




Speech By
Hon. Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR MCCONNEL

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Budget, Racing Industry; School Infrastructure

 **Hon. G GRACE** (McConnel—ALP) (Minister for Education, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Racing) (9.50 am): I join in acknowledging the loss of Duncan Pegg, who, after delivering one of the best speeches in this parliament, just seven weeks later lost his battle. Rest in peace, Duncan Pegg.

The Queensland racing industry provides more than \$1.6 billion to the state's economy, supporting more than 12,600 jobs, and the Palaszczuk government is backing this winner. In this budget, a new funding model will guarantee the racing industry receives 35 per cent of revenue from the state's point-of-consumption tax on wagering. This will deliver around \$41.3 million extra for the Queensland racing industry over the next two years, backing this important industry as part of Queensland's COVID-19 economic recovery plan. That means every time someone places a bet in Queensland, as I did at Stradbroke Day on Saturday, a guaranteed portion of that money will go back into racing. I think they got quite a bit of my money on Saturday, too! These funds will continue major racing infrastructure projects already underway, including the \$38 million Gold Coast Turf Club redevelopment and the \$9 million Sunshine Coast synthetic track along with dozens of other projects throughout regional Queensland turf clubs.

As many members in this House know firsthand, country racing at non-TAB race clubs is a big part of the social and economic fabric of regional Queensland, and that is why this government continues to support country racing. Our \$35.2 million commitment over two years provides a purse for prize money and to maintain tracks and facilities at places like Barcaldine, where I had a great afternoon with the minister for tourism and locals at the Tree of Knowledge Festival races in May. Our investment in country racing is creating local jobs and improving facilities for jockeys, trainers, connections and racegoers from Cooktown to the Gold Coast and from Mount Isa to Birdsville.

While I am on the subject of jobs, there will be hundreds of jobs created in the 10 new primary and secondary state schools and extra classrooms we will be building. We will invest over \$1 billion to build these new schools, which will open in 2023-24, adding to the 18 we have delivered since 2015 and four others under construction or planned. This budget will also provide around \$541 million towards 300-plus new classrooms at 35 schools, as well as administration buildings and amenities, supporting 1,600 jobs and meeting the growing demand.

I also take this opportunity to wish our school cleaning workforce of nearly 4,800 a happy School Cleaners' Day. These essential workers are a big part of the effort to keep our students and staff safe during this COVID-19 pandemic by putting in an extra 16,500 hours a week cleaning our schools. It is thanks to the efforts of frontline workers like our hardworking school cleaners that we can now focus on Queensland's economic recovery by delivering world-class infrastructure for Queensland students.