




Speech By
Ros Bates

MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Mudgeeraba Electorate, M1

 **Ms RM BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (11.30 am): I experienced a serious case of déjà vu last Monday as I helped turn the first sod on the project that will widen the M1 from exit 77 at Worongary to exit 79 at Mudgeeraba. Now, do not get me wrong: I am an enormous supporter of this project. I have fought for it, amongst other significant road projects in my electorate, since 2005. In fact, in 2005 the *Gold Coast Bulletin* did its first ever photo shoot and story with me with a sign clearly saying that the M1 needed to be upgraded now. As I said, the local media was so used to me talking about the importance of the motorway that it actually dubbed me the ‘member for the M1’. My electorate goes from exit 73 right through to exit 87, so I think I am an authoritative speaker on the M1.

I was fortunate to attend the sod-turning ceremony as a representative for the Minister for Transport and Main Roads on Monday last, but I had been through the whole thing six years before. In fact, I accompanied then Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile in August 2007 together with Steven Ciobo, the federal member for Moncrieff, and the then member for McPherson, Margaret May, and I was part of the announcement of that \$455 million in funding from the Howard government which was earmarked to widen the M1 from Nerang through to Tugun. There is some confusion about that original funding.

The Labor Party, which is very good at reinventing history, tries to make out that it was pork-barrelling for an election commitment from the Howard government when in actual fact the funding was part of the AusLink mark II funding that was funded in the 2007 budget by the Howard and Costello government. The Labor Party, I might note, has not put in one red cent to the M1 upgrade and the federal Labor Party—whether it be Rudd or Gillard or whoever it is going to be next week as the Prime Minister—has not put in one cent federally since 2007. Despite this promise to match the Howard government’s funding commitments, as I said, subsequent to the election of a federal Labor government the funds actually took a trip northward up the M1, and guess where they went to? They went to some marginal Labor seats, and in particular one that is even more marginal now—the seat of Woodridge!

It was surprising not only because there was a clear pledge from Labor to deliver but also because in 2007 no-one actually travelled northbound on that road by choice. This busy section of the M1, for which I attended the sod-turning ceremony the other day, carries some 70,000 vehicles per day and has been dubbed the ‘Mudgeeraba car park’. It must be one of the most important pieces of infrastructure in South-East Queensland. It links our state’s two largest cities not only to each other but to the largest population and business centres in the nation. It is a vital commercial, commuter and local road, and when it is clogged the whole of the Gold Coast suffers.

Whilst the project is expected to be completed by late 2014, there will be some short-term pain for some long-term gain for Gold Coast motorists, as was the section between exits 73 and 77, which took almost 18 months to complete. This section of road will take around about the same amount of time even though it is a shorter length of road. There are some engineering difficulties with the

duplication of the overpass at exit 79, so the contractor is going to have to divert traffic around the internal pylons on the median strip and, because of this, this will take a lot longer.

Mr Johnson: I can get you some good engineers and contractors to do that job for you.

Ms BATES: I take the interjection from the member.

A government member interjected.

Ms BATES: But we are not giving up any of our money down on the Gold Coast. The other day I was joined by the very active federal member for McPherson, Karen Andrews MP, who also welcomed the project, which has been a long time coming. She, too, has pledged to continue to fight at a federal level for improvements to the road. On behalf of Mudgeeraba residents, I thank her for her resolve. Obviously we are not finished our lobbying, and it will not matter whether it is a Liberal or a Labor government federally. We still need to fund from exit 79 right down to the Tugun bypass, where it was supposed to go in the first place. I know that the state government understands the importance of the M1. On behalf of the rest of Gold Coast members, who also have to put up with the traffic on the M1, I thank the government for its ongoing commitment.