



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PROOF

Federation Chamber

CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS

Sunshine Coast

SPEECH

Tuesday, 21 March 2017

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

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Questioner	Responder
Speaker O'Brien, Ted, MP	Question No.

Mr TED O'BRIEN (Fairfax) (16:15): The experts agree: Queensland's Sunshine Coast is on a roll. With proper management and strong representation, it has one of the brightest futures of any region in the country. Bernard Salt, one of our nation's leading demographers, recently predicted an increase in the Sunshine Coast's population from around 350,000 people today to 550,000 by 2036, based on a continuation of rigorous, transformative economic growth now running at four per cent. Four per cent! That is nation-leading growth.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland has just completed research which predicts this strong growth is set to continue on the back of a pipeline of major projects—projects that the coalition government is backing strongly and that have helped spark a steady rise in business confidence. Let me give you a few examples. Over \$1 billion will be spent over the coming years on local stretches of the Bruce Highway, 80 per cent funded by the Commonwealth government. The upgrading of Sunshine Coast Airport to a major international airport will be underway thanks in no small part to the coalition government generously extending a \$181 million concessional loan to the local council. The construction of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, which has also been strongly supported by this government, will transform health care and boost jobs for our rapidly growing population. Add to that the Maroochydore CBD and major housing developments by the likes of Stockland and you see why our region is attracting such optimistic forecasts.

The Sunshine Coast Business Council, under the very strong leadership of its chair, Sandy Zubrinich, held its annual strategic directions discussion on 9 March. That discussion strongly reflected a growing sense of optimism based on infrastructure, investment and jobs, all built around a vision of a much expanded demographic of young, upwardly mobile families. This portrait of the strong future of the Sunshine Coast is richly deserved and it is in lockstep with the transformative policies and vision of the Turnbull coalition government. What excites me the most about the economic growth the coast is enjoying is that it comes without compromising our natural advantages. We experience a near-perfect climate. We have a lush, rolling hinterland. We have probably the healthiest lifestyle in Australia, making us the lifestyle capital. I have every confidence that, with the support of the coalition government, this will continue.