



Speech By  
**Michael Healy**


**MEMBER FOR CAIRNS**

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## **MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **Smithfield Mountain Bike Park**

 **Mr HEALY** (Cairns—ALP) (2.52 pm): I rise today to inform the chamber of the ongoing transformation that is happening in Cairns in the Far North as a cycle sport destination and mecca. The latest chapter in this evolution is the incredibly successful Crankworx event that was held last weekend at the Smithfield Mountain Bike Park just north of Cairns.

Crankworx is a world tour that brings together the best mountain bike athletes from around the globe. It is an event that is held annually and has been held in Austria, Canada and New Zealand. It is the first time it has been held in Australia—and we had it in Cairns. It involves a multitude of disciplines, including some of the most spectacular cycling such as slope style, dual slalom, downhill and pump track. It is not just a fantastic competitor and spectator experience, but a massive tourism drawcard bringing visitors to the region and highlighting why events are a linchpin in our tourism economy. Much of the local success of Crankworx can be attributed to its first-class venue location in Smithfield. This mountain bike course is a proven elite venue having hosted everything up to world championships and also has become the nurturing ground for local champions and icons of the sport, Mick and Tracey Hannah.

Like anything, sport changes. We see Olympic events evolve and new disciplines emerge. What we have seen with Crankworx in Cairns is a glimpse of our sporting future, an athletic code of adventure sport that feeds into our economy with increased visitation. This has huge benefits for the tourism sector through local accommodation, tours, restaurants and the like which benefit our entire region. Cycle tourism does not stop with Crankworx, as the northern calendar bulges with related events that not only bring tourism dollars but also encourage active participation and healthy communities. We have Iron Man; the Tour of the Tropics; the Cardiac Challenge; the Port Douglas Gran Fondo; one of the oldest and most iconic mount bike races, the Crocodile Trophy; and we have the Triple-R mountain bike race. They are just a few examples of well-patronised events making our region the cycling capital of Australia. Throw these into the current world-class suite of tourism products we have in our region and we have increased offerings of experiences to lure tourists from far and wide.

It is also testament to how the tourism industry is in collaboration with the state government in responding to new trends and attractions and meeting the market needs with in-demand and emergent products. The ability to engage with industry and identify these opportunities early and put structure around it is key and that is what this government does. Being at the head of the pack with innovation and cutting-edge attractions will maintain Queensland's reputation and standing as Australia's number one tourism destination in a wide range of areas.

I am pleased to say that the Palaszczuk government is backing all the way events such as Crankworx related to mountain biking and infrastructure right across the state. This government has invested and will continue to invest in not just showcase events but majestic tracks and trails and will continue to work with the private sector to make them happen. The number of families that were at the

event on the weekend, young and old riders, is testament to how the broader community has embraced mountain biking. There is no better example of investment in infrastructure than the 94-kilometre Wangetti Trail from Palm Cove to Port Douglas, a trail that will capture the imagination of trail riders and walkers alike and when completed will have the capacity to link up with the Cairns Regional Council Northern Beaches Leisure Trail creating one of the greatest coastal and cycling/walking routes in the world.

**Mr Harper:** I will come up and do it with you, mate.

**Mr HEALY:** You are more than welcome. I will take that interjection. We continue to recognise the need for the development of a variety of trails and opportunities for all cyclists. Ensuring that we cater for a broad section of the community is the key to success. Our support for trails goes well beyond just Wangetti. Recent discussions with Glen Jacobs and his team at World Trail reveals that we have three scoping documents that are currently underway and we are working with the Mareeba, Cairns and the Tablelands councils to ensure we continue to invest and make improvements. We know what is working; and this is one of them. It is a fantastic event and I congratulate my parliamentary colleagues and look forward, as we move forward, to more of these events.