



Speech by

Andrew Powell

MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE

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GLASS HOUSE ELECTORATE, HEALTH SERVICES; CALOUNDRA SOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Mr POWELL (Glass House—LNP) (9.53 pm): Before I speak on a significant electoral matter, I would like to pause and personally thank some very important people. Last Thursday my wife, Taryn, was taken via ambulance to the emergency department of the Nambour General Hospital. I would like to start by thanking Matt and Martin from the Queensland Ambulance Service at the Nambour station for their professionalism and comic relief in what was a stressful situation for Taryn, me and our five kids. I know that Taryn had to ask them to stop the wisecracks because it was hurting too much, but their levity certainly helped us all.

To the staff at the emergency department, particularly doctors Andrew and Lisa and wardsman Gary, thank you. Your quick and skilful intervention means Taryn is well and truly on the mend and, Gary, thanks for helping me corral the kids at various times throughout the day. Quite simply, we do not praise the work of our front-line health professionals near enough, so let me take this opportunity to personally say a heartfelt thankyou.

On a less pleasant note, since the Bligh Labor government announced that the Caloundra South development would be taken away from the Sunshine Coast Regional Council and handed to the ULDA my office has been inundated by community concern and outrage. Whilst I appreciate there is a need to identify and progress suitable sites for development, I share many of the concerns raised by my constituents.

Firstly, the project was removed from the oversight of the relevant local government. Throughout Queensland it is local government that plans and approves developments such as this. They, better than any other tier of government, are in touch with the sentiments of our constituents in these matters and aim to reflect this in their decisions. By removing this project from local government oversight the Bligh Labor government could be accused of removing a local voice in the progress of the Caloundra South development.

The transfer of the project to the ULDA also removes a number of checks and balances that would normally exist around such developments—another cause for alarm with Glass House locals. Then there are the environmental implications. The council has spent considerable time and money on investigating the environmental challenges posed by this particular development, not least of which is the ongoing status of the Pumicestone Passage and its catchments. Just last week the Ecosystem Health Report Card showed that the passage itself had fallen from a C plus to a D plus rating and the catchments from a B to a C minus. The council will be making its studies available to the ULDA, but I would encourage the authority to go further and ensure that there is a full environmental assessment of the development site and its environs. If the outcomes do not add up, do not force the issue.

Finally, if this development is to be fast-tracked, we on the Sunshine Coast need vital infrastructure now. We need the CAMCOS now—not a fast bus system from Landsborough to Caloundra but a rail solution from Beerwah to Maroochydore. If not, all the newcomers to the coast will become car dependent and our roads excessively congested. We need the Sunshine Coast University Hospital now. This is yet another example of the Bligh Labor government foisting its demands upon the people of the Sunshine Coast while it continues to ignore the desires and reasonable requests of the same people.