




Speech By
Tim Nicholls

MEMBER FOR CLAYFIELD

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MATTERS OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Palaszczuk Labor Government, Business Confidence

 **Mr NICHOLLS** (Clayfield—LNP) (12.33 pm): On behalf of the member for Mudgeeraba, Ms Ros Bates, I also acknowledge the students here from Mudgeeraba State School. I wish to put on the record a matter of significant public interest that concerns all those interested in the prosperity of this state and the job prospects of Queenslanders—that is, the ongoing failure of this clueless Labor government to support and implement job-creating significant projects. In the almost three months since this government took office it has demonstrated a disdain for business and infrastructure unheard of in this state. Subject to the dictates of the extreme left of the union movement and with no place for those who want to see jobs and investment occur, racked by internal division over who gets the spoils of office, this clueless Labor government is single-handedly destroying confidence in Queensland as a place to invest, build and employ.

The Premier has promised that jobs will be at the top of her priorities, yet her government has cancelled, called in or stymied projects with the potential to create up to 30,000 jobs with \$8 billion worth of investment, adding to the 4½ thousand jobs that have been lost since this government was elected.

Mr Rickuss: Jobs, jobs, jobs.

Mr NICHOLLS: Jobs, jobs, jobs; gone, gone, gone under Labor, as the member for Lockyer has pointed out. Projects axed or under a cloud include the Cairns Shipping Development Project; the Trinity Harbour development, even before the EIS process has been allowed to run its course—again, disdainful of the proper process put in place to allow a proper assessment of the project to run its course; the privately funded—not requiring government money at all—and already approved Cedar Woods development in Upper Kedron for base political purposes and no other reason; the Kurilpa Riverfront Renewal, called in by the minister and which is in her own electorate; the Gold Coast cruise ship terminal, cancelled without a word of discussion with the proponents of the project, just a flat-out refusal—‘No, we don’t even want to talk to you’—just the vague promise, which I am told is as vague as it possibly can be, about doing something in the future somewhere; and the Brisbane bus and train tunnel, a project that was being fully scoped and for which a business case was being worked up, cancelled by the Deputy Premier because it was not her project. The project that she now seems to want to see go ahead, but does not have any money for, is that of her mentor and good friend, Anna Bligh, with no money and no plans.

How is this viewed by those who take the risks, who invest their own money in projects in this state? After just three months in power Labor has already scored a hat-trick and bowled over the Property Council of Australia, Queensland Division, the CommSec report and CCIQ—all three bodies marking them down in just over two weeks. What did the most recent Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland report say, reflecting small and medium enterprises the length and breadth of

the state? It said business conditions since the election are at their lowest level in 10 years—that is, before the GFC—and business confidence is at its lowest in six years—that is during the height of the GFC. Previously where was it? Under the LNP, Queensland had the highest degree of confidence from business. It is now the second lowest. We are ahead only of South Australia. Coincidentally, the longest serving Labor state government. Guess who is coming third? Victoria. What have the Victorians excelled in under Labor? Cancelling a major transport infrastructure project—the East West Link.

Why is this occurring? Why is business losing confidence in the Queensland government? It is because of the uncertainty that shrouds major infrastructure projects in Queensland. Labor have continually turned a blind eye to their union mates shutting down work sites and hurting industry confidence. After almost three months in power they still have not named anyone to chair Infrastructure Queensland—their only infrastructure policy from the election. The only appointment with respect to Infrastructure Queensland has been that of Mr David Quinn—whom I congratulate on his appointment—as the acting CEO. Mr Quinn was appointed by me to head up Projects Queensland and actually do the work that led to those projects that are being built around Queensland at the moment as a result of the LNP. We have an infrastructure minister who did not even ask for funding for major projects like the Gold Coast Light Rail Stage 2 project when she met with the federal infrastructure minister. She did not even ask for the money—clueless! The only time the Minister for Infrastructure pays attention to the portfolio is to axe another project. When the minister says they are doing good work in starting projects, it is projects that the LNP government, and particularly the member for Callide, commenced.

(Time expired)