




Speech By
Grace Grace

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

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BUILDING QUEENSLAND BILL

 **Ms GRACE** (Brisbane Central—ALP) (5.41 pm): I rise to support the Building Queensland Bill mainly because I believe it meets three major government objectives. Firstly, it meets our election commitment to Queenslanders to deliver infrastructure based on transparency and accountability and, in order to do so, we promised to create a new independent statutory body to deliver our aims and objectives, thus removing the politics. That is a known known. The key words here are 'independent statutory body', not one that is buried in the department, thus we are removing the politics when looking at transparency and accountability when it comes to infrastructure.

Secondly, the bill establishes Building Queensland with the necessary powers as an independent statutory body to evaluate major infrastructure prioritised investment and planning. So we have that independence there. Thirdly, it ensures that the government is provided with independent expert advice about infrastructure in Queensland with a robust and transparent framework on priority pipeline infrastructure projects published and promoted to the private sector and the public at large.

This bill will deliver what Queenslanders want—a considered, open, transparent and accountable independent process to assess infrastructure projects in this great state, a process unfortunately missing in action during the last three years of an LNP government. To be lectured by those opposite on openness and transparency is breathtaking to say the very least.

The establishment of Building Queensland is supported by the many organisations in their submissions to the Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee. They welcome the certainty the private sector desires and needs to do business with the Queensland government and our government owned corporations. They are well aware of the significant economic benefit for jobs, skills and training and productivity that comes with this certainty and good planning.

This bill rightly provides Building Queensland with the necessary functions and structure to deliver and carry out their duties in providing meaningful strategic advice and evidence for Queensland's infrastructure of the future. I am talking about infrastructure like the much needed and prioritised—and I know who will deliver it; it will be Labor—Cross River Rail project, not the pipedream that was the bus and rail tunnel that was never going to occur.

Opposition members interjected.

Ms GRACE: I hear questions interjected by those opposite about where the money is coming from. Obviously these are joint partnership projects that generally happen not only when Labor are in government but also when the LNP are in government. Many of the projects that they delivered were with the assistance of the national government, similar to the assistance that we will be getting from the federal government as well, and rightly so. It should be a joint infrastructure—you took the money from Labor; we will also take the money from the LNP.

When it comes to projects, I have heard things that have been made up. I have heard things about what we built and what we did not build that I believe have no basis in truth. The truth of the

matter is that both sides of this House want infrastructure—both want the jobs and both want the training. But it is Labor that delivers them openly and transparently and delivers them on budget and on time.

Those opposite talk about us having no plan. When it comes to the infrastructure that past Labor governments have put in place, there is not enough time to list them all, but I am going to go through some: the Gateway bridge duplication—on time and on budget; Ted Smout bridge—on time and on budget; Airportlink and the airport flyover—on time and on budget; the busways that delivered the buses on time, something which the former transport minister continually goes on about—it is very good when there are bus lanes dedicated to buses so that they can be on time—built by Labor on time and on budget; hospitals up and down the coast—on time and on budget; railway station upgrades—on time and on budget; light rail on the Gold Coast—on time and on budget; new schools and year 7 transition build—on time and on budget; rebuilding Queensland after the 2011 floods as practically nearly all of Queensland was destroyed by those floods—on time and on budget. Those opposite who do not recall those projects are really misleading this House.

The infrastructure that we delivered as a government is second to none in this state. We had the biggest infrastructure budgets of any government around the country. Those opposite know it and so do the people of Queensland. Not only that, we also drought proofed South-East Queensland. Had it not been for the infrastructure that Labor put in place, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and those areas that were flooded would not have received clean drinking water when the treatment plant went under during the floods of 2011. That is why they had clean drinking water. It was because of the infrastructure, the pipes and the work that Labor put in place.

Ms Trad: They weren't complaining then.

Ms GRACE: Yes, they were not complaining then. I take the interjection from the Deputy Premier. If we are talking about infrastructure, let us not have short memories. Let us call it as it is. The things that we built as a government are second to none in this country. We have the No. 1 priority project—the Cross River Rail, which I will guarantee Labor will deliver. It would never be delivered under the LNP.

In line with openness and transparency, this bill, together with some government minor amendments, provides for the publishing of Building Queensland deliberations, including a summary of preliminary evaluations, pipeline of priority projects and ministerial directions. I think that is very accountable. These measures included in this bill will enable greater public scrutiny and provide certainty to the private sector to plan their business activities with government and GOCs and details of a clear plan. Of course, commercial-in-confidence material will be protected.

This bill provides Queenslanders, through Building Queensland, a process for value for money infrastructure, a process for a transparent evaluation of projects and a process for providing the public and private sector with open book information on their work and deliberations. That was not provided in the manner in which the previous government delivered infrastructure.

What this will deliver is greater business confidence, better planning skills and increased job creation pipeline initiatives which will benefit jobs growth now and in the future and benefit Queensland's economic performance. Gone will be the days of secrecy and lack of transparency as demonstrated by those opposite during their very short time in government. I commend this bill to the House.