



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 24 March 2021

**MOTION**

**Electricity Supply**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (5.54 pm): It is the Palaszczuk government that is backing all sectors of the Queensland resources industry with real policy and real financial support. The resources sector supports more than 68,000 jobs right across the state and represents \$49 billion in exports. Queensland leads the nation when it comes to our domestic gas policy.

The Palaszczuk government has released more than 20,000 square kilometres of land for gas exploration and production from which gas can only be supplied to the Australian domestic market. In September 2020 we awarded petroleum and gas tenders that included three areas for domestic-only gas supply across 453 square kilometres in the Bowen and Surat basins. These releases have led to further market diversification. Two of these areas were awarded to Comet Ridge and the other to Senex Energy located next to its Project Atlas. Project Atlas was the first domestic supply condition tenure and has been kicking goals ever since it commenced production in January 2020.

Just last month Senex Energy reached an incredible milestone at Atlas by reaching its nameplate production of 32 terajoules a day ahead of schedule. That is not a day ahead of schedule; that is 32 terajoules a day ahead of schedule. Senex is now supplying Queensland gas users with 10 per cent of their natural gas requirements which is vital for creating and supporting jobs in the manufacturing industry. That is not all. Last month Senex Energy agreed to a further domestic gas sales agreement with our Queensland owned power generator, CleanCo, for 2.5 petajoules of natural gas in 2022. This will also be supplied from Senex's Atlas project.

The Palaszczuk government is doing all the heavy lifting when it comes to both domestic gas supply and policy. The Commonwealth government needs to come to the table and support additional gas infrastructure in Queensland to get our abundant gas supplies to market. I would encourage gas reliant manufacturers in the southern states who feel like they are not being heard to move to Queensland where this government values gas for local business. Why would they not? We are the envy of the southern states when it comes to COVID, we have great weather, we have great opportunities to develop more manufacturing, we have great people and sometimes we even play the footy they play down there.

When it comes to the North West Minerals Province the Palaszczuk government is doing everything in its power to untap the huge potential it represents. There are opportunities in traditional metals like copper, lead and zinc, but there are also great opportunities in emerging resources like cobalt, vanadium and scandium—sometimes called scandinium—which will play a key part in the world moving forward. We have developed a strategic blueprint for the North West Minerals Province and backed it with a \$27 million Strategic Resources Exploration Program, which has a strong focus in areas around Queensland's North West Minerals Province.

On top of that, we have the \$13 million New Economy Minerals Initiative and the additional \$10 million Collaborative Exploration grants to help explorers discover those new economy minerals and support future jobs in Queensland's resources sector. Combined, this is around \$50 million in initiatives and COVID-19 support which has helped our resources and exploration sector continue working strongly despite the global pandemic and could increase exploration and investment in the North West Minerals Province.

We all know that a key part of unlocking the North West Minerals Province will be through important infrastructure such as CopperString 2.0. Not only will it create hundreds of jobs during construction; it will also provide cheaper and reliable power for miners in the North West Minerals Province which will help new and smaller mines open in the future along with those that are already operating. It has been 233 days since the federal member for Herbert promised the people of Townsville that \$195 million would stay in the city after the federal government failed to fulfil their election commitment to build stage 2 of the Haughton pipeline. After 233 days here is the opportunity: invest in CopperString 2.0 because that is where we need the investment. It is only the Palaszczuk Labor government that has the vision and the foresight to secure our domestic gas supply, stimulate investment in exciting new resource provinces and futureproof our energy needs.

*(Time expired)*