



Speech by

Michael Caltabiano

MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH

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ROAD AND RAIL INFRASTRUCTURE

Mr CALTABIANO (Chatsworth—Lib) (12.25 pm): There have been record levels of underspending in infrastructure over the past eight years under this government's jurisdiction. That started when the government inherited in 1998-99 a budget for transport in this state of \$1.165 billion and a budget for main roads in the same year of \$1.039 billion. What has happened in subsequent budgets under this Labor administration whilst our state has been growing?

In 1999-2000 the Main Roads budget went down to \$780 million. In 2000-01, it went down to \$762 million. In 2001-02, the state budget went down to \$738 million. In 2002-03 there was a further decline to \$726 million. This failure to invest in our infrastructure over a considerable period of time has led to major shortcomings in the infrastructure for Queensland. The amount of \$7.3 billion was promised by this government in its year-on-year, five-year projections through the Main Roads budget. What did the government actually deliver? Just \$5.8 billion—an underspend in our road network across Queensland of \$1.5 billion.

The failure to deliver infrastructure when it is needed to service a growing state is best illustrated by the failure to build the new Gateway Bridge. This government was advised in 1998 that the new bridge would be required by 2005 as it would be at capacity—and, yes, it is, as you would know, Mr Deputy Speaker English, coming from the Redlands. So where is the duplication? It will not be completed until 2011-12 if the government keeps its promises because no tender as yet has been let, and the congestion continues to rise.

The Queensland coalition will be rolling out a positive program of infrastructure development across Queensland. Last week we saw the first tranche of that positive program announced when a fast-tracked Sunshine Coast rail link from Caloundra to Maroochydore was announced. The coalition will have the full rail link completed in 10 years—a decade ahead of the Labor government's proposal. The fast-tracking would see the Beerwah to Caloundra section completed in five years and the Caloundra to Maroochydore section completed five years later by 2015. The total cost of the five plus five project is estimated at \$1 billion and would finally connect the Sunshine Coast to the south-east Queensland corner with a high-speed rail service. The Sunshine Coast region cannot wait until after 2025 to have a significant public transport connection completed. By then that region's population will be well over half a million people, and if a start is not made in the near future that region will be gridlocked as we are here in Brisbane today.

The Labor government has failed the state on vital infrastructure projects such as the Sunshine Coast rail link. There is a lot of talk and little action from the other side. They cannot and will not build the infrastructure for our growing state for the future.