

Media Release

embargoed 11am 22 June 2015

Queensland's choice: schools or mining subsidies

Queensland spends less on social services than the rest of Australia in per capita terms, a [new report from The Australia Institute](#) has revealed. (Table 1 below)

Press Conference: 11am at Queensland Parliamentary Annexe steps, Alice Street, Brisbane. With:
Richard Dennis - Executive Director, The Australia Institute
Alex Scott – Secretary, Together
Kevin Bates – President, Queensland Teachers' Union
The Very Reverend Dr Peter Catt - Dean of St Johns Anglican Cathedral

The state is the nation's biggest spender of public funds in one area though; subsidies for mining projects. (Table 5)

Currently public schools face a \$268 million maintenance backlog, and in the next 15 years Queensland will need to build an additional 110 fully staffed schools, to keep up with population growth.

"The situation couldn't be any clearer. The Queensland government is pouring billions of taxpayer funds into mining, and coming up short for the state's kids," Executive Director of The Australia Institute, Richard Dennis said.

"Queensland Treasury put it simply:
Governments face budget constraints and spending on mining related infrastructure means less infrastructure spending in other areas, including social infrastructure such as hospitals and schools.

"It's a choice. You can spend tax dollars on helping out mining companies, or you can spend it on schools and hospitals."

"This can't be justified by employment creation either. Mining is among the most capital intensive industries, producing fewer jobs per million dollars than almost any other industry. (Table 4)

"In the major areas of health and education, Queensland, despite its rapid population growth spends less per person than any other state except NSW and Victoria – but they're a poor comparison because of their larger, denser populations. (Tables 2 & 3)

"Demand is growing for many services. In the next 15 years Queensland will have an additional 257,000 students. That means 110 new schools and 14,000 extra teachers and support staff.

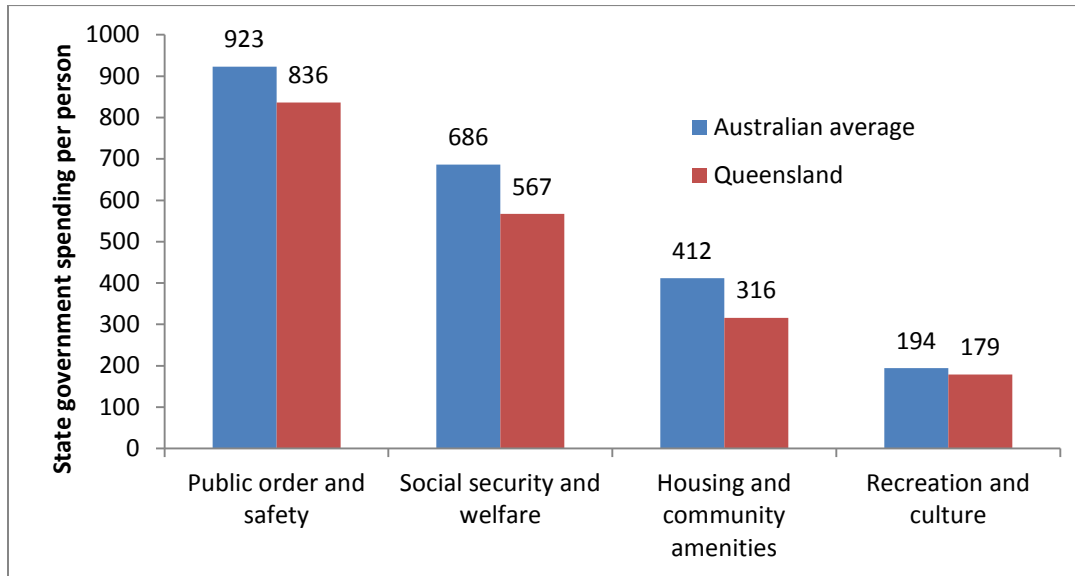
For media enquiries, please contact:

Tom Burmester 0468 926 833

“The Queensland Government spent \$9.5 billion assisting the mining and fossil fuel industry over the last six years. That’s the choice they made. The choice before the government is whether to do that again, or invest in people instead.

