



Speech by

Margaret Keech

MEMBER FOR ALBERT

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ALBERT ELECTORATE, INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

Mrs KEECH (Albert—ALP) (12.24 pm): The electorate of Albert is a very large and geographically diverse electorate and takes in some of Queensland's, and indeed Australia's, fastest growing suburbs. Living in the area and representing it is very exciting. It brings many new opportunities but it also brings increased demand for government services. That is why the Bligh government's election commitment to deliver and fast-track priority infrastructure projects to meet the demands of population growth is so important and very welcome to the people of the northern Gold Coast. In fact, this year when school went back three out of the four new state schools which have been opened throughout all of Queensland were opened in the electorate of Albert.

As a state member, I want to thank the police minister who recently gave an update of the new police district within the Queensland Police Service's existing South Eastern Region. This new region, which will service the northern Gold Coast, will have immediate and positive benefits to the people in my electorate. The Australian Bureau of Statistics shows that over the next few years population growth on the northern Gold Coast will be consistently above both the state and the national average. This brings responsibilities to provide a continuing high standard of infrastructure and services for this rapidly growing area. That is exactly what the Bligh government is doing. I am very proud to be a member of the Labor government that is looking ahead to the challenges of the future. We are meeting not just the current needs of residents but those well into the future. We are anticipating growth and we are staying ahead of it.

I am advised that the new Coomera police district will attract an additional 163 new police officers which means the northern Gold Coast will see a significant police boosting. More police patrolling our streets ultimately means improved safety for the people of Albert. This is in line with the Bligh government's Toward Q2 vision to create safer Queensland communities. An increase in police numbers and improvements to police services on the northern Gold Coast is part of the Bligh government's commitment to delivering world-class policing for all Queenslanders.

However, a safer Albert is just one of the benefits the new police district will bring. Construction of the multimillion-dollar district headquarters adjacent to the existing Coomera Police Station is providing very important job opportunities for Albert residents. Keeping Queenslanders in jobs during these very tough economic times is the Bligh government's priority. This is especially a priority in Albert, which is home to a significant number of young working families. When construction is complete, estimated to be around August of this year, the new headquarters will not only hold the district office but also contain a number of different branches of the Police Service. Residents of Albert will receive additional services as a result of a strengthened traffic branch, CIB branch and a child protection and investigation unit operating out of the Coomera headquarters. With the M1 going right down the middle of the electorate, additional officers will be able to respond more quickly to concerns on the M1. I thank the police minister for his response.

The Bligh government is rising to the challenge of rapid and unprecedented population growth despite the global financial crisis. We are a forward-thinking and proactive government that delivers on its election promises. In particular, I thank the Coomera Police Community Consultative Committee, its chair

Stewart Proud and all of the hardworking members who attend the monthly meetings. They have been very supportive of myself and the Bligh Labor government in fighting for these new police services. I thank the CCC for its good work in ensuring that the constituents of Albert have additional police services. The safety, wellbeing and job security of Albert residents are being well catered for by the Bligh government, of which I am a proud member.