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Media release

Treasurer, Minister for Employment and Industrial Relations and Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
The Honourable Curtis Pitt

A Budget for jobs, health and education

The Palaszczuk Government's first Budget delivers on its election commitments to increase health and education funding – with record budgets for these key service delivery portfolios.

Treasurer Curtis Pitt said the Budget also delivered for those Queenslanders seeking a job by implementing the Government's commitment to the Working Queensland jobs plan.

"A key element of this Budget's \$1.6 billion jobs plan is the Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative, which will support some 32,000 Queenslanders back into work, Mr Pitt said.

"It will create jobs now, and jobs for the future.

"Our Working Queensland jobs plan will help create the conditions for growing jobs and building new businesses," he said.

Mr Pitt said the Working Queensland jobs plan would focus on skills, training and innovative industries to promote jobs, growth and investment.

"It has five key priorities: skills and training, enhancing business productivity, boosting Government services, fostering emerging and innovative industries and growing our regions.

"The Skilling Queenslanders for Work initiative is exactly what the Queensland economy needs – it is designed to return \$8 into the economy for every \$1 invested.

"The Budget also delivers an additional \$34.5 million in funding to restore TAFE over the next four years to ensure more Queenslanders are job-ready.

"To better align skills demand and long-term workforce planning, we will also allocate \$40 million to the establishment of Jobs Queensland as an independent statutory authority.

"The Government will play its part, with 10 per cent of the workforce on all Government projects required to be apprentices and trainees. This now applies for the first time to Government Owned Corporations."

Mr Pitt said Queensland Treasury was forecasting a \$1.2 billion operating surplus in 2015-16 and \$6.9 billion across the forward estimates. These surpluses will help to fund core services across government, including:

- \$14.2 billion – record health budget to increase by more than 4 per cent. With the scope of available services and demand increasing, the Government has committed an additional

\$2.3 billion over four years

- \$12.4 billion – record education and training budget for more teachers, support and better classrooms
- \$4.8 billion – support for regional and rural Queensland, including \$200 million for the Building Our Regions infrastructure fund
- \$754.6 million – vocational education and training package
- \$500 million – new funding over four years for a statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund to generate local jobs and boost local economies
- \$347 million – Queensland pensioner and Seniors Card holder concessions
- \$31.3 million – extra funding over four years to tackle domestic violence
- \$30 million – funding over two years towards building a new State Netball Centre.

Mr Pitt said the Budget would also provide important support for business by making good on our promise to deliver a payroll tax rebate for apprentices and trainees, resulting in an estimated \$45 million in tax savings for businesses to reinvest.

“Small business will be supported via initiatives such as the Entrepreneurs of Tomorrow fund, which will help stay-at-home parents grow their home-based businesses.

“This is also a Budget that recognises the importance of local infrastructure and local jobs.

“Labor Governments recognise that there are times when economic uplift is required in order to deliver jobs now. In a decentralised State like Queensland, Government building projects help deliver employment when and where it’s most needed.

“Today’s Budget includes a \$10.1 billion spend on infrastructure across Queensland this year, directly supporting an estimated 27,500 jobs.

“It also includes an injection of \$500 million in new money over four years for a statewide Schools and Hospitals Fund.

“Education and health are the backbone of good Labor Budgets and these will be the sorts of local hospital and school refurbishments that support local jobs.”

Mr Pitt said the \$180 million Advance Queensland strategy was another Budget initiative that would deliver jobs now, and jobs for the future.

“This Advance Queensland investment is expected to co-leverage funding and generate total investment of \$300 million.

“It will include programs to deliver new Fellowships and Scholarships to increase research talent and a Future Jobs Strategy to make Queensland the nation’s largest source of investment for industry-research collaboration projects.

“Jobs now, and jobs for the future. That’s what this Budget is about, and that’s what it will deliver.”

Media contact: Martin Philip 0427 919 548

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