



## David Littleproud MP

Federal Member for Maranoa

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# Media Statement

May 9, 2018

### **A Federal Budget focused on the regions: David Littleproud MP**

BUSH communities are at the forefront in the Federal Coalition Government's Budget delivered last night, Maranoa MP David Littleproud said.

"Maranoa is vital in this government's plan to drive economic growth to secure more and better paying jobs," Mr Littleproud said.

"The \$51.3 million for six more agricultural counsellors to grow our agriculture trade will help grow farm exports from Maranoa, which means more money for our farmers and in our communities.

"Whether it's Granite Belt horticulture and wine from the South Burnett; kangaroo meat harvested and processed in Western Queensland; beef processed in Warwick, grazed on the Channel Country, sold at Australia's largest cattle-selling centre in Roma; or Darling Downs grain – trade deals are fantastic news for Maranoa.

"Trade agreements can reduce tariffs, but we need market access agreements for each specific commodity before our producers can export their produce there and these agricultural counsellors will work to remove barriers and create export protocol agreements for specific fruits, vegetables and other commodities so they can be exported.

"The \$121.6 million extra we're investing in biosecurity will help keep our farmers safe from exotic pests and diseases and protect their top-quality produce and their livelihoods.

"We're also investing \$51 million into controlling pests and weeds."

Mr Littleproud said the Budget also meant good news for bush communities from supporting our seniors, to child care and health.

"Seniors are very important members of our community and I think it's an absolute tragedy when someone is forced to move from their rural community – away from family, friends and everything they've know – to a city or larger centre to receive care as their needs change," he said.

"This Budget is about supporting the 28,979 people aged over 65 and their families in Maranoa to live longer, happier and healthier lives.

"Will provide capital grants funding of \$40 million, over four years from 2019-20, for aged care facilities in regional, rural and remote communities and helping seniors to stay in their own home for longer through more high-level home care packages.

“Childcare is important to help families balance work and caring responsibilities. The Coalition is making child care more accessible and affordable – providing the greatest level of assistance for those who need it most.

“On 2 July, our new child care system will come into place, with 3820 local families in Maranoa standing to benefit from our reforms.

“Also \$53.9 million will be used to help more students from regional and remote communities to qualify for Youth Allowance, or receive a higher rate of payment. This will go towards increasing the Youth Allowance parental income cut-off for the regional workforce self-supporting independence criteria from \$150,000 to \$160,000.

“There’s also the \$550 million plan for rural health which includes 3000 doctors and 3000 nurses for the bush.”

“Our 17 Local Government Areas in Maranoa will share in the \$482.8 million Queensland will receive under the Financial Assistance Grant program in 2018-19. Individual council allocations will be finalised early in the 2018-19 financial year.

“Funding to mental health will increase to \$4.3 billion. Counselling is now available through Medicare-funded telehealth appointments.”

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