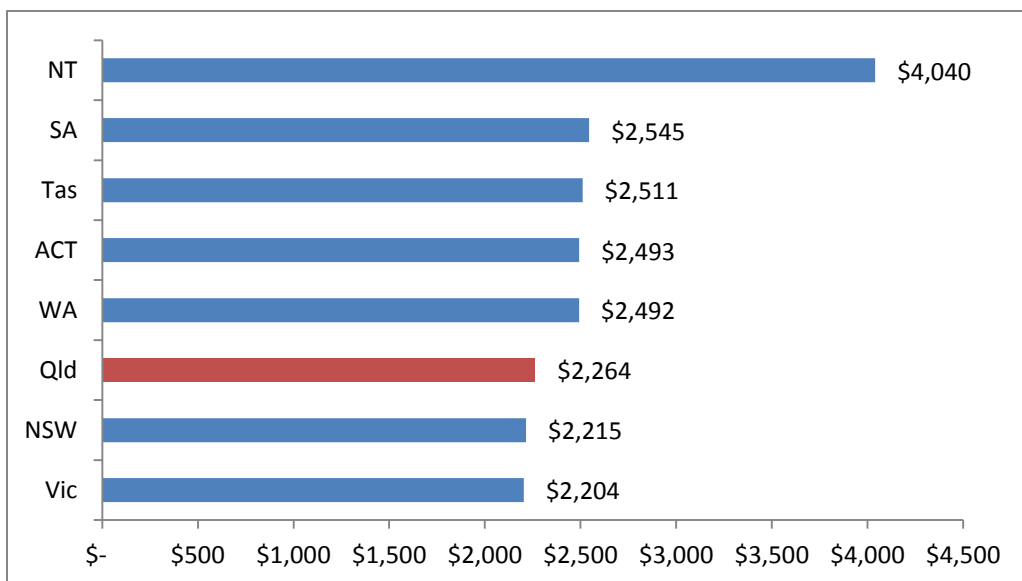
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Table 1. State government spending per person



Source: ABS (2015) *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, 2013-14*, Cat no 5512.0, 13 May and ABS (2015) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Sep 2014*, Cat no 3101.0, 26 March.

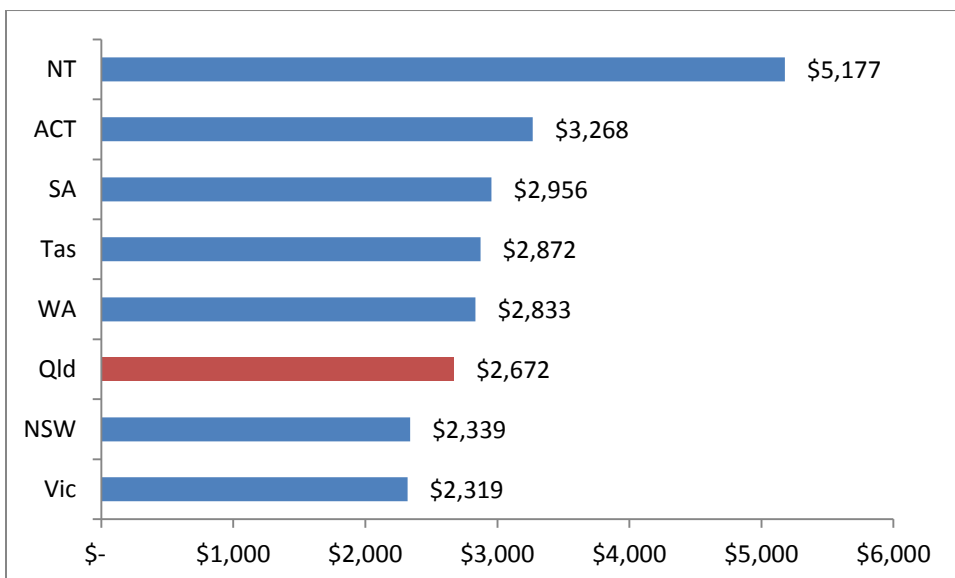
Table 2. Per capita spending on education by state



