



Speech By
Rob Molhoek

MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT

Record of Proceedings, 21 May 2015

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Mr MOLHOEK** (Southport—LNP) (12.21 pm): It is with pleasure I rise to add my contribution to the address-in-reply debate. I first want to acknowledge the Kombumerri Yugambeh people of the Gold Coast—the saltwater people so appropriately named given our city's great affinity with the beach and the Broadwater. Although it has been some time now since the 31 January election, this is the first opportunity I have had to place on record my sincere gratitude to the constituents of Southport for re-electing me as their representative in this House. I am extremely humbled to have earned their trust and faith for a second term. I am confident that I have represented their best interests in this state parliament and have demonstrated a track record of working hard for Southport. Southport is my home: I was born there, I grew up there and I have raised my family there. I love it and am just so proud of what a great place it is to live and work.

I want to take a moment to thank a few people. Everyone in the House knows that campaigns are a team effort and I am fortunate enough to have had the support of many amazing people. I want to acknowledge Reg Williams, my campaign director who has been a great supporter and did an exceptional job of overseeing the 2015 campaign. He also continues through his audit practice to provide tremendous support to many community organisations, including his generous work with the Gold Coast Titans Community Foundation and Bravehearts, to name just a few. Thanks to Kiel Sinclair, my amazing branch treasurer, and his partner, Kate, who were among the small group of people who ditched their Friday night plans to set up booths across the electorate before polling day. Thanks also to Glenn and Angeline Ayrton, who have done an outstanding job with campaign logistics and volunteer coordination not only for this most recent election but also previous elections, both state and from my time in council. Thanks to my SEC chair, James Kennett, my great friend and probably the most tireless and enthusiastic volunteer I have never known. James was out—

Mr Costigan interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: He was here the other day. He also helped Sid and a few other members on the coast. He was out every day with me for the 14 months prior to the 2012 election and again this year when the election was called he was out every single day on the campaign trail. He finally got the hint that I really do not like muffins all that much and prefer custard tarts, so I thank him for the constant supply of coffees and custard tarts. I also want to acknowledge the tremendous support of Kathy Quinn and Lisa Westra van Holthe, my electorate officers, who not only worked so hard on my re-election but have consistently been just so responsive, respectful and caring to the many people who come by my office and who attend my weekly roadsides and my Saturday morning listening posts. I also want to make special mention of Stephen Petith, my former electorate officer who could not be with us for this past election.

Mr Costigan: 'Big Red'.

Mr MOLHOEK: 'Big Red' has been a great supporter and served the people of Southport so well through the last election and my first few years in office. Stephen resigned last year to take up a job working in Malta, the UK, North Africa, Hong Kong and China with a Chinese group that we met here one evening at Parliament House by chance when they were here with a visiting delegation. I also want to thank the many volunteers who put in hours during the campaign at roadsides, those people who came and stuffed envelopes and pushed things into letterboxes. I also especially want to acknowledge my enduring office volunteers—Rose Gray, Laurie Stokes and her wonderful husband Colin, and Nicole Barnaby and her carer Judy Wishart from FSG Southport. I also need to say a special thanks to William Ricketts, Sophee Smith, my older brother John and sister Connie, my niece Lynda and my dear friends Ken and Lisa Stanley for turning up many days in January to help out with roadsides and the daily putting out and retrieval of campaign signs and banners.

Thanks to all of my booth captains: Hayden Whitworth; Steve Lutz; Dewayne and Angie Montey; Warren Bray, or 'Wazza' as he is better known; Kiel Sinclair; Reg Williams; William Ricketts; Craig Devlin; David Lister; Tanya Bell; Peter Yeomans; and Rowan Steer. Thanks for all of your hard work both during the prepoll and then on polling day. I should also thank the many people—the army of volunteers—who came out on election day, many of whom survived that vicious storm during the afternoon and continued to hand out how-to-vote cards right up until six o'clock. At this juncture I also want to acknowledge and thank the many members of my Young Leaders Group. It has been such a privilege to speak into their lives and so pleasing to share in their achievements. I want to make special mention of Nicole Willis, who last year won the Planning Institute of Australia Young Planner of the Year Award and was also a finalist in the Gold Coast Young Entrepreneur Awards. Along with fellow young leader Georgia Canning, they both were finalists in the Gold Coast women in business excellence awards. A special mention must also go to Simon Brook whose exceptional work ethic and motivation have seen him become a partner at Burling Brown, one of Southport's oldest architectural firms. Simon's community spirit is encouraging and he has inspired many of his fellow young leaders.

