




Speech By
Hon. Craig Crawford

MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER

Record of Proceedings, 11 May 2023

MOTION

Far North Queensland, Service Delivery

 **Hon. CD CRAWFORD** (Barron River—ALP) (Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships) (3.35 pm): I expected better than that from the member for Kawana. I thought it was going to be a bit more entertaining. I thought there was going to be a bit more punch in there. I was very surprised that he actually got called up to come back to relevance on his own motion, which was interesting.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: I will manage the House, thank you, member.

Mr CRAWFORD: I move the following amendment—

That all words after “House” be omitted and the following inserted:

1. commends the members for Cairns, Cook, Barron River and Mulgrave for their continued dedication and advocacy on behalf of their community.

Opposition members interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Members of the opposition, I would ask that we hear the amendment in silence so that I can adjudicate on the amendment.

Mr CRAWFORD: And—

2. notes the investment by the Palaszczuk government in Far North Queensland to support Queenslanders, including:

Mr O'Connor interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Bonney, you are warned.

Mr CRAWFORD: And—

- (a) \$346 million for a major upgrade of the Cairns Hospital;
 - (b) \$310 million since 2015 to upgrade local schools;
 - (c) \$15 million to upgrade Cairns TAFE with an additional \$16 million to expand Great Barrier Reef International Marine College;
 - (d) \$146 million for the Smithfield Bypass;
 - (e) \$481 million for Bruce Highway upgrades between Edmonton to Gordonvale;
 - (f) \$127 million for Cairns Shipping Development project;
 - (g) \$189 million to support the Cairns Marine Precinct with an additional \$39 million injection for road and bridge infrastructure and local shipyards upgrades;
 - (h) over \$1 billion to protect the Great Barrier Reef;
3. notes the savage cuts by the Newman LNP government including:
 - (a) cut 430 frontline health jobs in FNQ;
 - (b) cut over 140 agriculture and fishery employees in FNQ;
 - (c) cut 889 jobs at Ergon Energy;

- (d) cut \$188 million from the state's tourism budget;
- (e) increased electricity prices by 43 per cent in FNQ;
- (f) planned to shut 14 schools in FNQ;
- (g) cut \$2.7 million from FNQ child safety, support and disability organisations;
- (h) cut more than \$2 million to nine local community health organisations; and

Mr Mander interjected.

Mr ACTING SPEAKER: Pause the clock. Member for Everton, you are warned under the standing orders. I have asked to hear the motion in silence.

Mr CRAWFORD: And—

4. notes that the LNP opposition are the same tired faces of the Newman government who will cut, sack and sell again.

Coming into the 2015 election as a first-time Labor candidate, the Newman government held all of the seats up here bar one. They had completely turned their backs on Far North Queensland. They had taken the people of the north for granted. The LNP basically declared war on almost the entire public sector. As a candidate in 2015 coming from a paramedic background, the ambulance staff was being attacked by the Newman government, firefighters were being attacked, nurses were being attacked, senior medical officers were being attacked, the judiciary was being attacked and teachers were being attacked. The road construction industry was virtually on its knees with no significant work on the horizon. At one of the first meetings after I was elected there was a plea from the civil construction industry, 'Please get us a pipeline of work, otherwise we are going to have to sell up and go somewhere else.' The Palaszczuk government delivered project after project, and then we delivered the Smithfield bypass.

Under the LNP, school funding in the north had dried up. Since 2015, with our government, every single state school in my electorate has received significant funding—new halls, teachers, car parks, drop-offs, pick-ups, STEM facilities, world-class infrastructure into our schools. We have significantly supported our health system when the LNP turned their back. We have delivered state-of-the-art infrastructure to our health system over and over and over again.

They picked the wrong city to try on a motion like theirs. Cairns has sent a strong message to the LNP. They were not welcome in 2015, they were not welcome in 2017 and they were not welcome in 2020. The greatest thing to happen to Far North Queensland is the election of the Palaszczuk government, and the LNP again will not be welcomed here in 2024.