



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 9 November 2022

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Rural Economic Development Grants**

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.08 am): Queenslanders know that there has never been a greater friend of rural and regional Queensland than the Palaszczuk Labor government.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order!

**Mr Lister** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Member for Southern Downs, just like the vending machine on level 3, you are quite often out of order. You are warned under the standing orders.

**Mr FURNER:** As Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities, I have had the particular pleasure of visiting many of those rural communities across Queensland and listening to people from all walks of life whether they be butchers, truck drivers, farmers, farmhands, factory workers, builders, traders, exporters, mechanics and many others. In all of the communities that I visit, the creation of good jobs has had the greatest impact on the sustainability and great lifestyle of these towns and regional centres.

That is why the Palaszczuk Labor government's Rural Economic Development Grants have been so important for those rural communities. In four rounds of the grants we have partnered with agricultural businesses to create more than 2,500 good jobs to help those businesses grow and become even more the mainstays of their communities.

I am pleased to announce another round 4 recipient today will be Tropical Pines in the electorate of Caloundra. They have been producing great pineapples there for a long time. Tropical Pines will use its grant to install a drying plant to create longer shelf life pineapple products from its site at Beerwah. That means work for more of the year in that business, and more good jobs for that community.

This is a great program for agricultural businesses in this state, so I am very pleased to announce that expressions of interest in a fifth round of Rural Economic Development Grants will open from today. So far we have invested more than \$12 million to create more than 2,500 good jobs, and this new round will invest another \$3.9 million to create even more good jobs.

Under the RED Grants, agribusinesses can seek up to \$200,000 with an equal or greater contribution from the business to expand, improve and, more importantly, create good jobs. This is a proud achievement of the Palaszczuk Labor government and an ongoing investment in the future of our regions. Once again, this Labor government shows—with actions, not words—that Labor is known as the party of regional Queensland and that is why I am called 'Furner, the farmers' friend'.