

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

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Dametto marks big year in politics

HINCHINBROOK MP Nick Dametto has thanked the community for their ongoing support in 2019 as he marks the end of a productive year in politics.

Mr Dametto said he was incredibly grateful for the support on a number of key projects this year, including his part in securing \$1.5 million from the Federal Government to dredge Cardwell's One Mile Creek, improved drainage for residents in the Bluewater area, a Bruce Highway upgrade, new school infrastructure and introducing legislation to parliament that would allow vision-impaired persons access to disability parking spots.

"When it comes to creating change, the community expects their leaders to be their voice on the issues that matter to them. I certainly hope I've demonstrated that over the last two years and look forward to continuing the fight in 2020," he said.

"Making sure the Federal Coalition Government followed through on their promise for funding to dredge One Mile Creek was a big achievement for the Cardwell community. While council is still working through the process, I would hope that dredging starts as early as possible in the new year."

Better flood mitigation infrastructure was also achieved for residents in Bluewater and Purono Park after they were inundated by major flooding earlier this year that was exacerbated by a nearby rail line.

"After months of negotiations with Queensland Rail, we were finally able to secure a new culvert 10 times the size of the existing one at Healey Creek and four 900 diameter reinforced concrete pipes of the northern side of the bridge near Althaus Creek. I am also continuing to work with Queensland Rail to achieve better drainage solutions for the Deeragun/Jensen area," he said.

"This is a great example of what can happen with consistent lobbying and community pressure."

Mr Dametto said he was particularly proud of his first Bill that was introduced into parliament in October, which aimed at giving Queensland's vision-impaired community the right to apply for a disability parking permit.

"After being contacted by friends and family of those who faced this problem, I knew I had to act and we were able to create a groundswell of support for this change, which also attracted national media attention," he said.

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In November, the State Government relented and introduced their own Transport Legislation Disability Parking and Other Matters Amendment Bill 2019.

"This Bill is effectively an endorsement of my own Transport Legislation (Disability Parking Permit Scheme) Amendment Bill 2019," Mr Dametto said.

"I'm honoured to have had the support of people like Hailey and Chayd Brown and Taylor Blennerhassett, whose children have vision impairments. They gave me the inspiration I needed to take this fight right to the government.

"I'd also like to thank Shane Knuth MP and Guide Dogs Queensland for their relentless advocacy in fighting for this change."

If the government's Bill is passed, changes are expected to be in place by the second quarter of 2020.

The last two State Budgets gave a boost for road safety, with \$9.4 million to for pavement widening on the Bruce Highway between Deep Creek and Bluewater Creek.

"I take personally every death on the Bruce Highway in Hinchinbrook. There are many causes of road incidences and when road design and inadequate infrastructure plays a part, I see it as my mission to ensure funding is allocated to upgrade notorious sections of the highway," he said.

"Likewise, our schools have also benefited. In the last two financial years, there's been almost \$2.6 million spent to replace air-conditioning at Ingham State High School and Victoria Plantation State School and \$44.4 million for the construction of the new North Shore State School.

"St Benedict's Catholic School received more than \$600,000 in additional funding for the construction of six general learning areas, a learning support space, a multi-purpose area, a maintenance shed, toilets, administration and associated walkways. Likewise, Gilroy Santa Maria College is getting almost \$1 million for construction of a new library, learning support, two general learning areas, science room, covered court, administration, book hire and uniform store."

Mr Dametto said he looked forward to "continuing to deliver" in the new year and vowed "keep fighting for Hinchinbrook's fair share".

"Our community benefits when all levels of government come together to achieve great things for our electorate," he said.

"I look forward to 2020 and working with my fellow Katter's Australian Party colleagues to apply the pressure necessary to deliver for all Queenslanders."

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