




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 17 June 2021

APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL

APPROPRIATION BILL

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (8.27 pm): This is a budget that ensures our economic security and employment opportunities and delivers a bright future for Queensland. Each successive Palaszczuk government's budget has added to our collective future growth. The Palaszczuk Labor government has been a shining beacon for other states as an example of what leadership looks like, how to make the tough decisions that keep people safe and how to keep the economy moving in the right direction under pressure. Our economy is now bigger than it was before COVID hit. We have become the state of choice for interstate migration.

My region is set to be the powerhouse of new industry and jobs in agribusiness. The Future Foods BioHub has the potential to value-add to crops already grown across the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region—value-adding to sugar cane, cattle, broadacre crops from the west and our salad bowl crops to the north. New industries making high-grade vitamin and protein powders to sustain world food needs can be manufactured in my region. The many by-products from the sugar crop are waiting for an investor to take advantage of them. Products like biodegradable plastics, building products, paper, nutraceuticals and activated carbon are only some of the proven products that are waiting to be manufactured.

This budget supports the funding of the business case needed to get the ball rolling on the new manufacturing opportunities in agriculture in regional Queensland. The future bioscientists are sitting in the classrooms of Mackay and new industries are building the employment opportunities and choices for our regional students. The Paget industrial precinct has the skills and ingenuity to design and manufacture new machinery and factories to establish these new industries.

The Mackay Resources Centre of Excellence was a 2017 election commitment. It is now a world-class centrepiece for training and research for the resources sector. The centre will also be the home to the Mackay manufacturing hub. Mackay's manufacturing and industrial estate at Paget has a reputation of having one of the highest concentration of patents per capita. The manufacturing hub will assist those already in the export market to hone their skills and extend their market reach and also assist those who are putting their toe into the export market with the guidance and confidence to grow and develop offshore clients.

Mr Deputy Speaker, the Speaker has review and approved my speech on the budget for incorporation. As such, I ask that the remainder of my speech be incorporated in the *Record of Proceedings*.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr Hart): I understand you have had your speech approved by the Speaker and it will be incorporated.

The speech read as follows—

A skilled work force is need for now and into the future, we need to be agile and be ready to upskill our workers to meet the ever changing needs of industry. Being able to upskill close to home is an asset to employees and employers.

CQU Trade Training Centre is continually working with industry to deliver the programs that meet local needs. \$7.5 million to upgrading training facilities to cater for heavy automotive keeps apprentices in Mackay instead of needing to travel to other centres. It has been proven that apprentices that train close to home are more likely to complete their training. A win win for industry and training.

Safe and modern roads from our pits in the Bowen Basin to, Paget on to Port, for the resource sector is essential. The Ag sector also needs a reliable transport chain from paddock to processing plants to port.

The now completed Mackay Ring Road and the realignment of the Eton Range has made travel to port safer for industry and locals.

There are still works being executed on the northern approaches on the Bruce Highway, the \$110 million Northern Access Road. Hundreds of trucks and commercial vehicles have already been taken of the suburban streets of Mackay by the ring road.

The job is not done, the regions road program is marching on, the \$150 million Walkerston Bypass tender is out with the project ready to start before the end of the year, more work for locals, this will complete the southern part of the ring road link to the Peak Downs Highway. At the northern end of the Ring Road planning for the Port Access link is underway. Groundworks to upgrade Slade Point Road \$4,888,000 two lane road is in preparation for the Port Access Road.

While the Newman LNP government cut 600 jobs from Roadtek we are getting on with delivering the modern transport chain my region deserves.

Mackay is a flat city, ideal for cycling and walking, we love our shared paths that allow us to get out for recreation, exercise and sometime a fun run. This budget adds to the paths from the Harbour to Goose Ponds to the Pioneer River, when completed will be well used.

Public transport is an important choice for people of all age groups in Mackay. Canelands shopping centre is a hub for local bus interchange. The current bus stop faces into the afternoon sun, an unsuitable situation in our sweltering summers. This bus station will be replaces with a \$5.377 million purpose built bus station on Mangrove Road adding to passenger comfort.

In Mackay we love our parks and outdoor green spaces.

It was a Palaszczuk Labor Government that funded \$8 million for the redevelopment of the beautiful Queens Park, it is a place of pride for locals with packed playgrounds and walking paths each week. Now Woodlands District Park will be created by amalgamating reserves and parks across Andergrove and Beaconsfield spanning 21 hectares. Works for Queensland funding of \$2 mil, part of \$9.9 mil awarded to Mackay Regional Council will be used to build stage one of the new leisure and activity public space. As further stages progress.

The Palaszczuk Governments Works for Queensland programs supports local employment and allows councils to deliver projects that enhance the liability of our community. Local kids are excited stage one of their new park will include a modern bike pump track.

