



Speech by

HOWARD HOBBS

MEMBER FOR WARREGO

Hansard 29 October 2003

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS

Mr HOBBS (Warrego—NPA) (11.43 p.m.): I want to talk tonight about the needs of local government and particularly how disappointed I am that the state government has not put forward funding proposals for local government at this stage, particularly in relation to the capital works subsidy scheme, which is the backbone—the whole cornerstone—of local government. The coalition government put together a proposal a number of years ago for a large capital works scheme and what they call a SCAT scheme, a smaller communities assistance scheme, used particularly in relation to sewerage and water development in councils. This package, of about \$600 million altogether, will run out fairly soon. We have committed, with local government, that we will continue that program for a further period of time, but unfortunately we have heard nothing at this stage from the state government. It is particularly important that local government gets some acknowledgment from the state government as to whether it is prepared to continue that funding.

We have also put together another funding package in relation to green space—a \$40 million package that will allow the coming together of green space, particularly in south-east Queensland. As we know, there will be a huge population here in the next 10 to 20 years, and we need to be able to consolidate those green space areas. There is a commitment to provide assistance for stamp duty exemptions for the purchasing of land by local government. We think that will be a very valuable tool for local government to be able to use green space areas and earmark them for the future so that they will become the lungs of Queensland.

There are other programs in relation to mosquito control. We are prepared to put in funding for mosquito control on Crown land, which is essential. We have seen numerous increases in viruses that are now coming about simply because there are so many mosquitos in developed areas. There is a desperate need to provide resources to reduce the sickness found in those particular areas.

We have made an annual \$5 million commitment for the next three years for local government beach erosion projects. That is particularly important because a lot of our beaches are eroding. In many instances, bags can be filled up with sand, which can be reasonably cheap. If we want to move them later on, all we have to do is slash the bags and move them around. It is a very worthwhile project.

Time expired