



Speech By  
**Hon. Mark Furner**


**MEMBER FOR FERNY GROVE**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 June 2023

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Budget, Agriculture Industry**

 **Hon. ML FURNER** (Ferny Grove—ALP) (Minister for Agricultural Industry Development and Fisheries and Minister for Rural Communities) (10.10 am): Queensland would not be the fantastic state in which to live and work that it is today if it were not for our primary producers. That is why the Palaszczuk government is a friend of the farmers. It is why we are investing well over half a billion dollars in agriculture in our state budget. While conditions in Queensland—

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr FURNER:** You have to love those cries of adulation from those opposite!

While conditions in Queensland are good for farmers right now, we know that it will not stay that way forever. We want to help primary producers and agribusinesses to be as resilient as possible for the next drought, so we are investing \$150 million into grants, loans and programs for drought preparedness.

We also recognise how vital it is to safeguard Queensland's biosecurity. The world-class food and fibre we produce must be protected. We are investing more than \$22 million over five years and almost \$3 million each year after that for action against plant pests and diseases. We are also investing \$22 million over five years and \$2.5 million every year after that to address animal biosecurity risks and tackle livestock diseases like lumpy skin disease and foot-and-mouth disease. We are putting \$61 million towards the national red imported Fire Ant Eradication Program and almost \$36 million over five years and \$7 million per year thereafter for the National Biosecurity Strategy. We are funding 15 new permanent jobs in Biosecurity Queensland, on the front line, protecting Queensland agriculture.

The Palaszczuk government's successful Rural Economic Development Grants will be funded once again also. We are already supporting the creation of 2½ thousand jobs through this scheme, with \$12 million in grants already awarded. We are putting another \$3.3 million towards those grants in the budget.

We have also committed almost \$12 million towards our Sustainable Fisheries Strategy, \$22 million to monitor commercial fishing operations and their interactions with endangered species, and more than \$9 million towards swimmer safety through our Shark Control Program. I could go on. The cost-of-living relief our government is providing will also greatly benefit rural and regional communities. The budget shows once again that the Palaszczuk government remains the farmers' friend.