I can't wait to see the new walking and bike paths, playgrounds, and lake with Barramundi as works progress.

Affordable housing is in high demand

Everyone deserves to have a safe secure home. We have seen unprecedented numbers of people moving to Queensland putting a huge strain on available social housing. People are also choosing to live closer to where they work since COVID, they are looking to settle closer to the Bowen Basin and centres that service the mines instead of fly in fly out as their first option.

We have gone from a situation of having 2000 vacant properties to families living in tents. The federally funded NRAS has been wound up, investors are withdrawing their investment properties from the rental market displacing families.

To Combat the housing shortage the Palaszczuk Labor Government is embarking on a four-year building scheme on a scale that has not been seen since the end of World War II.

We are fast tracking the construction of 48 units of accommodation this is just in the wider Mackay region alone.

I visited a building site on the north side of Mackay 10 units of accommodation on the way of being finished. They are solid, well laid out homes, close to schools, doctors and shops all within walking distance. The trades people working on the homes are doing a great job. In months to come 10 local families and singles will have a safe secure place to call home.

The groundwork has already commenced on 4 more units of accommodation on the westside, we are getting on with the job.

There is so much construction there is so much construction taking place in Mackay on private builds and government builds our next biggest problem is sourcing trades people. If you know of any tradies looking for work, send them to Mackay, when have plenty of work for them.

We are also funding services to support those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness to local organisation including, St Vincent DePaul, HomeStay Early intervention, Kalyan Youth Services, CASA, Lowanna House, Mackay Hostel, Community Housing and Information Centre Incorporated. The services are varied to deal with individual needs.

Education gives you choices in life. It is important that we deliver updated quality modern learning settings whether it be in a newly built school or in one of our many schools steeped in proud education history.

My region has great State and fee-paying schools, and I would like to thank our hard working teachers, teacher aides, cleaners, and axillary staff that support our students.

I would like to also congratulate the Queensland College of Teachers on their 50th anniversary this year.

44 schools across the Mackay Region will receive funding for ongoing minor works. I am looking forward to seeing the new disabilities amenities at Mackay SHS, and the refurbished learning spaces at Pioneer SHS and Mackay North SHS from Schools Infrastructure Enhancement Program. Students at Pioneer SHS tell me they are excited at getting renewed science classrooms.

Active kids are healthy kids, the resurfaced basketball courts at Mackay North SS will be well used.

We believe education is for all and not all students have the support they need from home to be ready for learning when they arrive at school. That is why we are continuing our support for schools to continue breakfast programs were needed.

There has been a big focus on mental health during the pandemic.

I am pleased \$6.6 million upgrades to the Mackay Community Mental Health Facility will provide safe and private clinical environments for patients and deliver clinical spaces that improve patient management in delivery of mental health services.

This is on top of the new pilot Crisis Support Space at the Mackay Base Hospital providing an alternative to emergency department care for someone arriving at hospital in distress.

The upgrades will deliver better care to more people as part of our region \$19.7 mil health upgrades which will also deliver jobs and add to our economic growth while adding to our top-quality health infrastructure in our region. The Palaszczuk government is committed to delivering for our community.

Health Services delivered across the Mackay HHS takes pressure of the Mackay Base Hospital, the new state of the art Sarina Hospital to be built at Brewers Road will continue to deliver quality health care for people living to the south of Mackay, the new hospital will be single bed rooms instead of the current multi bed rooms. Health care delivered close to where people live has better outcomes for patients and their family.

The Mackay electorate is not just about heavy industry, our natural beauty lends us to being a top tourist destination for adventure sports, engaging with nature, and attending events.

The Great Barrier Reef Arena will see shovels in the ground later this year more employment opportunities for locals. This is a piece of fantastic infrastructure that will attract big sporting matches to Mackay. Mackay was the first regional centre to hold a Sheffield Shield match outside of Brisbane, we have had National AFL teams play off and Big Bash games with large spectator crowds. With modern facilities more events can be attracted to my city, adding to our number of tourism stays in our accommodation, also boosting our restaurants and retail spend.

We want our day trips to local islands to be revived, funding for the Red Cat catamaran will get our island hopping tourism off the ground.

For our tourist that want to get out and active, they will be attracted to the Pioneer Valley Mountain Bike Trail, \$500,000 funding will assist the Mackay Regional Council to get this project off the ground.

Looking for a holiday, come to Mackay, explore our beautiful rainforest, pristine beaches, meet the wallabies at Cape Hillsborough beach, there is something for everyone.

As a former teacher I am pleased with the education improvements for my electorate, I am really proud of Duncan Pegg's achievements for the schools in Stretton. A wonderful tribute to Duncan naming the Stretton College Performing Arts Centre in his name, Vale Duncan.

I commend the Bill.