



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Bailey**


**MEMBER FOR MILLER**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 June 2020

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Road and Transport Infrastructure**

 **Hon. MC BAILEY** (Miller—ALP) (Minister for Transport and Main Roads) (10.08 am): The Palaszczuk government invests in creating Queensland jobs. With the COVID-19 pandemic, our unite and recover plan for Queensland jobs has never been more important. Thanks to Queensland's strong response to the pandemic, the Palaszczuk Labor government continues to deliver our record \$23 billion pipeline of road and transport projects, crucial to stimulating our economic recovery. In particular, regional rail projects throughout the state are on track, helping to carry the freight industry and jobs through COVID-19.

I am pleased to update the House that the first phase of our \$100 million rail line upgrade between Rockhampton and Townsville is now complete. Queensland Rail has commissioned the first of eight passing loop upgrades, allowing longer trains to run, boosting productivity for industry and supporting 300 regional jobs. These jobs will continue to flow as all eight passing loops are upgraded. This multimillion dollar investment will help lower freight costs for our primary producers and exporters, driving the beef capital's \$4.8 billion economy and Townsville's \$11.7 billion economy.

These works will soon be joined by a \$10 million commitment for the central west and Clermont lines. Over three years, crews will replace five bridges and carry out vital maintenance on 35 others, creating a steady stream of regional rail jobs for our central western communities. It builds on close to \$45 million already delivered on the two lines by the Palaszczuk Labor government.

It is not just these projects that are driving a rail jobs boom across Queensland. Between Townsville and Cairns, 150 jobs for steel fabricators, precast manufacturers, quarry suppliers and labourers are being created due to a \$46 million investment to build new steel bridges. In the Toowoomba region, a \$37 million rail upgrade near Spring Bluff is strengthening slopes and putting 130 jobs on the cards to add to the tremendous Toowoomba bypass built by the government. On the Sunshine Coast, the \$550 million rail duplication project will see 330 jobs created and new opportunities for local suppliers and industry.

Last week, the Premier said Queensland is 'good to go', encouraging Queenslanders to explore the very best of their own backyard. To support this, Queensland Rail has started resuming our iconic travel trains and is offering up to 60 per cent off the price of tickets. Therefore, these school holidays are the perfect time in the mild winter months to head out to Longreach to check out the Qantas Founders Museum or the Stockman's Hall of Fame, or explore the tropics on the iconic Kuranda Scenic Railway in Far North Queensland. It is another way that we can all unite and recover for Queensland jobs because that is what the Palaszczuk government does—we put Queenslanders first.