



Speech by

KAREN STRUTHERS

MEMBER FOR ALGESTER

Hansard 27 November 2001

TRANSPORT LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL

Ms STRUTHERS (Algeria—ALP) (8.35 p.m.): The Algeria electorate is the transport hub of south-east Queensland. Acacia Ridge alone contributes 10 per cent of the economic wealth of the Brisbane region. It is a productive electorate, full of hardworking people. Many road-transport operators are located near my office in Acacia Ridge along Beaudesert Road. We have the freight yard for National Rail and Queensland Rail and, of course, the Archerfield Airport borders my electorate. I am always eager to support legislation and policies which improve our road, rail and aviation industries and which improve the flow of traffic and people around the southern suburbs of Brisbane.

This bill includes numerous technical amendments that I support. I particularly welcome amendments in this bill that seek to reduce the risk that can arise from the transport of dangerous goods by rail and to promote a nationally uniform approach to these safety issues. Thankfully, National Rail and Queensland Rail operate a world-class system with an enviable safety record. Governments at the federal and state level need to continue to invest in rail infrastructure, including track upgrades, to maintain this proud record.

Holding the tag 'transport hub of south-east Queensland' brings great economic benefit to my local electorate, but it does have a downside. Traffic congestion, rail, road and aircraft noise are all issues that require constant monitoring and action. I commend the Minister for Transport and Minister for Main Roads and his departmental officers for taking action to deal with the traffic congestion and noise issues along the National Highway corridor, that is, Ipswich Road, Granard Road, and Kessels through to Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Roads. The minister was instrumental in undertaking a heavy vehicles survey two years ago to get a good picture of truck movements through the southern suburbs. This study showed that 75 per cent of heavy vehicle traffic on the Mount Gravatt-Capalaba Road is local. These trucks are noisy and they are slow, but they serve an essential economic function for our local commercial and industrial precincts. It is sort of a love/hate relationship that many of us have with them. We cannot do without them, but we get fed up with the noise and congestion.

Certainly a lot of work is being done. A planning study is about to commence. The minister is being very responsive to the issues raised by my colleagues the member for Mansfield, the member for Mount Gravatt and other members in that area who have been on his back for a couple of years now reminding him—

Mr Bredhauer: Member for Stretton.

Ms STRUTHERS: Yes, the member for Stretton, Stephen Robertson. We have all been on the minister's back trying to obtain some remedies to this problem, and there is good work under way.

While no-one likes paying tolls on toll roads, the removal of the toll on the Logan Motorway would not necessarily bring more of those trucks travelling locally in Acacia Ridge, Rocklea and Coopers Plains onto the motorway. It is too far away. They will not travel backwards to then go on with their journey. Removal of the toll would cost the state government \$780 million. While some federal government members have called on the state government to remove this toll and wear the debt, they are not offering federal funding support. I have raised with the minister the possibility of, say, toll reductions as an incentive for heavy vehicles to try to get some of the vehicles out of that local precinct. This is one of the strategies that may be considered within the planning study that is soon to get under way. I encourage the minister to make sure that this issue is rekindled within that study.

The study will investigate and recommend strategies to ease congestion and noise along that Brisbane urban corridor. It is a federal road and it needs federal government action and funding. I urge local residents in my area and across the southern suburbs and the transport operators to participate actively in the study. It is through well-planned work that we will get evidence based solutions. Some of those solutions will be major engineering solutions—big cost strategies. Others will be road management strategies. Some will be around public education. We need a package of solutions to this problem, not quick fixes. I value the minister's interest and his determination to see lasting and effective solutions to the urban corridor noise and congestion problems. I will continue to work with him, his departmental officers and my state colleagues, and any cooperative federal colleagues who want to get on board, to solve and remedy these problems.
