




Speech By
Bruce Saunders

MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH

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MATTER OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Maryborough Electorate

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.40 pm): A lot has happened in the Maryborough electorate since the 2020 state election when the Palaszczuk government was resoundingly re-elected. There are many happy faces in the Maryborough electorate and in the neighbouring seats of Bundaberg and Hervey Bay. It is very good to work as a team for the whole of the Wide Bay district, not just the Maryborough electorate.

Mr Power: Team Wide Bay.

Mr SAUNDERS: I take that interjection from the member for Logan. It is Team Wide Bay because we are all working for the benefit of our constituents, rather than putting other things first. Over the past couple of weeks I have had some great news for the Maryborough electorate. Last week was a fine week when we announced a \$1.9 million subsidy for the Isis Central Sugar Mill to purchase more trailers to take cane grown in Maryborough to the Isis mill to be processed. It was unfortunate that MSF Sugar closed the Maryborough sugar mill. I thank the state development minister for ensuring that minimal harm was done to the community and that workers were able to seek work elsewhere. He and his department have done a fantastic job, on top of the \$1.9 million subsidy for 36 new trailers. That will make the industry viable in not only Maryborough but also Childers because the 500,000 to 600,000 tonnes of cane coming from Maryborough will keep the Isis mill alive. We know that that cane will now be transported safely on the Bruce Highway thanks to 36 new trailers provided by the Palaszczuk Labor government. I acknowledge the work done with Canegrowers Isis and, in particular, Peter Russo, who is a man of his word. It was very pleasing to work with him to get this result for both the Burnett area and the Maryborough electorate.

The other day I had the good fortune of having the Assistant Minister for Health in the electorate to announce funding of \$5.3 million to reroof the whole Maryborough Hospital complex. That is a fantastic achievement and I thank the assistant minister. She was quite impressed by some of the heritage buildings at the Maryborough Hospital. The Chief Executive of the Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service was very pleased with that announcement from the government because it does not take money away from health care. This is state government money allocated to help maintain hospitals; it does not come out of the Health budget. That is not all we have done at the Maryborough Hospital. The A&E department has received \$12.4 million. There has been funding for air conditioning, rewiring and car parks. We have spent a lot of money on the Maryborough Hospital to improve services. As a government we returned the pathology unit to the Maryborough Hospital and we have also installed new X-ray and scanning machines. The X-ray department at the Maryborough Hospital is very modern thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government.

It is good news week from the Palaszczuk Labor government. We cannot stop the good news rolling out. There is more good news for Hyne. Maryborough is a timber and train town. Hyne has expanded its factory at Tuan, meaning 50 extra jobs—I repeat: 50 extra jobs. That was made possible because of a grant for the Glulam factory in Maryborough that was delivered last year by the Palaszczuk Labor government, which is reinvesting in regional Queensland.

We hear the other side talk. We saw the new Leader of the Opposition sneak into Maryborough at three o'clock one afternoon. He told the TV stations not to take a photo inside the room. He parked his Merc down the street so that no-one could see it, walked around and then said that nothing is happening in Maryborough. I am inundated with people saying that there is heaps happening in Maryborough.

While I am on my feet I want to thank the transport minister and member for Miller for the new traffic lights that have been installed at schools in my electorate, such as Riverside Christian College where new lights became operational just after the last state election. This month lights will come online at the intersection of Alice and Pallas streets. The big news is the installation of lights near the Maryborough Skate Park. A lot of kids cross the road from the skate park to the store to buy a can of coke or whatever they want to buy. Kids were running out in front of the traffic. Now we have lights there, which I am looking forward to turning on on Friday. That will make the children, young adults and everyone else who goes to that skate park much safer. That is what a Labor government does. We reinvest. We make sure that no-one gets left behind. I can say that no-one in the Maryborough electorate has been left behind by the Palaszczuk Labor government.