



Speech by

Paul Hoolihan

MEMBER FOR KEPPEL

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YEPPOON WESTERN BYPASS

Mr HOOLIHAN (Keppel—ALP) (11.39 am): I have great pleasure in informing the House today of the successful completion of a major capital road project in my electorate of Keppel which shows the strong commitment of our state Labor government to regional communities. It was mentioned by the minister for main roads this morning and I fully support his comments. It is a pity that the federal government does not allocate sufficient funding to roads in Queensland. For 11 years we were threatened with no road allocation unless we met the philosophies of the federal government. Imagine the scepticism of the electorate when \$2.8 billion was allocated for the Bruce Highway. I am not quite sure what part of the Bruce Highway that will be wasted on, but the federal government ought to realise that it is 2,000 kilometres long.

People on the Capricorn Coast know the commitment of our government and last week commenced using the western bypass at Yeppoon, which is to be known as Neill's Road. This was a \$16 million election commitment, being part of a total of \$26 million, by me in 2004. This was generally outlined by the minister in his statement today, but the overall impact on our community by this major government funding needs to be fully outlined. We hear so much from critics that funds are spent in the south-east corner of our great state but not in the regions. The amount of funding secured for my electorate puts the lie to that criticism. The \$10 million portion of this road network, being the Tanby link road, was opened for use in 2006 and the final major portion was recently completed and is now in use. I look forward to the minister for main roads officially opening this great new road system. That will be the new minister but I would be remiss if I did not also thank the previous minister, Minister Lucas, who is now the Deputy Premier, for his strong support for this project.

The people of Yeppoon had experienced large heavy vehicles carrying logs travelling through their beachfront and CBD, and some aspirational wish list was touted by the local council but nothing was done about it. No proposals were put to my predecessor or to me, and other than to gain public relations kudos nothing else was done by the Livingstone Shire Council. I was supported by the Hon. Robert Swarten in lobbying the then Treasurer, Terry Mackenroth, and the then Premier, Peter Beattie, to fund these access roads. The lobbying resulted in an election commitment for its construction in my campaign in 2004. That funding was over three years, but as it happened the final funding was committed during this term after the 2006 election.

The work was undertaken by the Livingstone shire workforce and RoadTek, the construction arm of Main Roads. I believe that the many people who will benefit from these two roads will thank the Labor government for its substantial investment in their safety and time-saving use of the roads. The design reflects the latest achievements in road safety. The Tanby link has cut about 10 minutes off the time to travel from Emu Park to Yeppoon, and the new road will cut approximately 15 minutes off the time to travel from north of Yeppoon to Rockhampton. It commences from the intersection of Farnborough Road and Byfield Road, with some work between Bungundarra and Farnborough roads and further north still to be completed. It intersects with Adelaide Park Road, Limestone Creek Road and Barmaryee Road, which are major access roads that used to channel traffic into the centre of Yeppoon but which will now allow the option to travel direct to Rockhampton.

After the opening of the road, the timber trucks which formerly travelled through the CBD and the fruit growers will be able to direct their trucks along this bypass. The Scenic Highway and Farnborough Road will revert to the control of Livingstone Shire Council but certain further funding has been approved for some intersections, notably at Roslyn Bay and Statue Bay. The final road area from Kinka Road turn-off to Pybus Street, Emu Park has funding approval and will complement the Kinka link road, and that is to commence shortly. Funding of approximately \$19.6 million has also been earmarked for the Rockhampton-Emu Park Road over the current five-year plan and that further enforces the Bligh government's commitment to regional and rural communities.