



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**

**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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## **APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) (2020-2021) BILL**

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#### **Consideration in Detail (Cognate Debate)**

#### **Appropriation (2020-2021) Bill**

#### **Transport and Resources Committee, Report**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (5.54 pm): I welcome the tabling of the Transport and Resources Committee's report on the proposed budget appropriations for 2020-21. I acknowledge the committee's recommendation that the proposed expenditure, as detailed in the budget bills, be agreed to without amendment. I also take this time to thank the acting chair on the day—the member for Bancroft—committee members, my department and all those who participated in the hearing for taking the time to take part in this very important role in our parliamentary system.

The 2020-21 Queensland state budget delivers for all Queenslanders, and especially delivers for our crucial resources sector as we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Palaszczuk government understands the critical role this industry will play throughout the recovery—from the \$49 billion it brings to the Queensland economy and the more than 68,000 people it employs, particularly in regional Queensland. We are backing the sector with more than \$29 million invested in exploration grants, initiatives and COVID-19 support for explorers and miners. To help keep explorers' boots on the ground, we are reducing their operating costs and have waived \$9.8 million in rent along with freezing exploration fees and charges at their current rates until March 2021.

In the gas sector, work has begun on Queensland's \$5 million gas infrastructure study that could open the Bowen Basin as the next gas frontier and potentially create 1,000 construction jobs. New gas infrastructure could boost the development of gas production in the Bowen Basin and make more gas available for Queensland manufacturers, leading to more affordable gas and supporting jobs across our critical supply chains and industries.

Coal, including steel making metallurgical coal, will continue to play an important role in jobs and economic growth for many years to come. In September last year we approved what will become Queensland's third largest metallurgical coal mine. The mine will have a production life of around 80 years and is expected to produce up to 15 million tonnes of metallurgical coal for steel production each year.

We are also providing relief in other areas of my portfolio wherever we can to make sure we help those who are doing it tough. That is why we have waived state rent for around 72 tourism businesses operating on state owned land until 31 March this year. We recognise that the tourism industry has been one of the hardest hit by this pandemic.

In August last year, the Geological Survey of Queensland was proud to launch two new data platforms for use by industry and the public at large. I know that the member for Gregory was particularly interested in this project. It will significantly improve the work of our industry explorers and it will remove the risk of failure that we had remanded in the old systems. It was delivered ahead of time, on budget and is free to use.

The Palaszczuk government supports the resources sector for the royalties and the jobs it generates, particularly in regional Queensland. Under the Premier's watch \$21 billion has been invested in or committed to resource projects creating some 8,000 jobs. The 2020-21 Queensland budget proves that the Palaszczuk government understands the importance of the resources sector. The budget provides more investment opportunities and potential jobs for the resources sector and sets Queensland on the path to recovery. I commend the report to the House.