I also want to acknowledge and thank the local business community for its continuing support. Special thanks must go to Laird Marshall from the Southport Chamber of Commerce; John Howe from the Committee for Southport; David Lister, the producer of the Southport book; and Luke Atlschwager from Parkwood International Golf Course for his support for so many events and functions. I particularly want to thank Luke for donating the function in support of the Gold Coast Domestic Violence Prevention Centre and the Gold Coast Centre Against Sexual Violence last year where we were privileged to have Lisa Newman attend as our special guest.

Of course, I need to say thanks to my family. I am immensely proud of my four sons—David, Tim, Matthew and Andrew. I am grateful for their patience and long suffering, for their help during the election and the great job they do of keeping me humble and challenging my thinking. Of course I need to thank Melinda, who, in spite of our separation last year, continued to provide very practical and enduring support and encouragement during the hectic three-week campaign. This is the fourth family election for the Molhoek household and I am thankful for Melinda and appreciate her hard work in rallying volunteers and standing with me at our many prepolls and polling days. I also need to make special mention of two of Melinda's dearest friends, Liz Crouch and Jodee Litzow, for their support and friendship. Of course I cannot complete the list of thanks without making special mention of our extended family from across the street, so special thanks go to Cristale, Ben and little Oscar for their enduring love and support.

Earlier in this debate my colleague the honourable member for Surfers Paradise touched on the Gold Coast election result, but I think it is important to acknowledge the message from the people of the Gold Coast. As a city, they spoke with one voice. Although not everyone agreed with all of our policies or all of our decisions, there was an overwhelming endorsement of our achievements on the Gold Coast. I know we spoke a lot about law and order in the campaign and I know nobody wants to listen to campaign rhetoric, but the changes we have seen on the Gold Coast in terms of law and order are significant.

The LNP's crackdown on criminal motorcycle gangs in September 2013 not only kicked the bikies out of town but also made some serious headway in the fight against organised crime. I have had many constituents stop me in the street to thank me for what our government did. I need to mention the success of RAP, the highly trained rapid action patrol squad, and the tough legislation that our government introduced not only to clean up our streets but also the flow-on of which there has been a dramatic effect on tourism and business confidence. Despite the best efforts of the union backed Labor campaigns and lobby groups to unseat the sitting LNP members on the Gold Coast, we saw an overwhelming endorsement of these laws. The new government has offered vague support

for RAP and its role on the Gold Coast. I believe that it is in everyone's best interests that the government continue to support the resources necessary to allow Superintendent Jim Keogh and colleagues of his calibre and this squad to continue tackling serious crime in our city.

Speaking of our achievements on the Gold Coast, and more specifically my electorate, I was incredibly proud to have worked with the council, Mayor, Tom Tate and Councillor Dawn Crichlow to deliver the priority development area for Southport and its designation in the new draft planning scheme as CBD Gold Coast. Some 38 new approvals, representing an increase in commercial office space of 30 per cent, and an additional 7,000 apartments with a developed value of more than \$2 billion have been lodged and approved all because our government committed to the PDA and sent the strongest possible signals to the business and development communities that an LNP government was serious about getting the Gold Coast going. The revitalisation of Southport and the jobs that come with a vibrant, productive and thriving CBD focused on business, health and knowledge was and will continue to be my highest priority. Southport is already a hub of activity for the city. Almost 20 per cent of all jobs on the Gold Coast occur in the Southport CBD, the health and knowledge precinct at Parklands and within the industrial estates of Molendinar and Arundel, also within my electorate.

