



Speech by

CHRIS FOLEY

Member for MARYBOROUGH

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STATE BUDGET 2003-04

Mr CHRIS FOLEY (Maryborough—Ind) (10.05 p.m.): As the old saying goes, we have some good news and we have some bad news. According to the Premier's message in the regional budget statement for the Wide Bay-Burnett region 2003-04, it is nothing but good news for the Maryborough electorate, with more than \$49 million for rail manufacturing in Maryborough, including CityTrain units, locomotives and the continuing Cairns tilt train program; \$5.66 million to complete the \$14.2 million Maryborough residential aged care facility at Maryborough Hospital; \$8.2 million to finalise construction of the commissioning of the new 500-bed correctional centre at Maryborough; \$1.25 million to the Maryborough Shire Council to continue the CBD beautification project; \$2.41 million to construct overtaking lanes on the Maryborough-Hervey Bay road between Philip Court and Salt Water Creek; \$565,000 in joint state-Commonwealth funding for the Wide Bay Institute of TAFE to continue the development of information and communication technology infrastructure; and \$4.33 million provided by the Commonwealth government to continue the consolidation of the Wide Bay Institute of TAFE Maryborough to a single site located on Nagel Street, including construction of a new engineering facility. Emergency services in the electorate will be supported by a \$486,000 ambulance station at Howard.

The Maryborough electorate is thankful and positive about any new funding that comes our way. But we are entirely cynical about the leftovers from last night's dinner being tossed into a casserole and being dished up again as a new meal, complete with glossy and expensive packaging. Announcing then reannouncing and then reannouncing again and, when it finally starts getting a bit obvious, celebrating the fact that there is \$8.2 million to finalise construction of an already budgeted project, such as the correctional centre, which has already been celebrated time and time again, leads to a delicate medical condition called EVC, or extreme voter cynicism. This type of practice is like telling one of our kids that we are going to buy them a DVD for their birthday and then giving them a brochure on it for their 10th birthday, the packaging on their 11th birthday, the case on their 12th birthday and the actual DVD on their 13th birthday, and then claiming to be a good father for giving them four birthday presents in a row.

However, as an Independent I believe in giving credit where credit is due. I have no need to politicise this budget reply. I simply remind the government that Maryborough electors are rugged individuals with very good memories, especially when it comes to promises made. Yesterday I sent out a media release congratulating Judy Spence on her grant of \$353,500 for a mobile child care centre. I note also that the Minister for Transport, Steve Bredhauer, has not fallen off his bike when it comes to delivering his promise of up to a million dollars for the bikeway for the Lamington Bridge. In addition, I congratulate the government on commencing renovation work on the St Mary's Primary School to the tune of \$120,000.

I notice that \$390,000 has been allocated for a Tactical Crime Squad. In my maiden speech I applauded the Premier for his wisdom at the last general election in deciding to locate the tactical response group in Maryborough. Maryborough is the logical choice because of its geographical centrality in our region. In addition to this, because of the swift response times needed for a Tactical Crime Squad, Maryborough's location on the Bruce Highway gives it quick access to the feeder roads to the surrounding regions. Even though the location of this group has not been announced yet, the Premier has reminded us that he has not forgotten his initial promise to the people of Maryborough and district.

I also mentioned in my maiden speech that Walkers EDI has the skills, expertise and capacity to produce all of Queensland Rail's rolling stock requirements for the foreseeable future. I call upon the government in future budgets to enter into a formal, long-term agreement with Walkers EDI to provide all—

A government member interjected.

Mr CHRIS FOLEY: If honourable members on the other side actually listened they would realise that I am complimenting them. They are confused about that. I call upon the government to in future budgets enter into a formal, long-term agreement with Walkers EDI to provide all Queensland rolling stock needs for the next 10 to 20 years. That would remove the uncertainty which hangs over this facility and the future job prospects of the workers and families who depend on it at this time. Companies or families relying on them cannot make long-term commitments or even have long-term aspirations based on short-term ad hoc work prospects and contractual arrangements.

I also call upon the government to budget to assist our electorate to get the proposed marine park off the ground as it has the potential of employing 400 to 2,000 workers. We also look forward to the government's support in helping us implement the innovative Reddacliff plan, including the transformation of our inner-city riverscape into a Mapleton-style feel. The bridges of Tiara shire are in a crisis situation which will put into jeopardy rural yields this calendar year. We need the government's help in this area.

If the Hon. Peter Beattie wishes to ingratiate himself forever with the Maryborough people, including those in the surrounding areas, he should pay close attention to working with his minister to find innovative solutions to staffing and services to help our very hardworking nurses and doctors and ancillary staff at Maryborough Base Hospital. Like all rural electorates, our financial needs are great, and we look forward to forging good working relationships with all ministers to deliver positive, long-term, lasting solutions for this wonderful electorate that we call home. Finally, I would like to thank all of my parliamentary colleagues for making me feel welcome to the 50th Parliament of Queensland.