



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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Record of Proceedings, 7 March 2024

**PRIVATE MEMBER'S STATEMENT**

**Mackay Electorate, Biomanufacturing**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.16 pm): The Mackay region is a very exciting place for new and emerging industries in the biomanufacturing area. The Miles government committed \$415.5 million to the Industry Partnership Program to grow industry and local jobs in regional Queensland. In order to see how this fund could benefit my region and all of the sugar-growing industries of Queensland, Minister Grace recently joined me in Mackay for a tour of the QUT laboratory on the grounds of Racecourse Mill. Our tour guide was Professor Ian O'Hara, Queensland's envoy for the development of biocommodities. Both state and federal governments have supported QUT in the refurbishment and modernisation of their research laboratory so that facilities can meet the new and growing needs of development in regional Queensland in the areas of sustainable fuel and food production. The upgrades allow companies to fast-track the development of bioproducts derived from different parts of a stick of sugar cane. The new facilities will enable companies to undertake early stage scale-up, reducing costs and time frames for getting new products to market.

One process the laboratory will be able to offer is precision fermentation. This allows the manufacturing of new, high-value food ingredients such as proteins that can boost our bioeconomy and provide new domestic and export opportunities for our agriculture and food and beverage industries. Professor O'Hara told us that the use of precision fermentation in the production of food ingredients is one of the most exciting developments in food innovation in recent years. The process can turn the carbon from sugar into proteins. There are two products that are of most interest to companies: powdered egg white and powdered milk. The export opportunities to our northern neighbours are immense. The value-adding process to the sugar produced in Queensland has the potential to deliver food security to our global region.

The Miles government is supporting companies like Cauldron to develop a business case to set up a biofood manufacturing hub in Mackay. The development of this new product will diversify the sugar industry and produce new jobs for the children who are currently sitting in schools. Older workers may also be able to transition to new skills. You might be asking where all of this is going to happen. We have a new state development area in Mackay: 907 hectares of land across Racecourse Mill and the Rosella site. Mackay is an exciting place to be.