

MEDIA RELEASE



THE HEART OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

For Immediate Release
5 March 2021

Calls for Student Reef Marine Experience as part of Tourism Recovery

Member for Whitsunday Amanda Camm and Leader of the Opposition David Crisafulli has backed Tourism Whitsundays' and Tourism Tropical North Queensland's (TTNQ) call for the Federal Parliament Civic and Education Rebate – a \$150 rebate for school students to visit Canberra to be extended to the Great Barrier Reef.

Trips focused on environmental education – if the rebate was redirected over three years it would be a win for regions like The Whitsundays, Cairns, and regions like Bundaberg.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Tash Wheeler said, “The health of the Reef is theoretically taught in schools; now there’s an opportunity for students across our nation to have an experiential learning experience and visit The Whitsundays to experience our Great Barrier Reef.

“The Whitsundays represents 40% of the \$6.3 Billion dollar Great Barrier Reef market to Australia. This initiative will support those operators who are promoting and protecting the Reef through their world-class experience every day and will support our industries economic recovery.”

Ms Camm said, “The benefit The Whitsundays has to offer is the surrounding rainforests and agricultural industries that can be explored to understand the complete interaction our region has with the Great Barrier Reef and educate our next generation of the good work across industries to enhance our regions environmental credentials.”

Sharon Smallwood from the Whitsunday Charter Boat Industry Association (WCBIA) said, “There are operators across The Whitsundays and the entire Great Barrier Reef Marine Tourism industry who are yet to see a turn of the tide with consistent bookings. This is an opportunity for our Charter Boat industry to tap into a new market whilst educating a generation of students about one of the Worlds Natural Wonders – the Great Barrier Reef.”

Ms Camm said, “The Queensland Government has an opportunity to partner and promote this initiative with the State Schools across Rural and South East Queensland, and I encourage them to look at how they could support such an initiative in transport subsidies for school students.”

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About Tourism Whitsundays: *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing, and business events.*

Tourism Whitsundays

PO Box 479 | Cannonvale QLD 4802

1/5 Carlo Drive | Cannonvale QLD 4802

+61 7 4948 5900

www.tourismwhitsundays.com.au

**Tourism
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FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES, CONTACT:

Kylie Forgione

Tourism Whitsundays

Ph: +61 417 765 736

Email: pr@tourismwhitsundays.com.au

To access the Tourism Whitsundays Media Centre, click [here](#)

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