




Speech By
Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe

MEMBER FOR SANDGATE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Coronavirus, Works for Queensland

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Local Government, Minister for Racing and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.49 am): As the heartbreaking economic fallout from this pandemic became more evident in the past few weeks, I have been speaking regularly with mayors across the state in order that we unite and recover. Their input has been instrumental in fashioning the Queensland Economic Recovery Strategy: Unite and Recover for Queensland Jobs launched by the Premier yesterday. It is their people who are affected: their workforces, their communities.

Our mayors were very quick to welcome the announcement of the extra \$200 million for the COVID Works for Queensland on top of our signature \$600 million Works for Queensland program for regional Queensland. We know that this equates to upwards of more than 6,000 jobs supported or created as we unite and recover. I could go on forever about the benefits of this commitment, but let us hear what they have to say. Let us start with the very southern end of the state for no particular reason other than it is a name that we are all familiar with. Coming to us from the Delta Quadrant known as Goondiwindi it is the Borg himself. Mayor Lawrence Springborg says—

Works for Queensland has been a very beneficial program for our region with many projects funded. This additional funding will make a significant impact in helping to build community structure and support jobs during this critical time.

Paul Antonio in Toowoomba says—

The current pandemic has disrupted the whole state, and we welcome the Queensland government's announcement that South-East Queensland will receive Works for Queensland funding for the first time.

Gladstone's Matt Burnett says—

We welcome the funding from the Queensland government. Works for Queensland has been an outstanding program for our region. This additional funding will provide a significant boost to Queensland local governments and help support jobs during this tough period.

Karen Williams from Redland City Council has been a very vocal advocate for the program to be expanded into her area and she says—

This funding will help create local jobs as we recover from the COVID pandemic, which is very welcome, and I thank the state government for this commitment.

In Bundaberg Jack Dempsey, another familiar name, says—

We welcome any extra funds for local government and appreciate the Queensland government's support.

A great supporter of this government. Mackay mayor Greg Williamson says it is great news—

Works for Queensland is one of the best funding programs the state has ever offered. To be able to now use it during COVID recovery is an excellent outcome.

Townsville mayor Jenny Hill says—

Works for Queensland is a win-win for the community. With regional economies taking a hit from the COVID-19 global pandemic, the jobs that will be generated through this increased funding are more important than ever.

In Mount Isa, Danielle Slade says—

Works for Queensland is an excellent program that has helped make several projects in Mount Isa a reality, and this funding will support and create many local jobs during this tough time.

Fraser Coast mayor George Seymour says—

The Works for Queensland program has proven enormously beneficial on the Fraser Coast, helping to create jobs and deliver local projects council wouldn't have been able to do on our own. Our council stands ready to work in partnership with the Queensland government to help our local community emerge even stronger from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In the Far North, Bob Manning in Cairns says—

We welcome the Premier's announcement today of an additional \$200 million in funding available to local governments through the Works for Queensland program.

I will finish with Greg Hallam from the Local Government Association of Queensland. He says—

This will ensure that new opportunities are created right across the length and breadth of Queensland and that we will see people who are unemployed find work. It's a great initiative. It's one we've proved works before. We thank the government for their leadership.

These are not words out of the mouths of babes, these are strong statements from people who are leaders of their communities and who are from a variety of political backgrounds. All colours of the rainbow are here supporting this government's commitment to unite and recover.