



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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Record of Proceedings, 15 November 2023

**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

**CopperString 2032**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources) (9.59 am): I stand before you today to celebrate a monumental step forward for Queensland's critical minerals sector and the pursuit of secure and sustainable energy for the North West Minerals Province. In March the Palaszczuk government pledged \$5 billion to CopperString 2032 and a renewable energy SuperGrid.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I am sorry, Minister. I will reset the microphones as there seems to be some feedback. Members, please check that your microphones are not on. It does not assist with the acoustics and the speaker system in the chamber.

**Mr STEWART:** Would you like me to start again?

**Mr SPEAKER:** I do not think so.

**Mr STEWART:** I would love to! During community cabinet in Townsville, I was proud to stand by the Premier as she announced the down payment of \$1.3 billion to accelerate the construction of CopperString 2032. That is why I wanted to start again, Treasurer. Initial works will focus on detailed design, engineering, environmental assessments and geotechnical surveys. This funding paves the way for the construction to commence in mid-2024, which is expected to support 800 good secure jobs. This is a pivotal moment for North and North-West Queensland as CopperString 2032 is not just a project; it is a legacy. This legacy should be built in the same way we built the stadium: by North Queenslanders, for North Queenslanders.

**Opposition members** interjected.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Order! Members to my left.

**Mr STEWART:** They love it as well. They love our CopperString announcements. What I am even more excited about are the thousands of new jobs in critical minerals mining and manufacturing and the construction of renewables that this project will lead to. It is the key to unlocking our natural advantage, which is critical minerals including copper, vanadium, zinc and cobalt. We know that there is potentially \$500 billion in new critical mineral deposits that we can unlock through CopperString 2032. Those are the minerals that the world is demanding as part of its journey to decarbonisation. We have a global ambition: to create a genuine pit-to-product value chain and leverage our natural resources. I have said it before and I will say it again: if we do not manufacture our future then someone else will.

We need to act now, together with industry, community and First Nations people to secure our future and unlock the next resources boom in critical minerals. That is why in June this year, at Australia's first-ever World Mining Congress, we unveiled our Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy. It is a bold \$245 million vision to position Queensland as a global leader in delivering critical minerals and renewables to the world. That means not only digging and shipping the raw materials but also processing our critical minerals and manufacturing high-value products here in Queensland.

**Mr SPEAKER:** Minister, I am sorry. Members, I have just asked that members be vigilant around whether or not their microphones are turned on. I wish to remind members that if you are doing so as a tactic to disrupt the member on their feet then it is a matter that I will deal with harshly.

**Mr STEWART:** I can start again! It is about future-proofing the next generation of jobs for Queensland, diversifying and decarbonising our economy and ensuring Queensland's future sustainable economic prosperity. This strategy is backed by the construction of the \$75 million Queensland Resources Common User Facility in Townsville. Last week, Queensland company Sedgman was announced as the managing contractor in a major milestone for the project. CopperString 2032 will help make the Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy a reality and take our state to the next resources boom. It is not just a game changer for our resources industries; it is the game.