




Speech By
Fiona Simpson

MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE

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APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL; APPROPRIATION BILL

Utilities, Science and Innovation Committee, Report

 **Ms SIMPSON** (Maroochydore—LNP) (11.42 pm): I rise to address the Main Roads component of this committee's hearing. The issue that I particularly wish to draw to the attention of the House is a matter I touched on in the estimates hearing. It is one that I think is the most serious, and it is that this budget reveals there was up to \$760 million being rolled over from the last financial year to projects in this financial year. There were excuses from the government as to why this was so. They said that the projects were still going to be delivered on time; however, that is \$670 million that was not expended last year putting shovels into the ground and roads under construction, with that money flowing into the economy. That is a lost opportunity and there were jobs lost as a result.

It is so serious that I have had senior figures in the civil construction industry say to me it is the worst they have seen in 35 years in the construction industry here in Queensland. This Labor government has stalled projects. The policies of this Labor government have resulted in an 11 per cent slump in construction figures in Queensland just in the last quarter. You can imagine that, when you have a government that is drip-feeding projects rather than having a consistent pipeline, it means there are lost opportunities to ensure that that capacity in the industry is taken up and people with those skills can maintain gainful employment. While there will be some legitimate reasons for some of the delays, to try to excuse \$670 million is quite unfathomable. This government simply cannot deliver infrastructure in a timely way.

I want to address the issue of RoadTek. RoadTek certainly has a place within Queensland, but one has to question why this government has failed to clearly answer questions about the potential to bring this government owned construction company back into the market within the South-East Queensland corner to compete in an industry which has such excess capacity or, as the DG said, where conditions are 'soft'. One has to question whether this is a good use of public resources in South-East Queensland. As opposed to other—

A government member: Market failure.

Ms SIMPSON: Are you serious? Market failure in South-East Queensland? The minister is out of touch with industry. If the minister seriously thinks there is not the capacity in South-East Queensland, I suggest he go back to that place south of the border where they smoke some interesting things. That is the only way you could seriously say there is a market failure and lack of capacity in South-East Queensland.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms Grace): Order! Member for Maroochydore, can I get a ruling on that, please? Can I see the Clerk for a moment, please?

Ms SIMPSON: I am happy to withdraw if the member and the chair find it offensive. I would suggest the minister is completely out of touch. I want to address the issue of the Mooloolah River

interchange. This much needed Mooloolah River interchange upgrade is critical to ensure that the future Sunshine Coast University Hospital has safe and uncongested access. I raised the need for this Labor government to tell us what its plan is to fix this dangerous bottleneck. We did hear a plan from the government. I acknowledge that the minister promised to look at the issue of hospital access and address it. I am concerned, though, that he may not understand that this means the Mooloolah River interchange as well, not just the bitumen outside the hospital, as this interchange is the main arterial link through which most people will access the hospital from the north. There is no doubt that this road is already dangerous, as the accident rates prove, but when the new hospital opens traffic will have to grind through this northern access point where the east-west and north-west sections of the Sunshine Motorway intersect with the Nicklin Way and local roads near the Mooloolah River.

I quoted the figures which were provided by the parliamentary library using Transport and Main Roads figures which reveal a very high accident rate in that area, but I may have inadvertently misled the House by omission because I did not include all of the roads leading into that interchange. In fact the accident rates are higher. I wish to table figures provided by the library which show that in this area there have been nine fatalities, 148 hospitalisations—

Tabled paper: Queensland Parliamentary Library research brief, dated 2 September 2015, regarding road accidents near proposed upgrade areas by the Mooloolah River Interchange [\[1070\]](#).

(Time expired)