



Speech By  
**Hon. Scott Stewart**


**MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE**

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Critical Minerals**

 **Hon. SJ STEWART** (Townsville—ALP) (Minister for Resources and Critical Minerals) (9.53 am): I am proud to launch yet another initiative that will help advance Queensland's critical minerals sector. More than a century of mining has left behind piles of waste across Queensland which is being managed safely in accordance with environmental regulations. But more can be done, and this legacy demands effective and innovative solutions to manage this waste, reduce environmental risks and create new and exciting opportunities. Work by my department in conjunction with leading researchers from the University of Queensland has involved assessing and analysing these residual resources right across the state. This work has identified the presence of many valuable, scarce and in-demand minerals lingering in mining and mineral processing residues. These are minerals like cobalt and rare earths, which are a key part of building and developing batteries and renewable energy projects which this government backs as part of our Queensland Energy and Jobs Plan.

As a government, we have done the work to identify and prove there is an opportunity to find value in mine waste. Now we are backing industry to take it further. Today I am proud to launch our new Collaborative Development Program, which is a \$5 million funding initiative to help companies assess and find ways to recover value from mining and processing residuals. Applications have now opened for the grants program. I have heard firsthand from international investors in places like South Korea about how excited they are to take on these prospects. There are huge opportunities for industry to recycle mine waste minerals into commercial and valuable products to reduce our carbon footprint and move towards creating a sustainable circular economy model.

This initiative is a key component of our Queensland Critical Minerals Strategy. The strategy oversees \$245 million in investment to transform the state, national and global economy through the responsible use of our critical minerals and outlines our ambition for the resources sector. Our ambition for this region and the state is not a small one. We want Queensland to be a global leader, supplier and manufacturer of critical minerals and renewable energy technologies. Queensland's attractiveness as an international investment destination for resources is growing, and we are striking while the iron is hot. We have the potential to be a leading producer of critical minerals based on the number of mineral deposit types we have around our state. We know that there is potentially \$500 billion worth of critical minerals in the North West Minerals Province alone, which is why this government is backing CopperString to unlock these opportunities. These minerals are essential for manufacturing renewable energy technologies like batteries and electric vehicles. We want investors across the globe to know about the huge opportunities in our Queensland resource sector, particularly in the North West Minerals Province, which will supply the critical minerals the world needs as part of its energy transition.

I would encourage anyone in the industry to apply to the Miles government's \$5 million Collaborative Development Program to take advantage of this massive opportunity to capitalise on what was once considered rubbish but could now be the next boom in resources for Queensland.