



Speech by

**Hon. Warren Pitt**

**MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE**

Hansard Wednesday, 11 February 2009

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## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Economic Stimulus Package, Roads Infrastructure**

**Hon. FW PITT** (Mulgrave—ALP) (Minister for Main Roads and Local Government) (10.20 am): It is pleasing to see that the Rudd Labor government is taking the global financial crisis seriously and has developed an unprecedented \$42 billion economic stimulus package for the nation. I am more pleased to advise that this funding will create numerous jobs here in Queensland, particularly within the road sector. Significant components of the stimulus package that impact on my portfolio include an extra \$150 million this financial year for critical maintenance work on the National Highway network, a total of \$90 million for national black spot projects over the next two years, and \$500 million to councils for local community infrastructure upgrades.

As a result of Queensland's continual lobbying about the state of the National Highway network here, we expect to fare very well out of the roads component of the package. I am confident that we will receive a major share of this allocation to help fund the backlog of maintenance projects on our national network. This money will go some way towards reversing a decade of neglect under the Howard government. While the final list of projects to be funded is yet to be approved by the Rudd government, I expect that money will be used for jobs such as the rehabilitation of the Warrego Highway between Blacksoil and Kholo near Ipswich; much-needed asphalt resurfacing of the Bruce Highway at Rockhampton; and rehabilitation on flood damaged sections of the network in north Queensland.

Also, this extra funding is not only good news for Queensland motorists; it is good news for Queensland workers. Research into the job-generating capacity of roadworks shows that maintenance work creates 15.8 direct and indirect jobs for every million dollars spent each year. This means that the Rudd government's additional maintenance funding will generate hundreds of new jobs in Queensland as well as sustaining and protecting existing positions. We will also be encouraging the councils to get their share of the \$500 million on offer for community projects. This is the sort of leadership that we need in these extraordinary times—not the flaky, flimsy responses from the new National Party.