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MEDIA RELEASE

NQ's project gain comes with definite Labor pain

Member for Burdekin and Shadow Minister for Northern Queensland, Dale Last, believes the State Budget offers some positives for the North of the State but that each and every dollar is well deserved.

With resources making a massive contribution to the State's coffers, it seems only fair that money earned by the region is returned to the region.

"The huge increase in royalties means there is funding for quite a few projects around the electorate and the region but there is also a massive cash grab with new fees and taxes," Mr Last said.

"It's great to see spending in regional Queensland but I do have concerns around the additional costs on small business, especially the waste tax."

"Labor is taking \$2.25 billion out of the economy through the introduction of five new taxes that will affect every household and business in the state."

"The waste levy was meant to stop interstate waste coming to Queensland but one third goes into consolidated revenue so the government is not being 100% honest." "North Queenslanders should not have to bear the costs of a waste levy because of a problem that exists in the south east corner of the State."

Mr Last said there was very little to address the bigger challenges the state faced and there was also several questionable announcements contained in the budget. "I am concerned that there is no plan to rein in \$83 Billion in debt that is costing Queenslanders more than \$7,000 a minute," Mr Last said.

"Unemployment is another big concern and whilst the State average might be sitting on 6.25% it's as high as 54% for youth in the outback which highlights the disparity between the city and the bush."

"We've seen projects like the Townsville Stadium and the Haughton River project announced again and again and then there's money for a Bio Energy project near Ingham but the project is supposedly on hold; so I'm not sure the Government has done its homework on this project."

LNP Leader Deb Frecklington will present her reply to the budget on Thursday and Mr Last is confident Queenslanders will see the difference when they compare the pair.

"I am confident that our plan will provide the infrastructure and services Queensland needs while sensibly addressing the debt to get Queensland back on track," he said.

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Media Contact: David Cooper 0427 834 844