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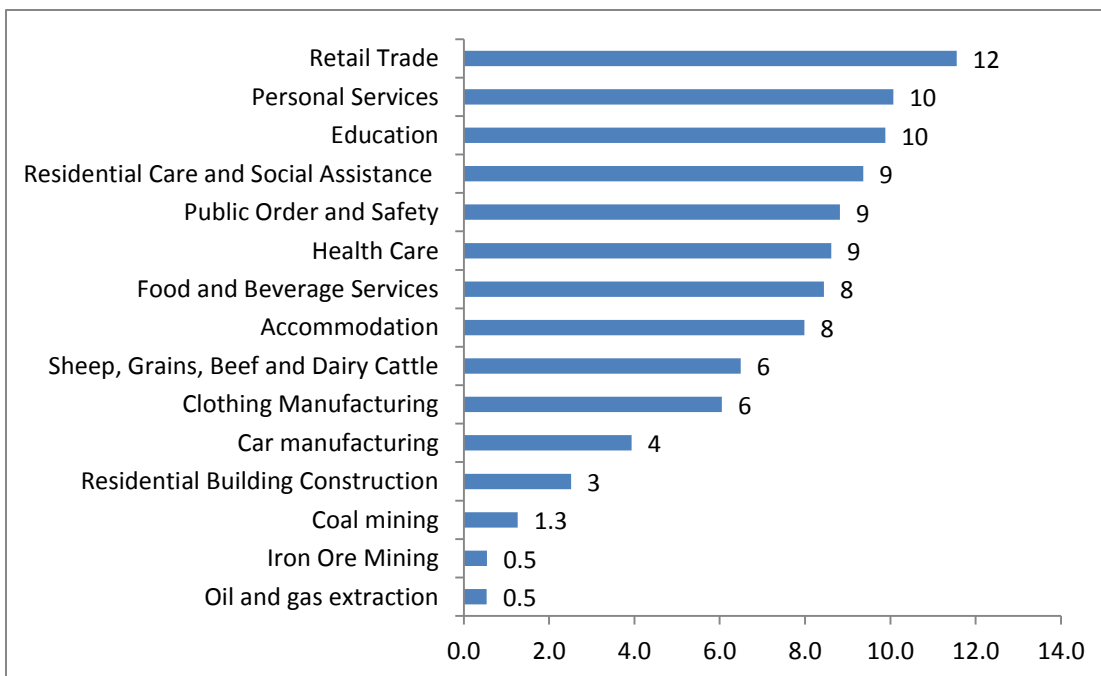
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Table 3. Per capita spending on health by state



Source: ABS (2015) *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, 2013-14*, Cat no 5512.0, 13 May and ABS (2015) *Australian Demographic Statistics, Sep 2014*, Cat no 3101.0, 26 March.

Table 4. Australians employed by industry per million dollars output



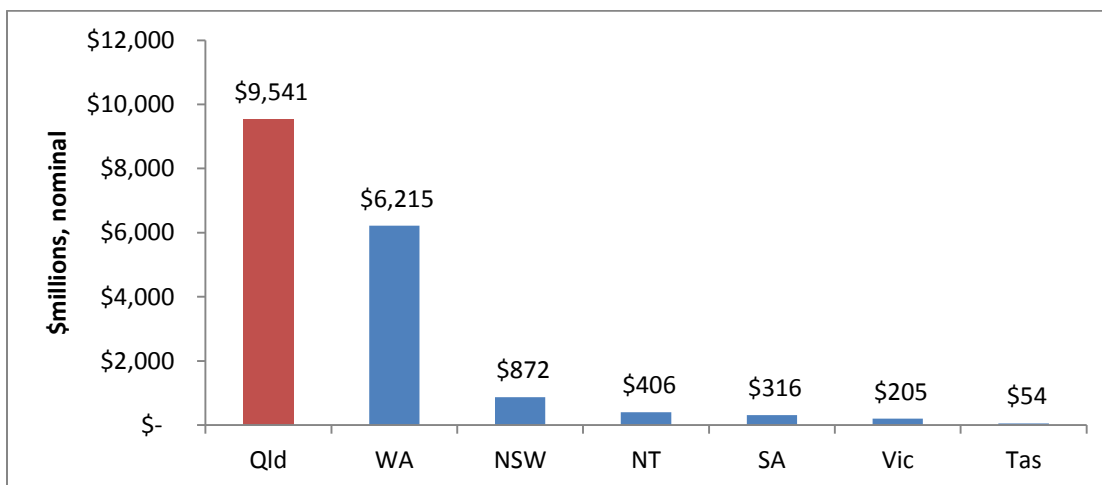
Source: ABS 2013 *Australian National Accounts: Input-Output Tables*

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Table 5. State government assistance to mineral and fossil fuel industries 2008-09 to 2013-14



Source: State budget papers, compiled in (Peel et al. 2014)

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