



Speech by

## Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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### ROAD FUNDING

**Miss SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—NPA) (7.00 p.m.): I rise to speak about a local issue. Locally we call it the battle of the bridge. On the Sunshine Motorway in the last few years there has been significant growth in vehicle numbers. Finally, we saw a commitment from the state government during the last state election for roadworks to the north of the bridge. We already had a commitment for the south of the bridge because they were in the road implementation plan in the previous budget.

The bridge was not something that the state government would complete to duplication. Unfortunately, if the bridge is not duplicated there is still gridlock. We have a situation where there are more than 30,000 vehicles per day travelling over the bridge on a two-lane road and the growth rate each year is between five and eight per cent. It is phenomenal growth but it has become the main coastal link, other than the Bruce Highway, to carry traffic between Noosa and Caloundra. It carries traffic into the regional centre of the Sunshine Coast, Maroochydore—as it is recognised on all the planning documents. There is no plan for the upgrade of that bridge on this state government's books.

If we want to really see what is happening with infrastructure in this state we have to look only at the budget papers. This state government has had record receipts from GST. We have heard how it has had a bonus windfall of over \$600 million from GST. We have heard how over the last couple of years it has had a couple of hundred million dollars over and above what it had anticipated from stamp duty. Yet we have the situation where the infrastructure spend, particularly on roads, has been falling.

Road funding, as a proportion of the capital budget, has fallen in Queensland from 28 per cent to only 14 per cent. In real terms, we are going backwards in the amount of state government funds which are being spent on state roads. This is at a time when there has been a record increase in state receipts. The people are paying the price. We are paying the price on the Sunshine Coast. We are paying the price throughout south-east Queensland and the rest of Queensland. If the government does not support an infrastructure spend, with an emphasis on that in the state budget coming up, then it will be affecting jobs not only currently but also in the future. Queensland is slipping further and further behind the national average in terms of road spending. We are far behind New South Wales's capital spend on roads as a percentage of the state domestic product. If the government wants to see growth and prosperity in Queensland or prosperity alongside growth, then this state government has to start focusing on infrastructure, particularly on roads.

This is also about the environment. By making sure people are not sitting in a gridlock, it will help the greenhouse gas problem. The battle of the bridge will go on until this state government recognises that infrastructure is important. It is also symbolic of what is happening throughout south-east Queensland—the focus has gone off jobs.