



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 16 March 2023

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**CopperString 2.0**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (2.58 pm): I rise to talk about the importance of the Palaszczuk government's investment in North Queensland, which is supporting both the resources sector and the energy industry. Last week it was the government that delivered a massive shot in the arm for Townsville and all of North Queensland. We will build CopperString 2032 which will unlock potentially billions of dollars in new resource projects in the North West Minerals Province. It is something I have long advocated for and so has the Townsville community.

The last time we saw people so thrilled and on the same page about an announcement was when the government helped bring State of Origin to Townsville. Do not just take my word for why CopperString is a game changer. The member for Traeger said, 'If you're looking for projects to create prosperity in Queensland and Australia, it would be pretty hard to go past anything better than this.' Well said, member for Traeger; I totally agree. It is unfortunate the LNP does not back you up on that one.

This project is at risk, and so is the future prosperity of the north if the LNP get their way. It is the Palaszczuk government that will continue to back good job-creating projects like CopperString 2032 that support our lifestyle in Townsville and North Queensland. As we announced last week, through the Industry Partnership Program we are helping Vecco Group deliver the \$26 million Townsville Vanadium Battery Manufacturing Facility. Vecco is one of a number of players that is planning to develop a vanadium mine in the Julia Creek region. Vecco's facility is part of the Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan, which includes creating a North Queensland battery industry supply chain. We know the North West Minerals Province has an abundance of critical minerals such as vanadium which are needed to produce large-scale batteries, which are a key part of Queensland's Energy and Jobs Plan. There are huge opportunities to continue creating good jobs in both our resources industry and the renewable energy sector through developing critical mineral projects.

Let's be clear: you cannot have a renewable energy sector without a strong resources sector. That is why CopperString 2032 is so important. It will help these new critical mineral projects get off the ground. In fact, I caught up with the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies and a number of potential vanadium miners on Tuesday of this week. It was exciting to go hear their plans for the future, which will help create great jobs in Townsville. As well, as a government we are supporting them through the \$75 million Australia-first critical minerals demonstration facility which we will build in Townsville. This will help support those very companies I caught up with on Tuesday to prove up their product, attract investors back into this state and create great jobs and opportunities. This is what real governments do—listen to stakeholders. We have a vision for the future and investment in that future.