



Speech By
Hon. Jann Stuckey

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Gold Coast Commonwealth Games

 **Hon. JA STUCKEY** (Currumbin—LNP) (Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games) (9.48 am): Friday, 4 April 2014 marks four years to go until the keenly anticipated Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games—a momentous occasion in our Commonwealth Games journey. Our games will be the biggest sports event ever held on the Gold Coast and the biggest sports event held in Australia this decade, with up to 6,500 athletes and team officials from 71 countries competing over 11 days in 17 sports and four para sports.

Plans for the 2018 Commonwealth Games are on time and on budget. The new Gold Coast Aquatic Centre will be ready for the Pan Pacific swimming championships in August and last week I joined the Premier and the Deputy Premier to reveal the design for the Commonwealth Games village, a project that will inject an estimated \$500 million into the local economy and will generate more than 1,500 jobs during its construction.

GC2018 will be a landmark event for the Gold Coast and for Queensland, a project that will deliver a lasting positive legacy. The Newman government is working hard to leave positive legacies for all Queenslanders, unlike Labor, whose years of mismanagement and incompetence have left us with the burden of an \$80 billion debt. Every single year Queenslanders are left with the legacy of a \$150 million interest bill alone for the failed desalination plant and recycled water projects rushed into by the Labor government. The good folk of Currumbin have felt the pain of this desalination monstrosity more than anyone else and have a right to be angry about this enormous waste of taxpayers' money.

The Newman government went into the last election with a commitment to make tourism one of the four pillars of the Queensland economy. Yesterday's satellite data released by Tourism Research Australia said that for the financial year ending 2013 tourism directly contributed \$23 billion to the Queensland economy, a \$3.5 billion boost since this government came in two years ago. Imagine what we could have achieved if we had invested an extra \$150 million into tourism, our state's wealth generator, instead of paying Labor's interest. The amount of \$150 million in extra funding would transform our major events calendar, already the envy of other states; \$150 million would take us to the next level. Right across Queensland our destination marketing approach, from Famous for Fun on the Gold Coast, Adventurous By Nature in tropical North Queensland and Outback Queensland's Eventures, we have told the rest of Australia and the world of the great times to be had here in Queensland. While these results have been impressive, imagine our tourism figures if we had invested \$150 million into these and other campaigns. Imagine the global market that we could have reached. Instead, that money goes to pay a \$150 million interest bill. How many more international business conferences, how many more major events, could have been held?

This is the terrible price that we have paid as a result of Labor's gross mismanagement. These are the opportunities we have missed out on due to the burden of Labor's debt. Paying the interest on Labor's mistakes has robbed Queenslanders of a chance to reinvigorate their economy even faster than the Newman government is already achieving.