



Speech By
Mark Robinson

MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Dr ROBINSON** (Cleveland—LNP) (5.40 pm): I rise to deliver my speech on the address-in-reply in the 55th Parliament. I acknowledge His Excellency the Governor Paul de Jersey and thank him for his address at the opening ceremony. I also acknowledge Queen Elizabeth and congratulate William and Kate on the safe arrival of Princess Charlotte, sister to Prince George.

It is a privilege to be re-elected for a third term. I am deeply honoured by the vote of support that I have received from the people of North Stradbroke Island, Ormiston, Wellington Point, Birkdale, Cleveland and Thornlands and for the opportunity it provides for me to continue to work hard for them and to achieve the goals that they have. We delivered much for the people of Cleveland in our time in government. Residents benefited from improved health services at Redland Hospital, better education in our schools and a safer community with more police on the ground. The Toondah Harbour priority development project, approved by the LNP government in 2014—and recently re-announced by the new government—will bring \$1.3 billion of investment and over 1,000 jobs per annum in the construction stage into the Redland City region.

On North Stradbroke Island, the LNP's legislation allowed for a carefully planned transition away from mining—to end in 2035—while not changing the substance of the government's ILUA with the Quandamooka people. This pro jobs plan was received well by the overwhelming majority of the 2,000 island residents, saving up to 600 jobs and stabilising the island's economy after the Bligh Labor plan imposed recession that saw house prices and business lending plummet and business confidence disappear.

I want to thank my campaign team and volunteers for their hard work and dedication. None of them are hirelings, paid to do the campaign work, but campaign on a volunteer basis. While time does not permit me to list my full campaign team of volunteers, I want to acknowledge key team members such as Shaun, Mike, Suzi, Mal and Mark. In particular, I want to thank my campaign manager, Mark Neville, for another successful local campaign.

I also thank my staff—Sue and Mark—who worked tirelessly through the 54th Parliament. I congratulate my fellow state MP for Redland City, Matt McEachan. I also extend my congratulations to Don Brown, the new member for Capalaba, while at the same time acknowledging the good work done by the previous member, Steve Davies. I am also grateful to my greatest supporters—my family. Julie, my wife of almost 30 years, and our wonderful children have sacrificed much for me to do this work. I love and appreciate them greatly.

I was honoured in the 54th Parliament to have served as the Deputy Speaker. I want to thank Campbell Newman for the chance to serve in that capacity and former Speaker Fiona Simpson and her staff—Ruth, John and Clare. The opportunity to represent the Queensland parliament as an executive committee member of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, the CPA, was a highlight of that time.

Many local and regional issues were important in my re-election. The LNP's Toondah Harbour project, our local job protection plan for North Stradbroke Island, our small business policies and job creation, Redland Hospital, Cleveland schools, transport issues, recreational fishing and boating, amongst many other areas, were very important.

In terms of jobs, business and major projects, in Cleveland and on North Stradbroke Island most jobs exist in small business, retail, tourism, mining, construction, health and marine related industries. Local job creation is of paramount importance to the residents of Cleveland. About 60 per cent of Cleveland workers leave Redland City each day to travel to work outside the area, particularly into the city centre. Our challenge is to keep creating local jobs so that a smaller proportion of our population need to leave Redland City for work. Naturally creating more small business jobs and attracting more major projects to the Redland City region is critical in that regard.

In terms of the major project of Toondah Harbour, now for some 6½ years I have spoken in this House about the need for a major upgrade of Toondah Harbour—one that would improve the ferry facilities to North Stradbroke Island for residents and tourists, and include a marina and mixed commercial and residential development. Since 1989, successive Labor state governments have failed to progress any plan, leaving very basic facilities. Only the private work done by the two ferry companies—Stradbroke Ferries and Stradbroke Flyer—and more recently the Big Red Cat, or Transit Systems, the owners of such, have made the situation bearable for island residents and tourists. But something has needed to be done for a long time.

It was not until the LNP came to government that any real progress took place. The LNP's economic development legislation that created priority development areas broke the Labor deadlock. The positive and innovative approach of the Walker Group, plus an enterprising LNP state government and the leadership of the Mayor of Redlands City Council, Karen Williams, has made the project possible, when the bureaucratic Labor government via DERM and DEEDI only bogged down the potential of this project.

