



Speech By  
**Bruce Saunders**


**MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH**

---

Record of Proceedings, 23 February 2023

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Maryborough Electorate, Manufacturing**

 **Mr SAUNDERS** (Maryborough—ALP) (2.39 pm): On 7 February—and seven is a very lucky number for the Maryborough electorate—I welcomed the Palaszczuk Labor government cabinet to Maryborough to announce the \$7.1 billion Train Manufacturing Program to be based at Torbanlea, which is 25 kilometres north of the great city of Maryborough. Downer was the preferred tenderer announced on 7 February, and I keep talking about 7 February because we are talking about \$7.1 billion for 65 sets of trains. It will set the Maryborough community up for many years to come. This will ensure that our young people in our community will have a career path. This will ensure that they will be able to do a trade, stay in the region and raise a family in the region. This is what the Palaszczuk government does—a good Labor government—we are spending a lot of money around regional Queensland.

The 65 sets of trains will be made at Torbanlea in a purpose-built factory which is owned by the state government. Honourable members should think about what that injection of money is going to mean across the Fraser Coast region, including Maryborough and Hervey Bay, for our young people. The education minister is not in the chamber today. I would like to congratulate her on working with the transport minister and the Premier and for the way our schools have been working with TransLink to ensure that these young people have a career path. Our public schools such as Maryborough State High School and Aldridge State High School are working very closely with TransLink to make sure these young people will have a career path. That is in addition to the money that is being spent in building these trains—\$7.1 billion.

In 2015 the great city of Maryborough was on its knees. One of the first meetings I had was with the management of Downer. They were talking about pulling out of our great city. It was pretty traumatic for me as the newly elected member for Maryborough to talk about losing one of the biggest factories in our community and also that skill set we have had for over 152 years in our city. Who saved it? It was the Palaszczuk Labor government. They have saved Downer in our city. They have also brought back manufacturing to regional Queensland and they are giving the young people a career path. We are giving young people in our region a career. We are giving them a trade as a boilermaker or a fitter. This has all been done by the Palaszczuk Labor government. Had we left it to that mob over there, Downer would have been closed and there would have been no career path. We were once noted as the Detroit of Wide Bay. We are now one of the few manufacturing hubs in regional Queensland and that is all thanks to the Palaszczuk Labor government reinvesting in regional Queensland.