



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 18 April 2023

## **MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

### **Resources Industries**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (2.32 pm): I rise to speak about how we are continuing to deliver for the resource industry throughout Queensland and why it is so important for regions like Townsville. Currently the industry supports around 75,000 good jobs with the majority of these being based in regional Queensland.

As a government we value the resource industry for the jobs it supports directly and indirectly along with the royalties it generates, which support our police officers, teachers, hospitals and infrastructure right throughout Queensland. That is why the Palaszczuk government is backing our critical minerals sector, which is shaping up to be the next big mining boom. That just does not happen by accident.

Today the Treasurer and I announced the next stage of the \$75 million Queensland resources common user facility. The call has gone out for a managing contractor to deliver this Australian first processing facility in Townsville. Once again, Queensland is ahead of the game. There is no comparable pilot or demonstration scale facility anywhere in Australia or in the Asia-Pacific. The state government owned facility will initially focus on vanadium processing with the opportunity to process other critical minerals like cobalt and rare earth elements in the future. We know the North West Minerals Province has an abundance of critical minerals like vanadium which will be used in products like batteries. In fact, yesterday and today the Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone, or MITEZ, held a forum focusing on vanadium where a number of proponents are discussing the opportunities on offer in the region.

We know there are great opportunities for good jobs through growing our own critical minerals sector, but the work is just beginning. That is why as a government we are supporting the resource industry to deliver this facility and we will continue to deliver for all Queenslanders. This is unlike those opposite, who have not uttered a single word about this investment. Maybe that is because they are planning to add it to their long list of cuts which we now know includes CopperString 2032, a project which will transform the north-west of our great state. CopperString will allow us to unlock the vast reserves of critical minerals in the North West Minerals Province like copper, zinc, vanadium and cobalt. These are the minerals the world is demanding in order to produce batteries and renewable energy as part of their plans to decarbonise. I have said it before and I will say it again: you cannot have a strong renewable energy sector without a strong resources sector. That is why CopperString 2032 is so important.

It will create opportunities for resource companies to develop these critical minerals projects and the broader North West Minerals Province as well as renewable energy in the area. The member for Traeger gets it. In fact, he thanked the Premier during Townsville Enterprise's Unlock the North event held in Parliament House last sitting week. What did the Leader of the Opposition say about

CopperString during the event? Nothing. The LNP have no original thoughts about how to grow the resource industry. They do have plenty of unoriginal thoughts though, and that is to cut the Queensland resources common user facility along with CopperString 2032. It is in their DNA.

As a government we are focused on delivering for all Queenslanders. The Leader of the Opposition is focused on whingeing and whining, cutting, sacking and selling. In fact, he deserves a gold medal for it. Do honourable members know where he will get his hands on one? It will be Ravenswood Gold, which last week officially opened its expansion project, becoming Queensland's largest goldmine. This is an amazing project which delivered 1,000 good jobs during construction and is now supporting hundreds during its operation. More than 1,000 contractors were supported during the mine's expansion while its permanent workforce has increased to more than 430 with a further 220 permanent contractors.

What I would like to see is the gold medals for the 2032 Olympics produced using gold from the Ravenswood mine. This will put the spotlight firmly on the resources industry when all eyes will be on Queensland in 2032 for the Olympics. Queensland is a leader on the world stage when it comes to our resources industry and during the World Mining Congress in Brisbane we will have the opportunity to be right in that spotlight. Holding this event in Queensland recognises our state's strong global reputation when it comes to our resources sector.

Let me say this. The resource industry matters to Queensland and to all Queenslanders. It supports good jobs for thousands of people. That is why the Palaszczuk government is working with industry to help grow it now and into the future.