




Speech By
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MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA

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BUILDING QUEENSLAND BILL

 **Ms BATES** (Mudgeeraba—LNP) (7.58 pm): I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the Building Queensland Bill. This bill purports to establish a new independent statutory advisory body called Building Queensland, which will be charged with providing advice to the government about infrastructure in Queensland. It will be responsible for developing a framework for assessing infrastructure projects with a value greater than \$50 million.

I have serious concerns about the establishment of yet another bureaucratic body which will have a seemingly unlimited scope to hold up new and existing infrastructure proposals in Queensland. Adding yet another layer of red tape will stifle the potential for real economic progress and infrastructure investment in this state after the former LNP government's efforts to make life easier for business by reducing red tape and streamlining infrastructure processes for business.

With Labor coming to government with no plan of its own, no major infrastructure investments in mind and no understanding of economic policy, this bill is yet another way for the Labor government to review rather than to build the infrastructure Queensland needs. While this legislation is only now being debated before this House, Building Queensland has actually been established administratively within the Deputy Premier's department since April of this year, including around 14 staff and an interim CEO on the government payroll. In the six months it has been established, however, we have seen no infrastructure projects referred to Building Queensland.

As this bill is finally debated in the House, it is clear that Labor's efforts to implement one of its few rushed election commitments has resulted in no community consultation occurring. The Labor government has failed to address legitimate concerns from the business sector and the broader community about the level of infrastructure development which will go ahead while Labor is in power.

With other bureaucracies already existing in Queensland to review infrastructure proposals, from the State Assessment and Referral Agency to Projects Queensland, it remains unclear what this new body will be responsible for. While Building Queensland would apparently 'ensure a whole-of-government approach is brought to major infrastructure and planning investment in Queensland', SARA is already charged with delivering a 'whole-of-government approach to the state's assessment of development applications', according to the department's website. Queenslanders could be forgiven for thinking this bill creates more needless bureaucracy and duplication in the assessment of major projects.

Of course, as we have seen in the past, Labor governments have a habit of failing to deliver viable infrastructure projects and recklessly wasting Queenslanders' money in the process. Whether it was the \$1.2 billion Health payroll debacle, the \$2.5 billion spent on the western corridor recycled water grid, the \$1 billion white elephant that is the Tugun desalination plant, dams being built without pipes, or trains being purchased without seats and which do not fit through tunnels, time after time, Labor governments have been simply unable to deliver cost-effective infrastructure for Queensland.

Keeping to this tradition of incompetence and ineptitude, we have seen the Deputy Premier release a draft infrastructure plan which she has since admitted did not include a single new project. Labor are simply content to sit back and watch our economy stall as a result of their complete lack of a plan. Not only that, but contrary to Labor's supposed commitment to transparency, it now seems that Labor has tried to ensure that we will only receive 'summaries' of cost-benefit analyses created by this new bureaucratic body. Despite this, I am pleased to see the Labor government take on board recommendations made by the member for Clayfield in relation to clause 16 of the bill and the publishing and promoting of public awareness.

In stark contrast with this Labor government's enthusiasm for bureaucracy, red tape and inefficiency, when in government the LNP got on with the job of delivering the infrastructure Queensland needs. We had a long-term infrastructure plan which would have continued to deliver major projects and growth across the state. We knew that business and industry groups wanted real action and an urgent injection of major infrastructure investments to get the economy moving. Whether it was \$8.6 billion for the Bruce Highway, \$1.6 billion for the Toowoomba second range crossing, \$4.4 billion for new generation rolling stock, \$450 million for the government wireless network, 10 new schools, or \$600 million to fix the maintenance backlogs in our schools and hospitals, the former LNP government delivered when it came to infrastructure and we did not need another bureaucracy to do it.

In my electorate, Labor's insistence on reviews, deliberations and new layers of bureaucracy have resulted in local residents missing out on the large-scale infrastructure investments they need to make their everyday lives easier, as Labor does nothing but take credit for the achievements of the LNP. The Labor government has no issue with taking credit for the approval of Pacific View Estate, the delivery of new train stabling facilities at Robina, or funding to upgrade the Gooding Drive roundabout at Carrara—all achievements of the former LNP government.

Unfortunately, when it comes to delivering new infrastructure, Labor is nowhere to be seen. With the M1, for example, which is the most major piece of road infrastructure in my electorate, the LNP presented a real plan to secure a \$250 million upgrade from exit 82 at Robina to exit 85 at Reedy Creek, as well as deliver a third northbound lane between exit 82 at Robina and exit 79 at Mudgeeraba. Unfortunately, this is yet another major infrastructure project which has been stalled by this Labor government. In fact, in a public slap down last month, the Deputy Premier directly contradicted claims made by the Minister for Main Roads and confirmed that statements he made in May in relation to M1 funding were untrue. In an embarrassing turn of events, the Deputy Premier confirmed that the Labor government, in a submission which contains no new ideas for infrastructure, finally asked for federal funding to upgrade the M1 between Robina and Reedy Creek. The was despite the fact that the Minister for Main Roads claimed to have asked for this funding four months earlier, prior to the federal budget in May.

One thing I was able to deliver through Projects Queensland in my time as the minister for information technology was the global wireless network. On coming to government the LNP decided that we were not going to waste \$450 million to \$500 million of taxpayers' funds on building our own network, rather that we would partner with a telco to deliver this much needed project. The last time Labor built a system it resulted in the debacle of the Health payroll, and the LNP made sure that projects such as the global wireless network would not succumb to the same fate as other bespoke models previously embarked upon by the incompetent Labor governments, both past and present.

I would like to also take the opportunity to thank the members for Callide and Clayfield for their vision of infrastructure for the state of Queensland. Not only did their plan have new projects in it; they also had a way to pay for them, unlike this government, who just builds on the Bankcard and leaves the debt for future generations of Queenslanders to deal with. This Labor incompetence when it comes to major infrastructure projects has been all too common in communities throughout Queensland since February, and Labor's proposal to establish another bureaucracy in Building Queensland is just the latest in a series of moves which are holding Queensland back.

This bill is not going to address the lack of infrastructure investment we have seen under this Labor government, nor does it explain how Labor intends to pay for its infrastructure spending. Instead, this is a bill which demonstrates just how out of touch this Labor government is with the fundamentals of our economy as it ignores the need for urgent infrastructure investment to create certainty for business and industry in this state.