



Speech By
Hon. Glenn Butcher

MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2021


APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL

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Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)

Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill

State Development and Regional Industries Committee, Report

 **Hon. GJ BUTCHER** (Gladstone—ALP) (Minister for Regional Development and Manufacturing and Minister for Water) (2.55 pm): Before I begin I would like to put on record my sincere thanks to the Deputy Premier for stepping in for me during the estimates period while I was recovering from serious back surgery. Today it gives me great pleasure to speak about the Palaszczuk government's vision for manufacturing, water and growing our regions. This is a vision that we are delivering every day through an ambitious program of initiatives to improve the lives of Queenslanders right across our state.

In relation to manufacturing, our vision is for a smart, innovative and resilient sector that embraces the opportunities offered by Industry 4.0 technologies, all backed by our 10-year Advanced Manufacturing Roadmap and Action Plan. It is a sector that is tapping into expanding domestic markets in not only Queensland but also Australia and exploring new opportunities in international markets. That means more jobs for Queenslanders right across this wonderful state. Regardless of the LNP's use of a single cherry-picked statistic to claim the opposite, it is a sector that is definitely moving forward.

Over the last five years the Palaszczuk government has seen manufacturing in our state go from strength to strength. Even in the face of a global pandemic and economic headwinds, labour force statistics show that an average of 165,000 Queenslanders were employed in manufacturing in 2020. That means there are now thousands more people in good, secure, long-term manufacturing jobs than when those opposite were voted out of office in 2015. We are delivering these jobs in manufacturing through a range of programs and initiatives designed to prepare Queensland businesses for the future of manufacturing, including our manufacturing hubs in Cairns, Townsville, Rockhampton and Gladstone—this list will very soon include Mackay and the Gold Coast—and initiatives like the \$61.5 million Made in Queensland grant program that provides important support for manufacturers to employ advanced manufacturing systems to take their business to the next level.

We are also working with local suppliers to build the capabilities they need to access emerging opportunities for major government and private sector contracts. This includes working with manufacturers to ensure that when the Department of Transport and Main Roads moves to procure new six-car rail sets Queensland manufacturers are ready to deliver them. In the December state budget we announced \$40.5 million for the Making it for Queensland strategy. This includes \$16.5 million to drive the development of advanced manufacturing skills through the creation of Manufacturing Skills Queensland, an independent not-for-profit industry body to support workers, employers, apprentices and trainees.

Our vision for water is that this precious resource, the lifeblood of our regional communities and industries, is secure, affordable and accessible. Since 2017 the Palaszczuk government has committed \$1.2 billion to water infrastructure, including: \$176.2 million for Rookwood Weir—I had the pleasure of visiting that site to see work commence; \$13.6 million for Emu Swamp Dam; and \$3 million for pre-construction activities for Big Rocks Weir plus \$27 million for its construction. We are also fast-tracking studies into raising Burdekin Falls Dam and the Fitzroy to Gladstone pipeline and we are reviewing a private proposal for a water pipeline for Lockyer irrigators, which I know the shadow minister has also been intrigued with.

We committed \$1 million to investigate contingency water supply options for Warwick, including a potential Toowoomba to Warwick pipeline. I will say this very clearly to the member for Nanango: we are currently considering the feasibility report. We have put in \$1 million, so you cannot sit over there and say we have put in zero. There is \$1 million going in and we are now investigating that feasibility report.

Mrs Frecklington interjected.

Mr BUTCHER: You can rabble on all you like over there, member for Nanango, but we are getting on with it. We are facilitating feasibility studies under the Australian government's National Water Infrastructure Development Fund as well. In doing so, we are following the same robust, best practice economic, technical and environmental approvals required by every level of government to ensure that the infrastructure built today is an asset, not a liability, for our future generations.

This need could not have been more clearly demonstrated than by the issues we are now seeing with Paradise Dam which, based on the advice of multiple experts, Sunwater has acted urgently to address. These works were a vital step towards ensuring the safety of the Bundaberg community. I can say right now that I support the local member for Bundaberg now in his support of this as well—

(Time expired)