




Speech By
Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

Record of Proceedings, 10 September 2020

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Townsville Electorate; Bradfield Scheme

 **Mr STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (3.03 pm): Firstly I want to put on the record my admiration, appreciation and friendship for Minister Anthony Lynham, Minister Kate Jones and Minister Coralee O'Rourke. It will be sad to see them leave this House. I thank them for their support of the electorate of Townsville. I also acknowledge the three opposition members who are leaving. I hope that they do well in their endeavours into the future.

Last week Townsville welcomed the announcement by Treasurer Dick and Minister Lynham that an independent expert panel chaired by Professor Ross Garnaut will conduct a comprehensive government examination of the Bradfield inland irrigation scheme. The panel's terms of reference include considering the economic benefits to regional communities and agricultural production, especially in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and related recession; opportunities for renewable energy generation, complementary hydroelectric power generation, hydrogen production opportunities and resources sector development; and integrating with complementary infrastructure, including the CopperString project, which is very important to the people of Townsville. Of course, we have already committed \$16.4 million to the project. This is a great announcement that aligns with the Palaszczuk government's economic recovery plan for Queensland.

The LNP's \$15 billion plan is to take water from North Queensland and funnel it to the south. The people of Townsville want to know how the LNP is going to fund their promise. We know that the LNP do not keep their election promises. During his election campaign, the member for Herbert announced that the LNP would fully fund stage 2 of the Haughton water pipeline. However, when the member was elected the promise of fully funding the project was broken. It became a project of the Palaszczuk government to fully fund stage 2 of the water pipeline through the GST allocation deduction.

How can the people of Townsville believe the LNP when they promise before the election and then do the opposite after the election? Former premier Campbell Newman said, 'No public servant needs to fear me,' but then 14,000 public servants were sacked. Now the LNP are saying that their \$15 billion Bradfield 2.0 plan will see no job losses or new taxes. The people of Townsville know how the LNP will pay for their Bradfield scheme and it is by selling the assets. Just as in 2015, they will want to sell the Port of Townsville, in which the Palaszczuk government has invested \$118 million to widen the channel and increase trade. The LNP will want to sell the Mount Isa to Townsville rail line, in which the Palaszczuk government is investing \$380 million over five years. The LNP will sell Ergon when the Palaszczuk government has invested \$16.4 million in CopperString 2.0 to bring cheaper electricity prices. The people of Townsville will not be foiled by the hollow promises of the LNP.