



Speech by

CHRIS FOLEY

Member for MARYBOROUGH

Hansard 29 October 2003

APPROPRIATION BILL [No. 2]; APPROPRIATION [PARLIAMENT] BILL [No. 2]

Mr CHRIS FOLEY (Maryborough—Ind) (2.38 p.m.): Maryborough of course is no stranger to the fact that every electorate needs funding and needs significant infrastructure funding on an ongoing basis. One of the concerns for the electorate is the rolling stock contracts. What used to be Walkers and which is now known as EDI Rail has continued to see a downgrade of employment. Obviously we would like more rolling stock contracts to come the way of EDI Rail at a government level. If that can be done, that continues to provide employment, apprenticeships and overall economic stimulus to the town. In fact, I am having a meeting next week with Danny Broad, the general manager of EDI Rail, with the president of the Chamber of Commerce and others regarding the possible relocation to the region of at least some of the millennium train project, which is floundering in New South Wales because it lacks the experience perhaps in train building that some of our very skilled tradesmen in Maryborough can offer.

Another issue related to the appropriation bills, as has been mentioned this morning, is public and community housing. We are facing a difficult situation in that 162 family units are waiting for public or community housing. Those are Housing Action Group figures. A lot of others are also waiting for Queensland government housing, for which there is a two-year waiting list. We need more funding in that area.

Another concern in recent times has been that there are no public shower facilities for homeless people in Maryborough. I would like to see the government, in cooperation with the Maryborough City Council, put in place public shower facilities so that people living in cars, under houses, buildings and so on can be allowed the common dignity of a shower.

Roads continue to be a problem and also require funding. This issue was raised at the by-election and it is ongoing. Another issue that needs addressing in the Maryborough electorate is bus services. I have been having some discussions with the manager of the Fraser Coast health service about the possibility of more bus services being provided between the two hospital campuses, and also for transport to TAFE and other areas around the city. As our population ages, more and more people are finding themselves unable to drive and in need of public transport.

Another issue of pressing concern in our electorate is the silting up of the Burrum River, which is so bad at low tide that one could just about walk across to Woodgate. Some urgent realignment of the original boundaries is needed to restore the flow of the Burrum River. One of the consequent problems—and we see this not only on extremely windy days such as today—is erosion along foreshore communities, which is at crisis point, with major trees falling over. All of these initiatives require further funds, which will have to be addressed according to their priority. I commend the bills to the House.