




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Ipswich Electorate, Small Business; Renewable Energy, Projects

 **Ms HOWARD** (Ipswich—ALP) (2.40 pm): Queensland's future is assured as an emerging powerhouse of renewable energy and manufacturing with the announcement on Sunday that the world's largest hydrogen equipment manufacturing facility is to be built in Gladstone by Fortescue Future Industries. Queensland's potential as a renewable hydrogen exporter and advanced manufacturing powerhouse shows that the Palaszczuk government has a strong plan for the future—one that is built on the emerging industrial green revolution taking place all over the world right now.

This means more high-tech manufacturing jobs for Queenslanders, a strong renewables export industry and a clean energy future for our state. Queenslanders want to see more manufacturing happening in their state. Rheinmetall Defence Australia has established its Australia-New Zealand headquarters in Ipswich. It has created hundreds of highly skilled jobs and it has been a huge boost for our economy.

This government's plan for Queensland's future is built on our strong health response to COVID-19, which has kept our economy charging ahead despite the challenges. Our domestic economy grew by 4.6 per cent to June and household spending has gone up 14.9 per cent. Queensland has seen the biggest net gain of people moving here from interstate and new house approvals are up 41 per cent.

We are backing small business with our \$600 million package of COVID-19 Business Support Grants and \$70 million for the Queensland tourism and hospitality industry. Small business is a key pillar of Queensland's economy, and it is vital to local and regional economies. More than 9,100 small businesses operate out of Ipswich, employing thousands of people and contributing to the economy and the future of our city.

I had the great pleasure of connecting with Ipswich small business owners two weeks ago at a morning tea I hosted with the small business minister, Di Farmer. I acknowledge and thank Di for her support for this fantastic event and for meeting with our local business community. I also acknowledge our mighty Ipswich Chamber of Commerce & Industry for the work they do. Ipswich's small business community is a thriving and diverse group who love their city. They want to see Ipswich thrive and they want to play a key role in its growth and revitalisation. Their entrepreneurialism is driving a renewed optimism in our city and that is exciting to see.

We know that the recent IPCC report paints a dire picture for our global climate future if we sit back and do nothing. We know that global and domestic investors are turning away from fossil fuels and driving the momentum in financing new green energy projects that could create thousands of highly skilled jobs for Queensland locals.

Since the Palaszczuk government was elected in 2015, more than 40 large-scale renewable projects have been brought online, representing \$9.9 billion of investment and supporting 7,000 jobs during construction. Our renewable energy generation is now offsetting 12.6 million tonnes of carbon emissions every year. Our recent budget put renewables front and centre with \$2 billion invested into the Queensland Renewable Energy and Hydrogen Jobs Fund.

Our partnership with Fortescue Future Industries will see Gladstone become a world-leading hub for the manufacture of electrolysers which are vital to produce renewable hydrogen. More than 300 jobs will be created over the life of the project and in years to come this partnership is expected to create thousands more jobs. This huge investment in domestic green energy manufacturing will open up new industrial opportunities throughout the state and benefit local supply chains, like we have seen in Ipswich with Rheinmetall.

The future will see strong demand from investors in green energy as the world moves away from a carbon-based fuel economy. This change is already happening. We are seeing Japan take a strong interest in our hydrogen export industry with Iwatani Corporation undertaking a feasibility study to export \$4.2 billion worth of renewable hydrogen from Gladstone, with the prospect of 5,000 jobs being created. Sun Metals in Townsville is transitioning their zinc refinery to 100 per cent renewable energy by 2040, which includes powering their trucking fleet on hydrogen.

The Palaszczuk Labor government's massive investment in this green energy revolution will not only not help us reach our newly announced goal of net zero emissions by 2050 but also fuel a surge in full-time, secure manufacturing jobs. Our dominance in the emerging renewable hydrogen industry will make Queensland an attractive destination for green energy investment as the world's finance industry pulls out of fossil fuels.

Queensland ticks all the boxes when it comes to being a dominant player in the green energy revolution. We have sun and wind, a highly skilled workforce, established infrastructure, critical economy minerals and a government that supports innovation, research and a partnership with investors and businesses. Because we are a government that plans for the future, our best days are ahead of us. I thank our Premier and her entire leadership team for providing Queensland with so many exciting opportunities.