




Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

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MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Gold Coast G:link

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (2.57 pm): Just over two weeks ago the first Gold Coast residents hopped on board the G: as the doors opened on a brighter transport future for our city. The Gold Coast community has embraced the trams with the *Bulletin* on Monday reporting that there were more than 184,700 paid passenger trips on the G: in the first 11 days of operation. There is no denying the construction phase was tough for all businesses and residents in the light rail corridor, however Southport and Surfers' businesses and retailers are already reporting an increase in foot traffic and property prices in the corridor are on the rise.

This is the world-class transport network our city had to have. I have fought for the light rail since I was a city councillor a decade ago. I have always been a supporter of the light rail and an advocate for its connection to the heavy rail. I have not wavered in this view since my election to Gold Coast Council in 2004. This was my stated position as a mayoral candidate in 2008 and it has been my continued position every day since my election to parliament in 2012.

Labor bungled stage 1 and the opportunity was lost. Instead of getting on with the project back in 2000, their procrastination and meddling led to huge cost blow-outs, particularly in respect of land acquisitions required for the realignment of the corridor.

This week I have sponsored a petition at the request of Southport Chamber of Commerce regarding the delivery of the second stage of the light rail, the connection to the heavy rail at Helensvale or Parkwood. Laird Marshall, the president of the Southport Chamber of Commerce, has been extremely vocal about the clear necessity of a heavy rail connection and the potential city-wide benefits. I thank Laird and the chamber for their initiative on this issue and note that, as of two o'clock today, over 1,250 Gold Coast residents had already pledged their support.

Last month, the Premier was in my electorate and confirmed the state government's support for the project, but he said that it is up to us Gold Coasters to show our support for it. If we want it, we need to use it and we need to let our government know just what we want in the future. Only an LNP government with a strong plan for better finances can deliver the extension for the heavy rail.

I also want to reflect very quickly on a few things that have happened in the electorate since we last met. It was my great pleasure to welcome the Minister for Tourism, Major Events, Small Business and the Commonwealth Games and Mayor Tate to the opening of the new Gold Coast Aquatic Centre in the electorate of Southport. I also had the pleasure of chairing the annual AGM for the Southport CWA. I was able to take the Premier on a tour of the Gold Coast radio centre, of which I used to be general manager, and introduce him to Tim Davenport and Nick Scott. Of course, Tim is the Queensland manager. We even got him on air with one of my old program managers, Jason Matthews, which was a lot of fun. Like the Minister for Housing, I too have been dunked since we last sat. It was my great pleasure to join with Gold FM in their Give Me 5 for Kids Appeal and help raise \$10,000 for the privilege of being dunked.