



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Budget, Resources Industries**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (10.04 am): Queensland's resources sector led the way during the COVID-19 pandemic, and it will continue to lead the way for future jobs in this state as we embark on the road to recovery. Our state is set for a surge in resources exploration with the 2020-21 Queensland budget delivering more than \$29 million in exploration grants, initiatives and COVID-19 support for explorers and miners over the next few years. Exploration is critical for developing a pipeline of future resource projects.

This year's budget boost for exploration will help drive future resource projects in our state and the thousands of jobs that will flow from them. This year we will invest \$9 million to help explorers discover new economy minerals that are high in demand globally in the renewables and tech sectors. We have already fast-tracked \$2 million in spending earlier this year to understand the potential for rare earth minerals. Furthermore, we will pump in another \$11.7 million in the following three years as new economy minerals will deliver the jobs of the future.

To help keep explorers on the hunt we have also waived \$9.8 million in state rent to back explorers and have frozen exploration fees and charges until July next year. In 2020-21, we will also provide another \$3.3 million to help boost gas and mineral exploration through the Strategic Resources Exploration Program. An \$845,000 budget investment will also make data collected from exploration projects freely available from January 2021 via the government's geological database. Everything learned from the exploration projects will be shared with the whole sector, helping to stimulate more mines, exports and, most importantly, more jobs for Queensland.

We are continuing to do the heavy lifting with gas production and supply to the east coast domestic market. That is why we are investing \$5 million over the next two years on investigating potential new gas pipeline infrastructure to connect gas reserves in the Bowen Basin to domestic customers and exports.

It is not all mines and gas in my portfolio. This financial year we are delivering more than \$33.9 million in rent waivers to support Queensland's other traditional strengths—our agriculture and tourism sectors—as they recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. So far more than \$2.7 million in rent has been waived for 72 tourism businesses operating on state owned land and islands. Another \$31.2 million in state rent has been waived for more than 6,000 farmers and businesses, because a strong Queensland agricultural industry will also be a driving force in Queensland's post-pandemic economic recovery.

Queenslanders elected the Palaszczuk government so we could continue delivering our strong health response and our plan for economic recovery. An important part of that plan is continuing to invest in and support our world-class resources sector. Through this budget, the Palaszczuk government is making sure that our resources sector maintains its momentum, growing our regions and keeping our people employed.