During the last sitting week and then again this week we heard the Deputy Premier taking credit for the light rail. How audacious! How unbelievably arrogant! The light rail has been a collaborative effort going right back to the time when Ray Stevens was the mayor of the Gold Coast. It was subsequently championed by mayor Gary Baildon and then councillors David Power and Ted Shepherd and then my fellow council colleagues and I continued to fight for it through the early 1990s. It was not until a delegation from the Gold Coast sat with then minister John Mickel that the state government finally made a commitment to this project. I am not sure, but I do not believe that the current Deputy Premier was even an elected member back when the crucial decisions and commitments were being made about this important piece of infrastructure.

I am sure also that in the coming years much will be made of the potential of the 2018 Commonwealth Games. No doubt there will be many who will want to take credit for securing the event. But let me place on the record that the Gold Coast owes a huge vote of thanks to Paul Broughton, founding chairman of the Gold Coast Titans, and Bob Gordon, former editor of the *Gold Coast Bulletin*, for their persistence in getting the bid going and sowing the seeds of what will be a great event for our city and for my electorate of Southport.

There is just so much happening in Southport. I am very fortunate to be the elected member of such a wonderful area. Aside from the brilliance of Ian O'Connor and his team at Griffith University and its spectacular growth in stature as a world-class university, we have the new \$700 million games village underway, the newly opened Gold Coast University Hospital and the massive new Healthscope 450-bed private hospital. We also have a newly renovated and thriving TAFE right in the main street of Southport with nearly 5,000 students, many of them undertaking studies in allied health services, tourism and hospitality. Thanks must go to the commitment of our deputy leader and member for Surfers Paradise, John-Paul Langbroek, for the work that he did in securing the funds to make the renovation of that TAFE happen.

There are major upgrades underway in Smith Street and Olsen Avenue. There is also the new Labrador hockey centre and, thanks to the hard work of our former tourism minister and member for Currumbin along with Mayor Tom Tate, our fantastic new \$48 million Gold Coast Aquatic Centre. But that is not all. The—

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I am not going to take that interjection. But that is not all. The Broadwater Parklands will be even further enhanced after stage 3 was recently commenced, with the development of new boat ramps and parking at the northern end of the precinct. It is great to see the dredging and general improvements that are being made to the Broadwater. These improvements are as a result of our government's commitment to reinstate the Gold Coast Waterways Authority and provide the funding and the teeth to get things done.

I am also delighted to see Chinatown developing within the Southport CBD. It has been such a pleasure to work with the council and the local business community on the evolution of Chinatown. Although the precinct still has a long way to go—another two restaurants opened last week—it sends a very clear message to the many Asian visitors and delegations coming to the Gold Coast. I am so pleased with this month's announcement of direct flights from Wuhan in Hubei province, China, to the Gold Coast. I have to say well done to the member for Currumbin, because the growth in the number of Chinese visitors to our city and our state has been spectacular. This service to Wuhan simply

builds on the other services that the now shadow minister Jann Stuckey was able to secure, with direct connections to Asia with Scoot, AirAsia and China Southern and improved connections with Jetstar, Virgin and Qantas.

I also want to acknowledge—and it would be remiss of me not to do so—the courageous leadership and example our former premier, Campbell Newman, and his amazing wife, Lisa. I especially want to say thanks to the member for Callide and the member for Aspley for the privilege of working with them as an assistant minister while a part of the Newman government. I am honoured to have been taken into their confidence and extremely thankful for their mentorship and encouragement. I am also very proud to have worked alongside each of them in the many reforms and safeguards that we delivered in respect of child safety and also the progress that we made in economic development through planning reform, in particular the achievements of SARA—our single assessment referral agency—that saw the unravelling of so much unnecessary red and green tape that spared the development industry and councils from the unnecessary drama of running the gauntlet of up to 14 state government departments and which resulted in the delivery of thousands of approvals but, more importantly, jobs for Queenslanders through the construction and development industries.

