Anthony Glasson's sheep property near Thargomindah. With the help of a low-interest loan through QRIDA Anthony has been able to erect cluster fencing on his property and the results are amazing.

Another way we can help our friends in the outback is to pick up the kids, pack up the car and head out there. 2019 is the Year of Outback Tourism. There is so much to see and do in outback Queensland. The scenery is stunning, the people are friendly, and they have fantastic attractions like the Cosmos Centre and Observatory in Charleville. I encourage everyone to head out west and experience outback Queensland. I know they would love to see us out there.