This \$1.3 billion LNP project will create 1,000 jobs per year in the construction stage and hundreds of jobs in tourism and small business afterwards. I will never forget that historic day on 18 September 2014 at the Grand View Hotel, which overlooks the Toondah Harbour area, when Jeff Seeney, Lang Walker and Karen Williams met and signed this historic agreement that made the Walker Group the preferred partner—all in front of the TV and local media. This was a significant moment in the history of Redland City as a region. All state MPs in the region were invited and gathered with locals and media.

In recent months the current Deputy Premier visited Toondah Harbour, where she said to those gathered that the jobs generated at Toondah Harbour would cover for the job losses on North Stradbroke Island. While I certainly do not diminish the importance of those jobs—and they are critical to the future prosperity of Redland City and North Stradbroke Island—there is a problem in that statement in that the time line for the rollout of jobs and the types and categories of jobs do not match many of the jobs that will be lost on North Stradbroke Island. So nobody believed that statement that it would be an immediate solution in the next few years—not the AWU, who know that mining workers do not automatically transfer into other industries; not the mining company Sibelco; not the Resources Council; not the chamber of commerce; nor anyone else.

In fact, the Deputy Premier, in answering one of my questions on notice—question on notice No. 777—about Toondah Harbour and job creation, could not provide the jobs time line in an annual format that would give confidence that this government has any such plan. In fact, she admitted that the Walker Group was working on a plan and there were some overall dimensions of potential jobs to be created. But, in terms of an explanation from the Deputy Premier about an exact plan—that is, by category of worker that shows that particular types of jobs on North Stradbroke Island will be picked up in Toondah Harbour and in a timely manner—that was not there in that answer. She could not confirm what jobs, if any, will exist and the particular time frame that is needed. In other words, there was not an existing jobs plan to meet the gap that will be created.

The chamber of commerce president issued a statement on the day the current Deputy Premier visited and it was reported in the *Redland City Bulletin* on 22 June. The title was 'Chamber chief says Toondah won't save Straddie', and it said that it was wrong to rely on jobs at Toondah Harbour to provide jobs for miners. The story quoted the chamber chief as saying—

Saying that sand mining jobs can be turned into construction jobs at Toondah Harbour is the easy answer—but it is the wrong answer.

I now turn to some comments on health. I am proud of what we achieved in government in terms of health services in Redland city, particularly with respect to Redland Hospital. Under the LNP government, Labor's waiting lists at Redland Hospital were significantly reduced and the local dental

waiting list was reduced from over 10,000 to zero. But the health achievement I am most satisfied with under the LNP government was the establishment of a new palliative care service of \$5.9 million at Redland Hospital. This new health service includes a five-bed palliative care service based at the hospital plus an additional in-home capacity of another five bed equivalence—all based out of the Redland Hospital. This was a very significant achievement. We also completed construction of the new emergency department at Redland Hospital, including a paediatric section and 10 new short-stay beds among other things. More ambulance officers and new ambulances were provided at Cleveland and Birkdale stations, and a new and better station was built in Cleveland to replace the old one that was burnt down.

In regard to health, it is of great concern to me and the residents of Cleveland and Redland city, however, that the budget had nothing to say specifically about Redland Hospital—there were no new announcements and no new significant projects or investments announced. It appears, as I raised during my budget reply speech, that there is an infrastructure freeze on health in the Redlands. I call on the health minister to invest in the Redland Hospital precinct. It is a growing region of Redland city and it has increased demands because of that growth and also because of the ageing population. I call on the health minister to address some of these emerging issues.

In terms of education, under the LNP government the students of Cleveland received a better education. Cleveland schools warmly received the introduction of the Independent Public Schools initiative, the Great Results Guarantee funding, the maintenance funding and construction of important facilities, like the Cleveland high school year 7 building and the BayView State School indoor auditorium. These were significant achievements in our time, but there are still challenges remaining that were the legacy of the former Labor government, like the school hall that is desperately needed by Cleveland high school. This high school has close to 2,000 students and it is one of the few schools in Queensland that does not have a hall in which the whole school can meet. There is nowhere that they can fit undercover.

Mr Rickuss: I've got one, Mark.

Dr ROBINSON: You have one? You're going to transfer it for me; thank you. The flashing lights for school zones mean that the children of Cleveland now have safer journeys to and from school each day—with the installation of flashing lights on South Street in Thornlands, Birkdale Road in Wellington Point, Passage Street in Cleveland and Anson Road in Wellington Point. I call on the government to continue to roll out more of these very important safety measures across the electorate of Cleveland. But, as with health, there is nothing in the budget that I could find for education that was a significant infrastructure investment in schools in Cleveland. Again, it appears there is an infrastructure freeze on the Redland city area. I call on the government and the Minister for Education to invest in the Redlands and Cleveland area so that we get our fair share of the state's funds.

