




Speech By
Julianne Gilbert

MEMBER FOR MACKAY

Record of Proceedings, 25 May 2023

PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT

Great Barrier Reef Arena

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.22 pm): Time for some good news. Last Saturday was a huge day of celebration in Mackay. Over 7,000 people gathered at Harrup Park Cricket Club for two big events—Legends of the Lawn and the official opening of the Great Barrier Reef Arena. Deputy Premier Steven Miles and Minister Stirling Hinchliffe, and also federal minister Tony Burke, joined the Harrup Park Mackay community, led by manager Adrian Young and also board chair Terry Doolan and his board members and life members of the club. Also, the member for Whitsunday and the member for Everton came along to join in the celebrations.

The \$25 million arena is a state-of-the-art professional sporting facility with media and broadcasting capabilities, professional standard team facilities, and fantastic public spaces. The vision for the club was always to build community space, and they have achieved that. Our good friend the late Tim Mulherin drove this project as a board member, and it is fitting that the largest public space has been named the Tim Mulherin Green. It is fitted out with a lovely walkway and memorial. The green has already been pressed into use with an eat street at our local cricket finals. When something fantastic happens in Mackay, our local legend, Graeme Connors, writes and performs songs. Make sure you check out the Great Barrier Reef Arena anthem; it is a cracker.

The building of state-of-the-art structures in my region keep rolling out. There are more and more of them. The tender for the new Moranbah \$45 million hospital is awarded to Hutchinson Builders, and shovels are ready to roll out a 12-bed inpatient ward, expanded emergency department, a helipad, medical imaging, laundry—

Ms Bates interjected.

Mrs GILBERT: Listen up! I just said it has been awarded.

Ms Bates interjected.

Mrs GILBERT: Put your ears on! Laundry and kitchen facilities, and everything needed for a quality hospital. Mayor Anne Baker is a champion of this project and she is so pleased that there are coal royalties being poured back into her community.

The new Minister for Health, Minister Fentiman, joined me in Mackay last Friday so she could also announce the tender for the \$250 million Mackay Base Hospital expansion. This expansion has been brought forward by at least 10 years from its original plans. BESIX Watpac will deliver the additional 128 beds—

(Time expired)