




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 16 June 2020

ADJOURNMENT

Townsville, Water Supply; Coronavirus, Economic Response

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (7.19 pm): There is no doubt that every person in this House knows about Townsville and the great investment the Palaszczuk government has been making in this great city. We have built a brand-new school, invested in hospital infrastructure and built—

Mr Harper: The Townsville stadium!

Mr STEWART: Riverway Drive.

Mr Harper: Oh, Riverway Drive.

Mr STEWART: Riverway Drive. As the member for Thuringowa highlighted, we have also built the stadium. What a great investment in our city that is. It was fantastic to go to the opening event, being the Elton John concert, and then to go to the north versus south clash between the Cowboys and the Broncos.

Mr Harper interjected.

Mr STEWART: We will not talk about the outcome. I take that interjection.

The Premier was in town again just recently. This time it was to officially open stage 1 of the water pipeline. The existing pipeline was built for a Townsville population of 30,000. The new pipeline will supply enough water for a population of 300,000 or more. Some 1,000 local jobs were created and it cost \$215 million to build. This was a major project to help the economy after Queensland Nickel closed. When Queensland Nickel closed 800 jobs were lost in one day. When Queensland Nickel closed 3½ thousand indirect jobs were lost. The Palaszczuk government stepped up. It has a proven track record of stimulating jobs in the local economy. Let us have a look at what the government did after the closure of Queensland Nickel. It created a very clear plan to get out of that situation. The Premier invested in a range of initiatives designed to create local jobs across a range of areas not just one big project.

Now with COVID-19 what are we seeing? We are seeing a loss of jobs. This time in completely different sectors—the hospitality, tourism and retail sectors. We have a recipe that works. We know it works because we saw it implemented after the closure of Queensland Nickel. What are we doing now? We are accelerating works like we did with the roadworks after Queensland Nickel's closure. We are investing in a range of projects. I just spoke to Simon Walker from Elliot Springs. He is a very happy man tonight. He has had a reduced staff load, but with the announcements today around the home owners grants those staff will come back on board.

It is about building confidence in the community. It is about training the future workforce for the jobs on the horizon. The Palaszczuk government's unite and recover economic recovery plan is based on a proven plan of recovery. It is about growing jobs and stimulating the economy beyond the simple sugar hit that other governments will do.