



Speech by

Hon. MERRI ROSE

MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN

Hansard 9 November 1999

APEC TECHNOMART

Hon. M. ROSE (Currumbin—ALP) (Minister for Emergency Services) (6.50 p.m.): I rise to support the Premier's amendment. In seven years in this House, I have seen many examples of rank hypocrisy from the other side of the Chamber, but tonight's debate on Technomart is one of the most outrageous cases of all. Members opposite have no credibility on this issue—no credibility at all.

In two years of coalition Government, I waited in vain for some recognition of the needs of the Gold Coast, the seventh largest city in this nation, and some action. I waited in vain for action on jobs. What did the Gold Coast get? Virtually nothing! I waited in vain for additional funding for the Gold Coast Hospital. What did the Gold Coast get? Almost nothing! What did Gold Coasters get? The big snub! The cold shoulder! They got representatives who virtually ignored them. Members opposite took them for granted. They thought they had them in their pocket.

This Government has done more for the Gold Coast in 16 months than the coalition did in three years, when they had a Premier and three Ministers representing Gold Coast electorates. Just ask the Deputy Mayor of the Gold Coast City Council, that well-known National Party member, Councillor Col Kleinschmidt. After the Government's extremely successful Community Cabinet meeting on the southern Gold Coast, Councillor Kleinschmidt put petty politicking aside and gave credit where credit was due. He recognised our efforts in delivering for the Gold Coast in contrast to the coalition's abysmal record. But we obviously cannot expect the same honourable behaviour from those opposite. What do we get? Bagging, bagging and more bagging from a bunch of people who obviously do not have the best interests of the people of the Gold Coast and Queensland in mind. Their pathetic efforts over Technomart demonstrate their negativity.

After Technomart collapsed, the State Government stepped in to salvage the Gold Coast's and Queensland's reputation. We stepped in and we kept it going. That includes the Regional Economic Development Conference; the Australian Association of Science and Technology Parks, a seminar on growing global enterprises, with 130 attendees; and the Australian Interactive Multimedia Association Conference, with over 400 attendees at the conference dinner. Then to cap it off, this Government's efforts in turning Queensland into the Smart State were recognised at the Gold Coast Business Excellence Awards attended by over 600 people. We were applauded for our efforts to salvage Technomart. This is what the Gold Coast Bulletin said on the Technomart issue in the editorial last Thursday—

"APEC Technomart 3 had the potential to put the Gold Coast on the high technology map ... It was to showcase the Coast and its cutting edge industries to the world.

Yesterday the Coast went into damage control ... and the State Government stepped in to pick up the pieces."

That is a quote from the editorial in the Gold Coast Bulletin. It also said—

"It was this last action that probably said more than any of the thousands of words yesterday.

When the collapse of the conference became obvious on Tuesday night, the Government began the task of putting together a rescue package.

It was their strategy that yesterday saw the Government putting in money to keep at least one section of the expo alive, the venture capital conference."

We salvaged what we could because we believe in the Gold Coast. This is in stark contrast to the coalition's abysmal record. We are delivering projects and jobs for the Gold Coast.

Austar is expanding from 400 jobs to 1,400 jobs. That is another 1,000 jobs in high technology areas such as Internet support—jobs for the graduates of our universities on the Gold Coast who under the Government of members opposite would have had to leave the Gold Coast to get jobs. Under our Government this brain drain has been reversed. Stellar Communications has set up a 300 person call centre on the Gold Coast. Again, that is more jobs in high technology. Gold Coasters are finally going to get the convention centre that has been talked about for years—something that members opposite did absolutely nothing about—and they are going to get a world-class facility because of this Government. In my own electorate, the association of surfing professionals has been enticed to move its world headquarters from California to Coolangatta.

This means that the world surfing tour will be run out of Coolangatta, and that will mean more jobs. We have secured Indy for the next four years. Where was the Leader of the Opposition when the Indy was picked? Did he go to the Indy? It generates tens of millions of dollars for the Gold Coast economy and hundreds of additional jobs.

Time expired.