In terms of transport and roads infrastructure, major arterial roads—like Rickertt Road, Old Cleveland Road, Mount Cotton Road and Cleveland-Redland Bay Road—are heavily congested now due to the 14 years of neglect from Labor's last term in government. With respect to rail, in government we added 450 seats on the Cleveland line at peak time and we upgraded the Cleveland station, but the biggest need with regard to upgrading the Cleveland rail is the duplication of the Cleveland line between Cleveland and Manly. I look forward to the government progressing this project in this term after promising it during the 14 years they were previously in power in successive elections. The most recent promise to duplicate the rail was made by the Labor candidate for Cleveland during the 2012 election, so I look forward to Labor honouring that commitment now they are back in power. We also funded cycling paths in Cleveland and Ormiston and we continued to call for road safety measures, including signalisation at the Shore and Wellington streets roundabout.

I have spoken before in this place about the Eastern Busway. The deputy mayor, Adrian Schrunner, and I put together a petition to this parliament calling on the government to prioritise the Eastern Busway. It is clear from the response of the people in that survey that this continues to be an important project. I call upon the government to keep it in their priorities, even though I did not see it in the infrastructure plan. The people of south-east Brisbane continue to call for the Eastern Busway to happen.

In terms of recreational fishing, boating and the coastal lifestyle in Cleveland, I have worked hard on behalf of Cleveland's and Moreton Bay's boaties, divers and recreational fishers to deliver more and better marine infrastructure, artificial reefs and fairer access to sustainable recreational fishing in Moreton Bay. As a coastal Moreton Bay seat, Cleveland has a comparatively high proportion of boat owners and recreational fishers. As a member of the LNP government, I was able to secure \$1 million in funding over the three-year period of our government from our \$50 million Marine Infrastructure Fund.

We built a new boat ramp in Cleveland and funded floating walkways that have just been built. We upgraded the Wellington Point boat ramp, we provided new artificial reef material, such as reef balls, for West Peel and Coochie reefs and we sunk a barge to extend Harry Atkinson reef. The LNP government also funded the Turner Artificial Reef for Moreton Bay that was recently constructed at Scarborough, about one kilometre offshore. I congratulate the former minister, Steve Dickson, for his good work in that regard.

Another important recreational boating activity in Moreton Bay is scuba diving. Being a scuba diver myself, I understand the needs of divers and the importance of this activity to tourism in Queensland. The diving community and small tourism businesses are keen for more dive sites, and I encourage the government to consider proposals outside of the Moreton Bay area in the deeper waters in the future. Whale watching is another important marine and ecotourism activity that takes place around Moreton Bay and Straddie. I appeal to the Minister for Tourism to include Straddie in all publicity as a whale-watching destination.

Within my electorate, there is an isolated community of three townships that together are the equivalent of a country town of 2,000 people. This community is an eclectic mix of people and includes a significant Aboriginal population. Another unique aspect of the community is that it has had a major employer for many years. It is a good employer which has paid good wages to up to 300 workers—it is 220 workers currently. It has been a good corporate citizen, underpinning the local economy and helping the community in many ways. It has helped with many projects, such as power infrastructure, roads, marine infrastructure, volunteer marine rescue, and cultural, arts and Indigenous projects.

The company employs 50 Indigenous workers currently. Further, up to 300 small business jobs are dependent upon the jobs of this company. So the total impact should the largest employer leave prematurely would be massive job cuts and a major hit to the economy. In the townships the morale among the workers is now low and businesses are struggling. People are trying to sell their homes. There is very much a feeling of recession, something that absolutely needs to be addressed. Obviously I am speaking about North Stradbroke Island. While there is a bill before the House I cannot say anything further. I am very concerned about the future of the families and the workers. I will park that one there for now.

I have also mentioned Toondah Harbour and job creation. I have mentioned a whole range of other things that we did whilst in government. I would like to conclude by saying I look forward to working hard for the families of Cleveland during this term in parliament, to getting our fair share of infrastructure and services and to holding this government to account. I will be pressing the government to deliver on the LNP's Toondah Harbour project in full, North Stradbroke Island economic transition, transport, roads, education and Redland Hospital to continue all the good things that we put in place while we were in government.

Let me close by thanking the residents of Cleveland for their trust and support once again. I recommit to working hard for their sake.