




Speech By
Barry O'Rourke

MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON

Record of Proceedings, 10 September 2020

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mr O'ROURKE** (Rockhampton—ALP) (11.58 am): I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation Bill 2020. When it comes to Central Queensland I could talk about some of the key initiatives like the \$90 million for jobs and skills training or the \$267 million for the Building Boost or the \$500 million in electricity and water bill relief, but I would like to provide a couple of practical examples of our government's plan and the economic recovery that is happening in my electorate.

The Palaszczuk government announced in May this year that we will invest \$35 million to upgrade the Lawrie Street bottleneck in Gracemere, with this project supporting 56 local jobs. The fixing of Lawrie Street has been a priority for me and my community. This announcement means that we will be able to duplicate the road, upgrade the bridge, overhaul the existing intersections and upgrade the crossing, which I am sure school parents will be pleased about.

I am proud that we have been able to come up with a solution to the congestion. At the time we also released the concept vision for the region's \$1 billion ring-road project, supporting more than 800 jobs. The upgrade joins a record \$23 billion, 21,500 job pipeline of transport and road upgrades across Queensland as the state continues its COVID-19 recovery plan.

In and around Rockhampton there is currently more than \$1 billion in investment in roads and transport. For example, there is \$158 million for the Rockhampton Northern Access Upgrade and \$75 million for the Capricorn Highway duplication, supporting local businesses and more than 1,000 jobs. This investment into Central Queensland is a vote of confidence in our community and will play a crucial role in supporting jobs into the future.

Last week I had the pleasure of meeting Paul Hubburd and his wife, Fiona, from a local Rockhampton company, Cirrus Ag. Cirrus Ag is investing almost \$2.5 million to introduce automated manufacturing production techniques to enhance the quality of its products and reduce Queensland's reliance on interstate resources. The herbicide manufacturer was awarded \$914,000 from round 3 of the Queensland government's Made in Queensland grants program to increase local production processes. Made in Queensland provides matched funding to Queensland manufacturers looking to increase international competitiveness, adopt innovative processes and technologies and create high-skilled jobs of the future.

The project will improve supply chain control which will reduce production, freight and logistics costs and open up export opportunities. Paul said adopting the latest automated granular manufacturing technology for the end-to-end production of products will drive innovation, reduce costs, increase job security for regional employees and create eight new local jobs. It was also great to see construction of their new warehouse underway, with local firm the Shed Company doing the work.

I am proud to be part of the Palaszczuk government which is committed to the ongoing transformation of the state's manufacturing industry as it transitions to advanced manufacturing. I note the jobs this will create. This is just another example of how we are delivering Queensland's plan for

economic recovery from COVID-19 and building our state back even better. We are supporting Queensland businesses through various assistance programs. That is what a good Labor government does. This is in stark contrast to the LNP's DNA of cut, sack and sell.