




Speech By
Mark Boothman

MEMBER FOR THEODORE

Record of Proceedings, 14 June 2019

**APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL; REVENUE
AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr BOOTHMAN** (Theodore—LNP) (12.47 pm): I rise to contribute to the debate today. As I have said many times in this chamber, the northern Gold Coast continues to experience unprecedented growth. I do not blame residents for wanting to move to the northern Gold Coast and the Gold Coast. We have the most beautiful beaches in the world. We have world famous beaches down at Surfers Paradise and Main Beach. We have the emerald mountain ranges in the Tamborine Mountains.

Mr Stevens: Great for growing avocados.

Mr BOOTHMAN: That is great for avocado growing. They have some of the best soils for growing avocados on the planet. Residents are flocking to the northern Gold Coast in their droves because it is close to the beaches, the tourism attractions, the services and the jobs on the Gold Coast.

Mr Stevens: It is relatively cheap too.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Yes, it is relatively affordable. This highly desirable lifestyle is causing an enormous amount of pressure on the infrastructure we have on the northern Gold Coast. I am sure members from all sides of the chamber have traversed the M1 Motorway but we all know what can happen on the M1 Motorway with one single accident, even outside of peak hour. This happened just recently at Beenleigh, and the traffic queued all the way down to Pimpama and Coomera.

Driving at 100 kilometres an hour that equates to 10 to 15 minutes of travel time. People were sitting in that traffic jam literally crawling along, and I can say I was stuck in that traffic jam for two hours. The problem for the northern Gold Coast is that we have one single north-south arterial link, and every time there is an accident my whole traffic network goes into meltdown. That is a concern to a lot of my residents and the residents of Coomera, Bonney, Broadwater and Surfers Paradise. Anybody who is travelling that highway in the morning, especially in peak hour, knows that if there is an accident they can kiss their appointment goodbye.

In my electorate of Theodore the most easterly point to traverse the Coomera River is the M1 Motorway and the service roads that straddle it. That is the most easterly point to drive a car over the river. We desperately need a second roadway to take pressure off this one roadway.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER (Dr Robinson): The member for Miller will cease interjecting. The member is not taking your interjections.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Whilst we welcome the additional money which has been allocated to exit 57, which was promised by both major parties at the last state election because this needs to be done, my residents will avoid travel at certain times of the day. They do that because they know for a fact they are going to be stuck in queuing traffic which, if this exit were properly addressed and fixed, would be greatly limited.

I turn to exit 54. I remember back in the day working with Michael Crandon, the member for Coomera.

Mr Bailey interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Miller, I now warn you under the standing orders.

Mr BOOTHMAN: Along with the then federal member for Forde and the then federal infrastructure minister, the member for Coomera and I had a meeting at the Upper Coomera Community Centre to discuss the issue and to lock in some type of funding package from the federal and state governments at the time and Westfield. Since then we have locked in that funding package. One of my main priorities that I have continued to voice in this chamber, whether through petitions or speeches, is the importance of upgrading exit 57. The problem is that my residents feel that this concept design has lacked consultation with the community about what they want. They are deeply concerned about the removal of the right-hand turn lanes from Old Pacific Highway and Heathwood Drive. Let's think about Old Pacific Highway.

Traffic from Global Plaza flows onto Old Pacific Highway. Global Plaza—Old Pacific Highway—has industrial sheds, retail outlets, Bunnings, Kmart, multiple service stations, fast-food restaurants and multiple shopping centres all converging on one road, which is Tamborine Oxenford Road, or Old Pacific Highway in that area. There are three roundabouts there, two of which were local council roundabouts, and they were never designed to take the additional traffic. The problem with the design that Main Roads has put forward is it will force vehicles—local motorists—to travel along that already congested road.

My residents will tell honourable members that on a Saturday or a Sunday Global Plaza and Old Pacific Highway is traffic mayhem. We cannot keep forcing more and more vehicles onto that already congested road. Therefore, my residents are pleading with the department and the minister to listen to their concerns, get rid of that idea and also put in slip lanes, including a slip lane from Tamborine Oxenford Road—my residents have been most vocal about this—to provide direct access to the northbound M1, therefore bypassing the second set of traffic lights. This will make a huge difference. Quite a number of residents have expressed that opinion; they cannot all be wrong. It is an easy, little fix we can make to that road. We can increase the capacity going across it, which residents are happy about. However, if we put in those slip lanes to bypass those traffic lights and therefore provide direct access and increased traffic flow, that will go some way to pleasing the majority of my local residents.

Whilst fixing that issue is one part of the equation, building the second north-south arterial road is becoming more and more urgent. We have a massive amount of growth on the eastern side of the highway up through Pimpama, Coomera and Ormeau. The growth there is unprecedented. Just recently I went there and saw the Pimpama mall, a shopping centre which appears to have come out of a field overnight. Every time I drive through that area more housing estates have appeared because it is a great place to live. It is so close to the beautiful beaches and the emerald hills of Mount Tamborine and the Gold Coast hinterland. It is a desirable place to live. In saying that, we need to start pushing this and putting funding in place to start construction of this arterial link. It is becoming more and more urgent. As I said, the most easterly crossing of the Coomera River is the M1 Motorway and the two service roads that straddle it.

These are not the only issues in the northern Gold Coast. I know the member for Coomera and I have spoken many times about the lack of police and the desperate need to increase the number of officers on the northern Gold Coast.

Mr Stevens: Fifteen thousand new people every year.

Mr BOOTHMAN: I take that interjection. There are 15,000 new people moving to the area every year. Our local officers work extremely hard and they are extremely passionate about their jobs. Residents do understand the issue they are experiencing, which is that their workload is extreme. Residents actually pity them; they feel sorry for them. They understand that they may not be able to come out to them straight away because they have other jobs to go to.

We need to allocate the necessary police numbers to provide good service and make my residents and the residents of Coomera and the northern Gold Coast—Gaven, you name it—feel safer in their homes because they know those officers in blue are only a short distance away. We have to ensure we have the necessary police numbers to cater for our population growth. To give members a bit of an example, it takes 45 minutes to drive from one side of the Coomera police district to the other. It is a huge area and the number of officers we have at the moment cannot properly service it.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all my local school P&Cs for the unbelievable hard work they have done in funding school air conditioning. They are very, very passionate about it. It is their priority for their children to have a cool learning environment. Therefore, they certainly do welcome the LNP's

initiative to air-condition state school classrooms. However, the issue is that Labor is not willing to stump up with the same policy that the LNP has put forward. Therefore, those school communities will have to wait until the next state election.

Considering the passionate plea in her speech that the Leader of the Opposition gave only yesterday, I can certainly say Queenslanders will finally feel that there will be a government that is going to listen to their needs and hear their concerns. We can no longer keep going down the debt path we are on at the moment because with projected interest payments, we as a state will be paying—

An opposition member: \$67,000 a family.

Mr BOOTHMAN:—\$67,000 a family, or \$3.5 billion in interest on forward predictions. That would pay for the Coomera connector.