



Speech By  
**Julianne Gilbert**


**MEMBER FOR MACKAY**

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**MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST**

**Mackay Community Cabinet**

 **Mrs GILBERT** (Mackay—ALP) (2.41 pm): The recent Mackay Community Cabinet was a great success. People from my community had access to Miles government ministers for three days across a wide range of events and announcements, and health was high on the agenda. The Treasurer visited the construction site of the new Moranbah hospital. The health minister officially announced the opening of the brand new state-of-the-art Sarina Hospital and at the Mackay Base Hospital we celebrated the start of construction of two new wings that will offer an additional 120 beds. The new children's and women's health units will be incorporated into those two new spaces. All of that is in addition to the multistorey car park that is still in the planning and consultation phase. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars on new health facilities across the Mackay HHS footprint is only possible because of the Miles government's progressive coal royalties and that policy is at risk from those opposite. Many members in my community have connections to the coal industry. It is fantastic to see everyone benefiting from the rich resources that are in our backyard—not just the multinational mining companies.

There are huge housing pressures in my region. We need more homes for those who need support with social housing and those who want to rent or buy in the private sector. Minister Scanlon and Premier Steven Miles joined me at a North Mackay site that will host seven new social housing homes. Ethan, a young apprentice from QBuild, met us on the site. He is one of the many apprentices and trainees that QBuild is supporting to be a part of our skilled workforce that will deliver homes and infrastructure for all Queenslanders.

Some of the best youth in Queensland live in my region and there are some who need guidance to make good choices about education, health and future work. The team from Youth Justice are making real changes to the lives of young people in Mackay. Minister Farmer and I met with the Youth Justice co-responder team that is working with the police. They work together on the streets to target young people who are at risk of offending or reoffending. It is better to keep young people out of the youth justice system.

It was fantastic to meet up with a great asset for Mackay, Patrick Thaiday. Patrick works his magic on children to help them to be proud of their First Nations culture and to walk through life as proud children who are making good life choices. As a bonus for the community, we were entertained by Patrick's students who performed dances. He was excited when Minister Farmer joined us to let him know that he was successful as a grant recipient for his community culture program.

Premier Miles announced that 20 new police officers will be deployed to the Mackay police district for police uplift operations. Those officers will be used for targeted programs and to keep our community safe. Minister Linard announced a further extension of areas on our tropical islands to be included as national park. Those areas not only protect our natural environment but also help to build on ecotourism. We love our local islands.

All three regional mayors attended and networked at our town hall meeting, where the deputations for each of the ministers were booked out. Some people had heard on the radio that the meetings were taking place at the turf club and, even though they did not have a booking, they showed up hoping to have a few minutes with the Premier or a minister. No-one was turned away and there was standing room only for the town-hall style Q&A session. Unsolicited feedback is always the most authentic. Kylie Porter, the CEO of GW3, wrote to Premier Miles and copied me in. I will share a little bit of her letter—

I appreciate these events are logistically challenging. However, the opportunity it provides for community and industry to engage directly with Cabinet and key department executives, right here in-region, is invaluable.

I observed a packed function room that was buzzing with the discussions of locals engaging directly with Ministers and key decision makers on the widest of subject matters. These discussions may not have taken place otherwise; either due to travel and cost constraints—

*(Time expired)*