



Fiona Simpson MP

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE • SPEAKER OF THE QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENT

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Bright start to 2014

Very encouraging signs are showing in key economic indicators for Queensland. Our State economy grew at 2.0% (2012-13) - the best growth rate in Australia. The latest ABS data shows that Queensland dwelling approvals rose 3.8% in December, which is the highest level since March 2008.

Confidence is growing in the Sunshine Coast economy too following a bumper Spring and Summer holiday season for the local tourism industry. Construction work on our newly completed Sunshine Coast University Private Hospital Work and commencement of the new \$1.8 million Public University Hospital has also given the local economy a major boost.

In 2013 we saw some great achievements for the area, and I'm looking forward to even more funding coming our way this year to improve infrastructure and services for our community.

I'll be working hard in 2014 and look forward to more wins for the Maroochydore Electorate. My key goals are to gain even more support in the areas of **health, education, tourism and community services** as well transport.

Health Update:

We've increased the health budget by \$1.28 billion and as a result we have seen improvements in health service delivery and waiting times. For example, the public dental waiting list for the Sunshine Coast region has almost halved from 8,836 (Feb 2013) to 4,668 (Sept 2013).

Local waiting times for public hospital appointments are also being cut with more than 400 public patients being referred to the newly opened Sunshine Coast University Private Hospital to receive treatment free of charge. This will continue to be used for public healthcare services until our new Public University Hospital opens in 2016 with 450 beds.

Tourism boost:

Local tourism operators are welcoming news that the Destination Q forum will be held on the Sunshine Coast later this year (details to be announced).

Securing more international tourists to the Sunshine Coast is critical to growing local jobs and this will be supported by building a better Sunshine Coast Airport. The State Government are supporting the Council's Airport Expansion project with the transfer of Crown Land to Council at no cost to help move forward the proposed \$418.6 million project.

Education News:

About \$800,000 in new funding has just been awarded to schools in my electorate as part of a package to help students boost their learning outcomes. This comes on top of an increase in education spending across the state of \$707 million, delivering 724 new teachers and support staff.

The latest round of extra money is part of the "Great Results Guarantee". This gives principals, in consultation with their school communities, the ability to develop a plan on how to spend the money on numeracy and literacy programs their students need.



Funding for local community groups:

The Maroochydore Electorate has seen some fantastic funding wins for our local community groups. I truly value the work of our amazing volunteers and I will continue to work with them to ensure they are aware of the funding opportunities available to help achieve their club goals.

Four not for profit groups in the Maroochydore electorate started the New Year well with funding wins under the latest round of State Government community funding through the Gambling Community Benefit Fund and the Jupiters Casino Community Benefit Fund:

Suncare Community Services - \$31,818 for the installation of solar power system;

Maroochydore Surf Life Saving Club - \$15,454 for the purchase of rescue boat and equipment;

ASD Care (Autism Spectrum Disorder) - \$34,898 for the purchase of a motor vehicle;

Maroochy Neighbourhood Centre - \$30,313.64 to build a commercial kitchen and run training programs.

Calls for a tougher stance on drug and alcohol-related violence

The State Government has announced a stronger stance against drug and alcohol-fuelled violence, including tougher penalties for offenders and a greater police presence in entertainment precincts. Any violence is unacceptable but when incidents happen, we want to see justice for the victims and appropriate consequences for offenders.



I am seeking feedback from my constituents, and especially young people, about what approach should be taken to tackle this problem and I invite you to join the conversation by completing a quick survey on my Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/FionaSimpsonMP> or emailing me at Maroochydoore@parliament.qld.gov.au.

Some people are suggesting limiting opening hours at pubs and clubs to 3am and imposing a 1.30 am lockout. These restrictions have been in place on the Sunshine Coast for some time. Another option is to get tough on those few people who are responsible for the violence and antisocial behaviour.

I believe it's also time for serious investigation of the impact of steroids and other drugs when combined with alcohol. I look forward to hearing your views on how we put a stop to this violent criminal behaviour.

8 new police officers to join the Sunshine Coast beat

Eight more first year constables have joined the Sunshine Coast Police Service this week to help revitalise frontline services. These new police officers are in addition to the 19 police officers added to the Sunshine Coast region since April 2012.

More State Government funding support to get kids into sport

Congratulations to eight sports and recreation clubs in the Maroochydoore electorate who have been successful in gaining grants of up to \$10,000 to boost club membership numbers in the second release of the State Government's *Get Going* program.

In addition to this, the Mooloolaba Outrigger Canoe Club has been awarded funding of \$65,758 under the *Get Playing* program to improve facilities and infrastructure. The Club will use these funds to install shade cover and the construct an equipment shed.

Funding applications for the *Get Started* program will reopen at 10am on Monday 10th February. Vouchers are to help children and young people whose families struggle to pay sporting club fees. Eligible children and young people can apply online for a voucher valued up to \$150, which can be presented at a *Get Started* sport or recreation club. Contact me for further information.

Honour an inspirational Queensland Woman



Queensland
Inspiring
Women
SPEAKER'S AWARDS

I am seeking nominations for a local "Queensland Inspiring Woman" to go in the running to be honoured at my breakfast at Queensland Parliament House in Brisbane on March 7, 2014.

As Speaker I am delighted to be hosting the event to honour women who demonstrate a spirit of generosity, whether through a particular initiative or through a lifestyle of encouraging service to others.

I encourage you to get involved by nominating someone who lives in the Maroochydoore electorate by emailing me before Friday 14 February. You will need to include the name and contact details of the nominee, including a short description that demonstrates why they can be considered a 'Woman of Generosity'.

The Queensland Plan: a 30 year vision for Queensland

Our working draft has now been released for public review from Sunday 8 December 2013 until 7 March 2014.

Feedback on the working draft will be used to refine the final plan, which will be released mid-2014. More information and a copy of the draft plan is available online at www.qld.gov.au/queenslandplan. Let me know your feedback on our draft 30 year plan for Queensland.

