




Speech By
Hon. Scott Stewart

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Further Answer to Question, Coal Industry

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (11.18 am): In question time I was asked by the member for Condamine about previous comments made in this House. The Palaszczuk government supports the resources sector for the royalties and jobs it generates, particularly in regional Queensland. Under the Palaszczuk government's watch, \$21 billion has been invested in or committed to resource projects creating 8,000 jobs. The resources sector is worth \$34.3 billion to Queenslanders and employs almost 73,000 people. As part of our economic plan for recovery, we have a \$10 million four-year booster pack of grants to supercharge exploration and drive future resources jobs.

The package includes a 12-month waiver of rent on exploration land due between 1 April and 1 September; a freeze on fees and charges until 1 July 2021; releasing almost 7,000 square kilometres, which is a lot of 'hectares', of land for gas and mineral exploration; and bringing forward \$2.8 million in grants funding for innovation in the North West Minerals Province. Queensland will be a coal exporter for many years to come which means that coalmining and jobs will be part of our economy now and for the foreseeable future. Queensland is naturally blessed with the world's highest quality metallurgical coal which the world needs to make steel. Even as the world transitions to renewables, metallurgical coal for steel will remain an essential, and therefore valuable, international export commodity for Queensland.

Since 2015 the Palaszczuk government has released more than 80,000 square kilometres of land for gas exploration, with over a quarter of it guaranteeing the gas will be for Australian consumers. In a national first, we released land nearly three years ago exclusively for gas for the domestic market to boost essential supply to the east coast market, particularly our manufacturers. We have also committed \$5 million to investigate feasibility and options for a new transmission pipeline, potentially 500-kilometres long, to connect currently stranded areas of the Bowen Basin in Central Queensland to the Australian east coast gas market.

New South Wales received \$1 billion from the Morrison government for renewables as a reward for developing onshore gas. Meanwhile, Queensland was offered nothing for doing the heavy lifting on gas to support manufacturing. The Palaszczuk government is committed to supporting the resources sector and acknowledges the role it has played in softening the economic impact of COVID-19 and we look forward to continuing to work with the resources industry as we recover.