Mr Crandon interjected.

Mr MOLHOEK: I thank the member for Coomera for that interjection. I also want to touch on our criminal law reforms and particularly those with regard to child exploitation and dangerous drugs, the two-strikes legislation and, of course, the Carmody inquiry into child safety and protection practices. These are all reforms of which our government can be very proud. Our government's commitment to Queensland families and children was to make Queensland the safest place in Australia to raise a child. We increased maximum penalties for child exploitation offences and afforded further protection to Queensland children. But there is still so much more work to do. As at 30 December 2014, sadly, 8,722 children are still living away from home, 11,437 children are still subject to ongoing intervention and 9,219 children are still subject to ongoing child protection orders. Last year alone, we received 124,913 calls or contacts to our intake centres in Child Safety. That is 342 calls, emails or notifications every day—every day—for an entire year. There is still so much work to be done with regard to child safety.

I am humbled to be part of this Assembly. I would have to say that I was delighted to have been asked by our leader, the member for Southern Downs, to be the shadow minister for housing and public works. I have already had the privilege of meeting with many stakeholders around the state in this new role—

Mr Costigan: And in the north.

Mr MOLHOEK: And in the north. I thank the member for Whitsunday. I am committed to working with our many housing providers and community based providers to deliver sustainable, better and more affordable housing options for those many Queenslanders in genuine need. Over the past three months, as I have met with some of these community service providers, industry associations, housing providers, mayors and councillors, I can say that there is one message that they would like to deliver to the House and that is that they are very concerned about how things will play out under the Palaszczuk government. They are concerned about how they will meet the future maintenance costs of public and social housing, and what a mess that was in when we came into government in 2012. They are concerned about the need for new housing. Under the previous government, there was no money for new housing, but it has been interesting to see the now Minister for Housing and Public Works out turning sods on programs and projects that we announced and that we found the funding for. Service providers are also incredibly disappointed that the government has placed on hold the stock transfer program, which would give them the equity, the resources and the balance sheets that they need to go out and independently fund additional housing to meet some of the growing need.

So here we are, six months after this government came into power, yet it is still to meet with many of these service providers. They want to know what the government's plans are to deal with problem tenants. Just last night on *ABC News* the minister was saying, 'We have to be kind and fair.' I understand that, but those on the other side of the House want to wind back the three-strikes legislation. They want to take away the teeth from the housing service providers so that there is no power to deal with problem tenants, there is no power to deal with people who want to run methamphetamine labs or conduct illegal activities from public and social housing. I wait in anticipation to hear just where those on the other side are going to go in respect of some of these challenges.

I am looking forward to serving the people of Queensland and Southport as best I can in this 55th Parliament. My goal, as it has always been, is to see Southport the best place ever to raise a kid and to make sure that there are great pathways and opportunities for our young people. I will also continue to work to make sure that those often overlooked areas—our parks, our sporting fields, our other community assets—are not overshadowed by the larger infrastructure projects. I will also continue to work and support the many local clubs, community service organisations and non-government service providers in my electorate.

As I do have a little time left, I would like to table a letter that I received from the chairman of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board prior to the election because I think it is important to correct the record. We have heard those on the other side of the House talk about their commitment to additional nurses. I was subjected to Labor lies in the election campaign when Rowan Holzberger, the Labor candidate for Southport, claimed we had sacked 22 nurses in three years. Here are the facts: we actually added 562 new nursing positions in three years to the Gold Coast and we increased spending by over \$400 million—up 40 per cent in three years. I am proud to have been part of a government that was serious about front-line service positions and I challenge those on the other side of the House to get serious about better services for Queenslanders and cut all the rhetoric.

Tabled paper: Letter, dated 19 January 2015, from the Chair of the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board, Mr Ian Langdon, to the member for Southport, Mr Rob Molhoek MP, and others regarding nursing numbers employed by Gold Coast Health [\[449\]](#).