




Speech By
Kim Richards

MEMBER FOR REDLANDS

Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2020

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Redlands Electorate, Works for Queensland

 **Ms RICHARDS** (Redlands—ALP) (2.53 pm): Our Palaszczuk government has front footed the challenges of COVID-19 and the global pandemic across communities. Our COVID-safe road map has guided us safely through the health challenges and the economic recovery is in full swing, supporting local businesses, delivering new infrastructure and creating jobs. Works for Queensland is a fantastic program, and I have been lobbying with my community and the mayor for two years to access funding for our island communities.

I was initially delighted to see that Redland City Council was included in the \$200 million funding round with an allocation of \$2.8 million secured, but that is where my delight ended. I am outraged. Not a brass razoo of the \$2.8 million has been allocated to my Redland City Council islands. That is right: zip, zero, nada, nothing. I will table electronically the 8 January letter from the mayor to Minister Hinchliffe about the Works for Queensland project and other documents.

Tabled paper: Bundle of documents relating to the exclusion of the Redland City Local Government Area from state government regional grants [965](#).

The letter states—

As discussed previously with you, Redland City Council faces many unique challenges that are not unlike those faced in Regional Queensland. Our Southern Moreton Bay Islands are amongst some of the most disadvantaged in the country ...

The 20 February 2020 letter from the mayor to me states—

I know you have been strongly advocating in this space ... I am writing to ask you to sponsor a Parliamentary petition calling on the State to recognise our Redlands Coast Island communities as regional under State Government funding mechanisms. In particular our SMBI communities ...

The petition closed 30 April and was tabled in the House 21 May asking for inclusion of our islands in that Works for Queensland project. I sponsored that petition in the parliament because I know how important access to Works for Queensland is. On 20 May the mayor wrote to the Premier to thank and congratulate the government for extending the Works for Queensland program to Redlands. On 3 June I wrote to the mayor requesting information on what projects Redlands was putting forward for. I did not receive a response until yesterday, and I know why I did not receive that until yesterday. On 9 June the mayor did a backflip from congratulating to criticising the funding. It was quoted in the *Redland City Bulletin*. It is disgraceful, particularly when I know where the money was actually allocated.

My opposition candidate, who with the mayor, also criticised the funding, has not backed our Redlands community. I say to him that instead of cutting cakes for Facebook perhaps he might want to stand up for the electorate he is seeking to represent.

On 12 June the council submitted their two projects: the Cleveland pool upgrade for \$800,000; and the Mount Cotton eastern escarpment project for \$2.1 million. There is not one island project and here is why I have further concerns. The escarpment project was endorsed by council in January 2019

for \$859,000. All of a sudden it has increased in value to \$2.1 million, but it has not come back before the council for discussion in the past 18 months. This project has more than doubled in price, but there has been no apparent discussion with councillors about this substantial increase and no discussion on projects nominated for Works for Queensland. It is absolutely outrageous!

This situation is beyond belief. It does not pass the pub test for so many reasons. I will always stand up for my community, particularly my island community, and I will continue to speak with the minister and others on this matter.